

Yet Untried by Caesar; Zealous for God Before Agrippa Acts 25 and 26



New Testament 8
Part 2: ABCs OF ACTS 19-28

SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 8 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Acts 25 and 26

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying" (Acts 25:11a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar" (Acts 25:11).

Also help the children memorize the ABCs of Acts.

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Acts 26:25"](#)
- ["Choices"](#)
- ["Choose You This Day"](#)
- ["Be Strong and Courageous"](#)
- ["Do Not Fear"](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [ABCs of Acts 13-26](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "N.T. 8 Bible Facts")
- "Acts Chapter Summary" from "[Kids Prep 2](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/Learning Centers
- [Map of Palestine](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)



- [Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Life of Paul (Series 2) A Beka picture set (**DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book***)
- Trials of Paul Visual (<http://store.bibleclassworkshop.com/shopexd.asp?id=340>)
- This lesson could easily be presented from the perspective of a news reporter in a courtroom. The OLDER CHILDREN could write the news story and act it out.

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can be zealous for God (excited and devoted to being a Christian), using opportunities I have every day to be a good example and to teach others about Jesus.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Last week we talked about Paul being in danger again just because he tried to teach others about Jesus. But he never gave up, did he? Today we are going to find out about more hard times for Paul and how he did what was right and good no matter what.

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

When bad things happen to us, sometimes they happen one right after the other. When that happens to you, do you ever wonder why? We have talked a lot about terrible things happening to Paul after he became a Christian. He was stoned and left for dead; he was beaten by the Jews; he was arrested and put in prison several times. It all seems so unfair—especially since he had done nothing wrong! Let's see what else happens to Paul in Acts 25 and 26.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Continuing our ABCs of Acts, chapters 25 and 26 correspond to Y and Z, and stand for **Yet Untried by Caesar** and **Zealous for God before Agrippa**.
2. Felix, the governor of Palestine, had refused to make a decision about punishing Paul, keeping him in jail for two whole years without a trial. Felix hoped that he could keep the Jews happy, and he hoped that Paul's friends would pay him money (bribes) to get Paul out of jail (see the note from the previous lesson). However, the Jews only grew to hate Felix even more. In A.D. 60, Porcius Festus was appointed by the Romans to replace him.
3. Festus went to Jerusalem to visit with the Jewish leaders who were still plotting to kill Paul, even after two years. While he was willing to reopen Paul's case, Festus was not willing to move the apostle and possibly put his life in danger. Within two weeks of becoming governor, Festus had opened an official tribunal (hearing) in Caesarea to hear for himself the charges against Paul. The Jewish leaders who came from Jerusalem "laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove" (Acts 25:7). (See the previous lesson for the list of the charges and what they meant.) Festus realized that the charges against Paul were false and pronounced him innocent.
4. To try to smooth things over with the Jews as the "new man on the job," Festus asked Paul if he, as a Roman citizen, would be willing to go through another tribunal—but in Jerusalem.

Paul said that he would be willing; he would not even object to dying **if** he had done anything wrong. But since he had not done anything wrong, he requested another hearing—but one before Caesar (the emperor), himself.



NOTE: It would have been a political mistake for Festus to free Paul. Allowing him to go to Rome would relieve Festus of having to deal with him or his Jewish accusers any further.

5. Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice (or Berenice) came to Caesarea from Jerusalem to welcome Festus to his new position. Festus told Agrippa about the strange man named Paul who was being held as a prisoner there. Agrippa wanted to hear what the “troublemaker” Paul had to say. The next day Festus had Paul brought to his palace so that Agrippa and the “commanders and the prominent men of the city” could hear what Paul had to say.



NOTE: Because of Agrippa’s Jewish heritage and familiarity with both Jewish religious law and Roman law, he was supposedly more qualified to decide what formal charges should be made against Paul before sending him to Caesar.

