

35. Shipwreck!



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## 35

# Shipwreck!

**Leader Notes:**

- View [this session's focus](#), faith nurture goals, leader devotional, and story symbol (click on the story symbol to download or print).
- For the full set of DWELL Flex story symbols use the link in the sidebar.
- Need this as a PDF? Just [print this page](#) and choose to save/print as a PDF.

*Take a few moments to greet the children and let them know how glad you are to see them.*

**I love exploring God's story with you. Let's get ready to do that together.**

## Breathe

*Use this time to focus your attention on God.*

**Do this with me: calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.** *(Demonstrate a few deep "in and out breaths" with eyes closed.)*

## Tell and Wonder

**Let's enter God's story together. Here's the story symbol for the part of God's story that we'll be spending time in today. I wonder what clues it gives us about the story we're about to hear?** *(Show the story symbol. Accept any answers without giving away whether or not the kids have guessed correctly.)*

**Listen closely as we read the story together to see which story our symbol represents.**

*Read "Shipwreck!" aloud (below), pausing throughout to allow children to answer the wondering questions.*

**NOTE:** *It's always a good idea to read through the story beforehand so you'll be able to tell it well.*

*You can also read the story from a children's Bible or a simplified translation of Scripture like the New International Reader's Version (NIRV). Remember to pause throughout to allow time to wonder.*

## Pray

*Close in prayer, praising Jesus and thanking him for being with you always, especially at times when you're frightened. Include any specific fears mentioned during your time today in your prayer. Invite any children*

that feel comfortable doing so to pray for the fears they mentioned. Give younger children this line they can speak, **Jesus, you are with me when I'm afraid of \_\_\_\_\_**. Have everyone respond to these prayers with, **Thank you, Jesus!**

See [5 Ways to Pray with Kids](#) for other ways to pray.

## Respond

Select and do one or more of the response activities from God's Big Story card #162\* or check out [5 Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids](#) for some fun ways to retell this story. Include older kids in the retelling by having them read the story aloud while the younger children act it out.

\*God's Big Story cards can be ordered from [FaithAliveResources.org](http://FaithAliveResources.org).

## Easy Extra

This activity is a great way to transition from the story to your prayer time.

Continue your conversation about fears. Write out the fears the children mentioned at the end of the story on a board or large piece of paper. Ask the children if they have any other fears to add. Be sure to add your own fears to help your group realize that we all become frightened from time to time. Assure everyone that being afraid is normal—for kids and adults!

Place your list where everyone can see it and recall Jesus' presence with Paul and his promise to keep everyone on the ship safe. Remind the children that Jesus is always with us, too. We can trust Jesus to be with us, as he was with Paul and the others on the ship.

## Story: Shipwreck! [Acts 27](#)

Once again Paul had been arrested for telling people about Jesus. After hearing Paul's story, officials decided that Paul should go to Rome to appear before Caesar. Here's how Luke, the author of Acts, begins our story in the Bible:

Read [Acts 27:1-2](#).

Paul and some other prisoners boarded a ship for Rome. Paul knew that this would be a long trip, but along the way there would be many stops at new and interesting cities. And for Paul, that meant lots of chances to tell others the good news about Jesus! The sailors pulled on the ropes and set the sails. They were on the way.

The ship sailed night and day and day and night. **How do you think that felt?** (Pause for responses.) The people ate and slept on the ship, except for when the ship stopped at cities on the way to Rome. And every time Paul had a chance to get off the ship, **I'll bet you can guess what he did!** (Pause for responses.) You're right, of course! He told people about Jesus.

One day, everyone on the ship felt the weather change. Winter was coming. Paul knew that it would be a good time to stop and find a safe place to stay until the warm spring winds came. So Paul asked the ship's captain to find a safe place to wait for better weather. But the captain said, "We'll be okay. Let's keep going."

Paul was worried that if they kept going, they would end up in bad weather they couldn't sail through. He worried they would lose the ship, and everything on it—including the people! But the captain was in charge, so the ship sailed ahead, straight into the crashing waves and the cold wind.

Instead of getting better, the storm got worse. The sky grew dark; lightning flashed and thunder crashed. The winds began to roar—colder, harder, stronger! The waves battered the ship, sending it up and down and sideways. The winter storm raged and howled day and night, night and day. **Can you imagine how everyone on board felt? How would you have felt?** (*Pause for responses.*) Me too!

They kept trying to sail around the storm, but couldn't find a safe way to land. It had been a long time since they had eaten. They were hungry and scared. It looked like all of Paul's fears were coming true.

But, Paul spoke up in a calm voice. "Don't be afraid. No one will be lost. Last night an angel from God came to me with good news. My great God has promised to save me—and all of you too. I know that Jesus is with me, and I am sure we will be safe." **How do you think the people on the ship felt after hearing what Paul said?** (*Pause for responses.*) A little bit better.

But the wind and water still beat against the ship, knocking it deeper and deeper into the cold, dark waves. With a giant crash, the ship rammed into a rock and began to break apart. People from all parts of the ship tumbled into the cold, dark waves. Other people jumped in after them, for the ship was breaking into pieces.

"Jump! Swim for shore!" shouted the captain. Some people swam. Others grabbed boards from the broken ship and held on tight. One by one, the cold, frightened people headed for the shore of a nearby island.

And, one by one, the wet and shivering people climbed onto shore. One, two, three, four, five, six . . . all the way to 276. The captain counted just to make sure. Yes! Every single person was safe from that frightening storm and the terrible shipwreck. The ship was in pieces—but the people were safe. Paul looked at everyone and smiled. "I told you we would be safe. Jesus promised to be with us—and he was."

**If you were on the ship with Paul, would you have been scared? Are there times when you feel as scared as the people on the ship felt? Do you know that Jesus is with you when you're frightened?**

## Looking for More Activities for This Story?

Click below to access the full age-specific *Dwell* session for this story:

- [Preschool: Shipwreck!](#)
  - [Kindergarten-1st Grade: Jesus Keeps Everyone Safe](#)
  - [4th-5th Grade: Shipwreck and Malta](#)
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