

PAUL'S PRISON PROTECTION

The Plot
to Kill Paul
Acts 23:12–24
AD 55

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God protects us from our enemies.

BIBLE VERSE

Deliver me from my enemies, O my God. Psalm 59:1

LEARNER GOAL

I know God protects me and helps me do His work.

LAW & GOSPEL

The world hates Jesus and those like me who follow Him.
Christ has overcome the world and is with me to the end of the age.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

When Paul's nephew overhears a plot by the Jews to assassinate Paul, he tells Paul, who tells his prison guards. They take the young man to the Roman tribune, who takes action to protect Paul from the plot. Now guarded by at least 470 soldiers, spearmen, and horsemen, Paul is safely moved to Caesarea to await a hearing before Governor Felix.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read the Bible text and notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read the leader devotion found in the online digital resource center.

IN DEPTH Read the section on the Fourth Commandment in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (CPH, 2017), focusing on the doctrine of vocation and how God often uses others as His instruments in keeping order in the world and our lives.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- Play dough & people-shaped cookie cutters
- Toy vehicles & figures or items like canteens, ID tags, badges & hats
- Buddy puppet & something to represent a soldier or police person (e.g., picture, ID, badge)
- Trail mix or cut-up fruits & vegetables with dip
- Upside-down cups or craft sticks, note cards, play dough & optional tissue boxes

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Bible, songbook & classroom supplies
- Copies of *Discover Leaflet*, stickers & music downloads
- Supplies for bonus activities
- cph.org/digitalcontent



LEADER NOTE

Greet each child and show the children where to put their offerings. Direct them to an activity that will connect what they know to what they will learn. If class time is short, omit these and start with Jesus Time.



LEADER NOTE

Sing one or more of the suggested songs.



LEADER NOTE

Hold up your Bible before you tell the Bible story. Remind the children the Bible is the most important book of all because it is God's true words for us. It tells us everything we need to know about God and His Son, Jesus.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use "Military Appreciation" to talk about how God works through people to keep us safe and to introduce the story of how soldiers protected Paul.

LAUNCH

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

PLAY DOUGH Use people-shaped cookie cutters to cut out figures from play dough and act out being helpers. Say, **You can be good helpers, even though you aren't big yet. What are ways you help? How can you help people who have troubles? What would you do if your friend fell and got an owie? Today we'll talk about how God sent a helper for Paul.**

DRAMATIC PLAY Set out toy vehicles (police cars, firetrucks) and figures (toy soldiers, police officers, firefighters) or items like canteens, ID tags, badges, and hats. Say, **God takes care of us and watches over us. Sometimes God uses soldiers and police officers and others to protect us and keep us safe. Today we'll hear how God kept Paul safe.**

JESUS TIME

SING "Father, Hear My Prayer" (digital resource center) or "Our Church Family" (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 11)

SAY I'm glad to see you here today! I see some good helpers here today.

PRAY Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You for giving us people to help us and protect us from trouble. Thank You for giving us helping hands too. Help us use them to show love for others. Amen.*

LEARN

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Buddy puppet arrives, holding something to represent a soldier or police officer (e.g., ID, camouflage jacket, a picture of a soldier or police officer, a toy police car or pretend badge). Buddy is proud to show what he has, and when asked, he explains that his uncle or neighbor is in the army or is a police officer and gave this to him so he could pretend to be a soldier or police officer too. Say, **That is special, Buddy. God uses soldiers and police to protect us from those who want to hurt us. Today we'll hear how God used a little boy and a Roman soldier to protect and help our friend Paul.** *Option:* Omit puppet and put the item in your story bag or suitcase as a story clue. Adjust talk.

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the Bible story in your own words, using the *Discover Leaflet* as a guide. *Option:* Make a set of story puppets to use as you tell it. Make a jail cell from blocks or a cube-shaped tissue box to put the Paul figure in. (See "Create.")

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE

Say, **Paul was in a lot of trouble. The angry people wanted to hurt him! But God worked through the Roman soldiers to keep Paul say from his enemies. Long ago, someone in the Bible was in trouble too. The Bible tells us that he said, "Deliver me from my enemies, O my God" (Psalm 59:1). Those are our Bible words for today.** Say them with the children.

God is strong and has power to help us. Who does He give us to help keep us safe? God protects us through soldiers and police. He protects us through our parents and teachers and others. But the best protection God gives us is from our biggest enemies sin and the devil. How does Jesus keep us safe from those enemies? (Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. Because of Jesus, God forgives our sins and takes us to be with Jesus forever after we die.)

LIVE

DISCOVER LESSON TRUTHS

Separate each *Discover Leaflet* into two pages. Send the first page home with each child, or put the page into a purchased binder. Hand out the second page and crayons.

SIDE 1 Review the story as the children color the clothes of Paul’s nephew and the soldier.

SIDE 2 Sing the “Helpers” song on page 2 of the first leaflet. Then point to the helpers in the middle of this page and tell the children these are some of the helpers God gives us to keep us safe. Have the children look at the scenes around the helpers and then use their finger or a marker to trace over the lines from the helper to the scene. Tell how the person can help (e.g., the police can help the people in the traffic accident get help, the paramedic can take a sick person to the hospital, the soldier can stand guard, the teacher can help the child who is hurt, the child can help the other children stop fighting and forgive each other). Have the children tell about ways they can be helpers too. Then talk about other ways Jesus keeps us safe, including sending angels to watch over us and forgiving us and giving us eternal life.

ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LEARNING

Take time to reinforce lesson truths with one or more of these active-learning options. Turn to “Active Learning” on the back page for instructions to do the activities below.

□ MOVE

Get the children moving with some “soldier” exercises. Then sing “I’m in the Lord’s Army” and march around the room.

□ SNACK

Serve trail mix or cut-up fruits and vegetables with dip.

□ CREATE

Make storytelling puppets.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Jesus helped His friend Paul when he was in danger, working through Paul’s nephew and the soldiers to keep him safe so Paul could continue His work of spreading the Gospel. Jesus gives us helpers, too, to guard and protect us from harm and helps us be helpers for others. Ask, **Who are some helpers God gives you? What do they do? How does God help you to be a helper too?**

LEAVE

SING “Jesus, You Are Always Near” (digital resource center) or “God Is So Good” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 57)

SAY Jesus protected Paul through his nephew and the soldiers. How does Jesus protect you? What is the best thing Jesus has saved you from?

PRAY Dear Jesus, thank You for giving Paul his nephew and the soldiers to help him and keep him safe. Thank You for guarding and protecting us too by giving us helpers to keep us safe and by forgiving our sins. Make us brave to be Your helpers too. Amen.



CHRIST CONNECTION

By His life, suffering, and death, Christ protects His people from the ancient enemies of sin, death, and the devil.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Make “ID Tags” and talk about what it means to be God’s children.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Sing “Jesus Hugs Me.”

ACTIVE LEARNING

□ MOVE

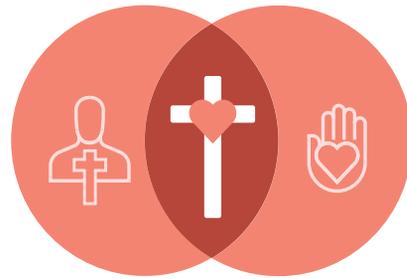
Say, **Soldiers and police officers need to do lots of exercises and training so they are strong and healthy. Let's do some exercises so we are too.** *Option:* Set up an obstacle course. Say, **A soldier can run fast.** (*Run in place.*) **A soldier can climb walls.** (*Pretend to climb.*) **A soldier can hop over puddles and holes.** (*Hop.*) **A soldier can jump rope.** (*Jump rope in place.*) **A soldier can lift heavy things.** (*Show muscle arms.*) Give more commands. **A soldier can sit down when tired.** (*Sit.*) **Even though soldiers get tired, God never does. He protects us from harm and danger. Who are some people He gives us to help us? Best of all, God protects us from our enemy of sin. How?** (*Show cross.*)

□ SNACK

Serve trail mix or cut-up fruit and vegetables with dip. Talk about how God helps us to keep our bodies healthy by giving us good food to give us energy.

□ CREATE

Have the children attach the stickers of Bible figures to upside-down cups or craft sticks. (Cut note cards in half to back the stickers on the back side of sticks and trim; supply play-dough bases). Older children can make a cell for Paul from a cube-shaped tissue box. Help them draw cell bars on one side of the box to make a door and cut around the side so it swings open. Use the figures to act out the story. Talk about how God gives us police and soldiers to help us. **How did God also work through Paul's nephew? How can you be helpers too?** (E.g., help up those who fall, give tissues and Band-Aids, tell an adult about bullies, ask an adult for help.)



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God uses authorities to protect and keep me safe from harm and danger.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can support and encourage those who work to keep me safe.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on previous learning for each age.

ADULT

I can consider different ways in the text and in my life that God protects His people from enemies.

YOUTH

I can relate God's protection of Paul in the text to His protection of His people today.

ELEMENTARY

I understand God protects us from our enemies.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know God protects me and helps me do His work.

★ BONUS ACTIVITIES

MILITARY APPRECIATION

15 minutes

If your church has people serving in the military and have photos posted of them, take the children on a walk to see them. Talk about who they are and how they serve. Alternately, show pictures of people serving in the military (e.g., army, navy, marines, national guard, air force, coast guard). Help the children gain appreciation for how these people keep us safe from enemies. Say a prayer, thanking God for those who protect our country and us from bad people and asking God to keep them safe.

ID TAGS

15 minutes

Give the children paper luggage tags or note cards with a hole to make ID tags to show they belong to Jesus. Have them print their names. Under names, write "is God's child." Add a heart/cross sticker. Thread yarn through the hole. Add dry pasta or pieces of plastic straws over each end. Tie the ends together, using breakaway knots (search online). The children can wear the ID tags and march as they listen to "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" (LSB 660) or "I'm in the Lord's Army."

JESUS HUGS ME

10 minutes

Sing to "Jesus Loves Me":
**In the day and when it's dark,
Jesus hugs me to His heart.
And I know that He will be
Always very close to me.**

Chorus: **Yes, Jesus hugs me. Yes,
Jesus hugs me. Yes, Jesus hugs me.
He never lets me go.**

**When the rain pours from the sky
And the lightning flashes high,
Jesus is right here with me,
as He promised He would be.**

Chorus