

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 265: PAUL IS ARRESTED IN THE TEMPLE
ACTS 21:26-22:29

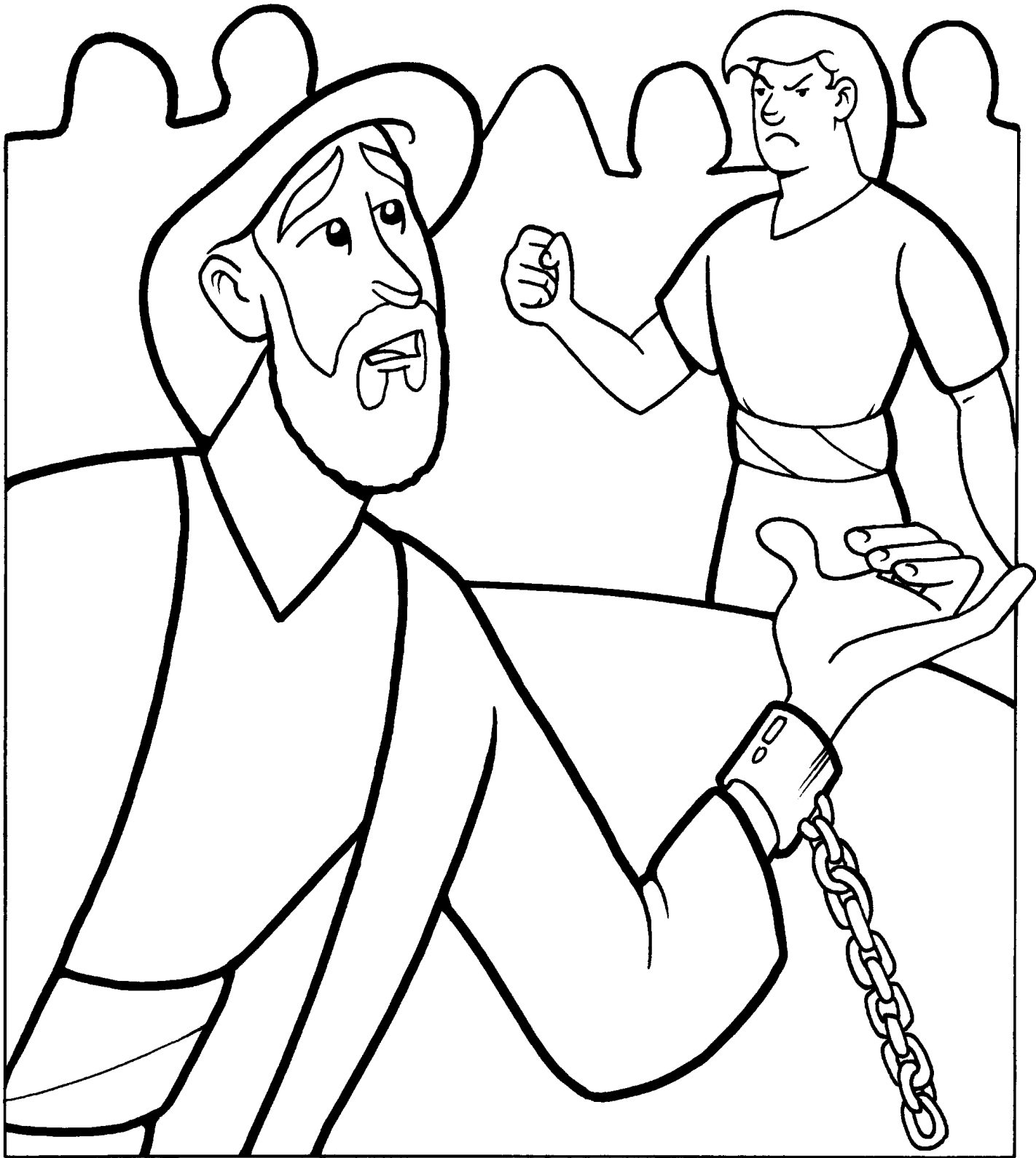
Paul went to Jerusalem and met with the elders who told him to take four men with him as a witness that Paul wasn't trying to get the Jews to stop obeying the Law of Moses. So Paul took the four men with him. The next day he shared in their cleansing ceremony, called Purification. Then he went to the Temple area and announced the time when the days of the cleansing ceremony would be finished. On the last day an offering would be given for each of the men. When the seven-day period was almost finished, some Jews from Asia saw Paul in the Temple area. They stirred up everyone into an angry mob. They grabbed Paul and shouted, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who is teaching things that are against the Law of Moses, against our people, and against this Temple of ours. This is what he teaches people everywhere. And now he has brought some Greeks into the Temple area and has made this holy place unclean!" (The Jews said this because they had seen Trophimus with Paul in Jerusalem. Trophimus was a man from Ephesus. The Jews thought that Paul had taken him into the holy area of the Temple.) An angry reaction spread throughout the city, and everyone came running to the Temple. They grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the holy area, and the gates were closed immediately. While they were trying to kill Paul, the commander of the Roman army in Jerusalem got word that the whole city was in a state of riot. Immediately the commander ran to where the crowd had gathered, taking with him some army officers called centurions and soldiers. When the people saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. The commander went over to Paul and arrested him. He told his soldiers to tie him up with two chains. Then he asked, "Who is this man? What has he done wrong?" Some people there were shouting one thing, and others were shouting something else. Because of all this confusion and shouting, the commander could not learn the truth about what had happened. So he told the soldiers to take Paul to the army building. The whole crowd was following them. When the soldiers came to the steps, they had to carry Paul. They did this to protect him, because the people were ready to hurt him. The people were shouting, "Kill him!" When the soldiers were ready to take Paul into the army building, he asked the commander, "Can I say something to you?" The commander said, "Oh, you speak Greek? Then you are not the man I thought you were. I thought you were the Egyptian who started some trouble against the