6. When Paul was given a chance to speak, he pointed out that he was not guilty of breaking any laws, Jewish or Roman. He said that he believed firmly in the promises God had made to Israel and believed those promises had been fulfilled through the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Paul told Agrippa, and the others at the hearing, how Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus many years before, and about his life-changing decision to become a follower of Jesus instead of continuing to persecute Christians. Paul was determined to tell others how important it was to truly repent (to completely change their ways of thinking and living) and be baptized because of what Jesus had done for them.



NOTE: Remember that Paul’s conversion is recorded three times: Acts 9, 22, and 26.

7. Because Festus did not want to believe in Jesus or change his life, he said that Paul must have been out of his mind (Acts 26:24). Agrippa realized that Paul was trying to convince him to become a Christian, too. Paul’s words were getting too close to Agrippa, making him uncomfortable. So he abruptly ended the hearing. Agrippa would have set Paul free, but because of Paul’s appeal to Caesar, Festus and Agrippa had no choice but to send him to Rome, with official protection. They did not realize that the terribly hard journey would give Paul more opportunities to spread the Gospel—even into the very heart of the powerful Roman Empire!



NOTE: Agrippa’s statement in Acts 26:28 (“you almost persuade me to be a Christian”) is one of only three places in the New Testament where the word “Christian” is used. The other two are Acts 11:26 and 1 Peter 4:16. As the Church grew, the believers were no longer considered a Jewish sect. The name was given by God (Isaiah 62:1-3; Acts 11:26).



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[The Name ‘Christian’](#)” by Dave Miller and “[I Don’t Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist—Really?](#)” by Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of the word “Christian” in the New Testament and for an important implication of one of Paul’s statements to Festus.

8. Paul spent a long time in prison (again), even though he had done nothing wrong. His only crime was to preach that Jesus was the Messiah, the fulfillment of every promise of God for the nation of Israel. Paul was **zealous**. He wanted others to understand the great sacrifice of Jesus, and especially the importance of His resurrection (see also 1 Corinthians 15:3-5).



NOTE: The Greek word translated “zealous” can be used in both a positive and negative sense. In a positive sense, it means “ardor, to have warmth of feeling for.” In a negative sense, it means “envy, jealousy, indignation, to have warmth of feeling against.” The primary verb from which “zealous” comes literally means “to be hot (to boil, of liquids; or glow, of solids); to be fervent.” (*The Complete Word Study of the New Testament*, by Spiros Zodhiates)

9. Paul had been mistreated much of his life because he was a Christian. Even though he got tired of being in prisons, tired of being lied about, and tired of being mistreated, etc., he used every opportunity to teach. He taught jailers and prison guards, kings and governors, the wealthy and the poor, those that were kind to him and those that were not. When people are mean to us, when others don’t treat us fairly, we want to lash out and hurt them back. But Paul (and Jesus and the other apostles) didn’t do that. Instead, he used every bad thing that happened to him to be kind, like Jesus, and to teach about Jesus. Can you think of some times when other people might hurt you—when you could be like Paul and Jesus? [OLDER CHILDREN: As time allows, read with them 2 Corinthians 11:23-29 and 1:8-11.]

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[Yet Untried by Caesar Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. (“[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)” p. 23 provided in activity sheets)
- Don’t Monkey Around: Write review questions on six to eight monkey cutouts and simple one-word answers to the questions on the same number of banana cutouts. Glue the monkeys to a poster board or cardboard—or staple the monkeys on a small bulletin board. [It is really cute if you draw a tree on the board, and put the monkeys in the tree.] Add Velcro® dots to the monkeys, with corresponding dots on the bananas. The teacher reads one question to each child and gives them the opportunity to match the correct banana and monkey. (“[Monkey Cutout](#)” and “[Banana Cutout](#)” pages, as well as [N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided on curriculum Web site)

1st-2nd Graders:

- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. (“[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)” p. 23 provided in activity sheets)
- Don’t Monkey Around: Write review questions on eight to twelve monkey cutouts and the corresponding answers to the questions on banana cutouts. Glue the monkeys to a poster

board or cardboard—or staple the monkeys on a small bulletin board. [It is really cute if you draw a tree on the board, and put the monkeys in the tree.] Add Velcro® dots to the monkeys, with corresponding dots on the bananas. Each student has an opportunity to correctly match a banana and monkey. (“[Monkey Cutout](#)” and “[Banana Cutout](#)” pages, as well as [N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided on curriculum Web site)

- Make a large Tic-Tac-Toe board on the floor and play a review game with children divided into two teams. ([N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided on curriculum Web site)
- “Who Am I?” game: Have several clues about main characters from the book of Acts. Giving one clue at a time, let the children guess about whom the clues are describing. If you like, give points (e.g., if the child guesses correctly on the first clue, award five points; if he guesses correctly on the second clue, award three points, etc. Can also be played in teams.

3rd-4th Graders:

- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. (“[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)” p. 23 provided in activity sheets)
- Don’t Monkey Around: Write review questions on eight to twelve monkey cutouts and the corresponding answers to the questions on banana cutouts. Glue the monkeys to a poster board or cardboard—or staple the monkeys on a small bulletin board. [It is really cute if you draw a tree on the board, and put the monkeys in the tree.] Add Velcro® dots to the monkeys, with corresponding dots on the bananas. Each student has an opportunity to correctly match a banana and monkey. (“[Monkey Cutout](#)” and “[Banana Cutout](#)” pages, as well as [N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) provided on curriculum Web site)
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- Have the children read Acts 25-26.

SONGS:

“ACTS 26:25”

Author: Jeff Miller

(Tune: See “[Christian Evidences Memory Work](#)” CD)

“CHOICES” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “Yankee Doodle”)

Every day in every way,
We all make our choices;
We say “yes” or we say “no,”
By using our own voices.

CHORUS:

Help us Lord, to choose what’s right,
Every day and night.

Help us, Lord to choose what's right,
We want to make good choices.

“CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*
(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

Choose you this day,
Choose you this day,

Whom to serve,
Whom to serve.

As for me and my house,
As for me and my house,

We'll serve God.
We'll serve God.

“BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS”

Author: Keith Lancaster
(Tune: See Internet)

“DO NOT FEAR” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook
(Tune: “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”)

Do not fear for God is near us.
All the twinkling stars do say.
Do not fear for God is near us,
All the night and all the day.

He will ever be our Father,
And He'll care for us, we know;
If we'll do as He commands us,
He'll go with us where we go.

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

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PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can be zealous for God (excited and devoted to being a Christian), using opportunities I have every day to be a good example and to teach others about Jesus.

INTRODUCTION:

Review [N.T. 8 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under "N.T. 8 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review briefly Sunday morning's lesson. (See [N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions), as well as other ABCs covered to this point.

Paul taught people directly when he could. He also taught through letters that he wrote to different churches and individuals. Those special letters are still teaching many people today as part of the New Testament.

Paul's letters to congregations:

- Romans
- 1 & 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 & 2 Thessalonians
- Hebrews (possibly; written to Jewish Christians)

Paul's letters to individuals:

- 1 & 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

How can we teach others? (writing notes, drawing pictures, sending tracts, inviting people to worship services, serving others, encouraging our missionaries, etc.)

With **OLDER CHILDREN**, discuss the importance of the resurrection. It was a key element of Paul's teaching and is the basis of our hope (1 Corinthians 15).

It would also be good to discuss again the meaning of the word “Christian.” The word indicates that we belong to Christ; even the younger children can understand the basic principal of ownership. (One illustration for OLDER CHILDREN: The “-ian” on the end of the word can represent the words “I Am Nothing.” So “Christian” can be remembered as, “Without Christ, I Am Nothing.”) [See Sunday lesson for the Apologetics Press article on the word “Christian.”]

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- See Sunday morning’s lesson.

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