government not long ago and led four thousand terrorists out to the desert." Paul said, "No, I am a Jew from Tarsus in the country of Cilicia. I am a citizen of that important city. Please, let me speak to the people." The commander told Paul he could speak. So he stood on the steps and waved his hand so that the people would be quiet. The people became quiet and Paul spoke to them in Aramaic. Paul said, "My brothers and fathers, listen to me! I will make my defense to you." When the Jews heard Paul speaking Aramaic, they became very quiet. Then Paul said, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in the country of Cilicia. I grew up in this city. I was a student of Gamaliel, who carefully taught me everything about the law of our fathers. I was very serious about serving God, the same as all of you here today. I persecuted the people who followed the Way (meaning the Christian Believers' Way). Some of them were killed because of me. I arrested men and women and put them in jail. "The high priest and the whole council of older Jewish leaders can tell you that this is true. One time these leaders gave me some letters. The letters were to the Jewish brothers in the city of Damascus. I was going there to arrest the followers of Jesus and bring them back to Jerusalem for punishment. "But something happened to me on my way to Damascus. It was about noon when I came close to Damascus. Suddenly a bright light from heaven shined all around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' "I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The voice said, 'I am Jesus from Nazareth, the one you are persecuting.' The men who were with me did not understand the voice, but they saw the light. "I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' The Lord answered, 'Get up and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that I have planned for you to do.' I could not see, because the bright light had made me blind. So the men led me into Damascus. "In Damascus a man named Ananias came to me. He was a man who was devoted to God and obeyed the Law of Moses. All the Jews who lived there respected him. He came to me and said, 'Saul, my brother, look up and see again!' Immediately I was able to see him. "Ananias told me, 'The God of our fathers chose you long ago to know his plan. He chose you to see the Righteous One and to hear words from him. You will be his witness to all people. You will tell them what you have seen and heard. Now, don't wait any longer. Get up, be baptized and wash away your sins, trusting in Jesus to save you.' "Later, I came back to Jerusalem. I was praying in the Temple area, and I saw a vision. I saw Jesus, and he said to me, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem now! The people here will not accept the truth you tell them about me.' "I said, 'But, Lord, the

people know that I was the one who put the believers in jail and beat them. I went through all the synagogues to find and arrest the people who believe in you. The people also know that I was there when Stephen, your witness, was killed. I stood there and agreed that they should kill him. I even held the coats of the men who were killing him!" "But Jesus said to me, 'Leave now. I will send you far away to the non-Jewish people.'" The people stopped listening when Paul said this last thing. They all shouted, "Get rid of this man! He doesn't deserve to live." They kept on shouting, ripping off their clothes and throwing dust into the air. Then the commander told the soldiers to take Paul into the army building and beat him. He wanted to make Paul tell why the people were shouting against him like this. So the soldiers were tying Paul, preparing to beat him. But he said to an army officer there, "Do you have the right to beat a Roman citizen who has not been proven guilty?" When the officer heard this, he went to the commander and told him about it. The officer said, "Do you know what you are doing? This man is a Roman citizen!" The commander came to Paul and said, "Tell me, are you really a Roman citizen?" He answered, "Yes." The commander said, "I paid a lot of money to become a Roman citizen." But Paul said, "I was born a citizen." The men who were preparing to question Paul moved away from him immediately. The commander was afraid because he had already put Paul in chains, and Paul was a Roman citizen. (You see, it was against Roman law to beat or punish a Roman citizen without a trial to prove him guilty first, so the commander and the soldiers could get in a LOT of trouble!)

PAUL IS ARRESTED IN THE TEMPLE

(ACTS 21:26-22:29)



An angry reaction spread throughout the city, and everyone came running to the Temple. They grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the holy area, and the gates were closed immediately. .

ACTS 21:30

265. PAUL IS ARRESTED IN THE TEMPLE

ACTS 21:26-22:29

MEMORY VERSE:

"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you....." **MATTHEW 5:10**

Review Questions

True or False

1. Paul took four men with him for their cleansing, and went into the temple.
2. The Jews from Asia saw him in the temple and got the whole crowd angry against him and grabbed him.
3. And the whole city was happy, and the people ran to welcome Paul to the temple.
4. As the people were trying to kill him, the commander of the Roman army heard that all of Jerusalem was in a riot.
5. The commander took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. When they saw the commander and the soldiers, they kept beating Paul.

Questions

1. When Paul went to the temple, what did the Asian Jews start telling people?
2. When the people were grabbing Paul and trying to kill him, who heard about it and what did this person do?
3. When the people who were trying to kill Paul saw the commander and the soldiers, what did they do?
4. When the commander had the soldiers take Paul to the army building, what was he going to do to him?
5. When the soldiers began tying up Paul to beat him, what did Paul tell them?
6. What did the commander and soldiers do when Paul told them he was a Roman citizen? Did they stop and move away from him?

Lesson 265 Discussion

Thumbs? Yup!

You will need a deck of cards, some pennies and a cup, string, a jar with a screw-on lid, a piece of paper with scissors, and a simple set of instructions or pictures of what to do for each item, such as: stack the cards neatly, put the pennies in the cup, tie a bow, put the lid on, cut the paper (you can also just verbally tell them what to do instead of pictures or writing it down – you can also think of other activities that are near-impossible to do without thumbs like ‘write your name’ or ‘draw a flower’ or ‘tie your shoes’ etc.

Before class, set the items on the table and cover with a tablecloth. Seat the kids in a circle and choose five at a time to go up and view the items. Ask them not to touch the items on the table until you tell them to. Ask them to look closely at the things.

Tell them after everyone has seen the items you will take a vote on whether they think they can do the tasks with only their fingers or not – no thumbs! After they vote (hopefully the “yes” vote wins), instruct them to go up, a group at a time, while the rest of the class watches. Each person in the group should try one of the tasks and may use only their eight fingers...No thumbs allowed! After this, take a vote on whether thumbs may be counted as fingers or not (hopefully the “yes” votes will win). Explain how the Gentiles were different from the Jews, just like our thumbs are different from our other fingers, but God had chosen to extend His grace to them as well as the Jews! This is what made the Jews in the Temple so angry – they were prejudiced against the Gentile (Non-Jewish) believers. **THERE IS NO ROOM FOR PREJUDICE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE; JESUS DIED FOR ALL MEN!**

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY:

Discussion

What kind of persecution do you go through, or trouble do people cause you, for being a Christian? How do you handle it?

What are some other forms of religious persecution Christians experience today?

Discussion

What is your background? What was your life before you were saved? Did you obey your parents? Were you honest? Etc.

Please emphasize the importance of keeping background comments of our testimony brief and always pointing toward the need of a Savior. We do not want to glorify our sin.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to love all men with the love of Christ.

If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity to do so.