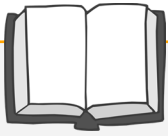


GOD'S GOT THIS

3. Paul - Trapped! PRIMARY



Bible Passage

Acts 24:24-27; 28:16; 28:30-31



Aim

To help children see that even during lockdown they might choose to try and make good flashbulb memories of telling other people about Jesus.



You will need

- ◆ A list, pictures and/or objects of flashbulb memories
- ◆ Pictures of Paul's story in Acts 24 and 28
- ◆ Pictures of emojis

INTRODUCTION (6 minutes)

Explain to the group the idea of a **flashbulb memory**.

When a flashbulb goes off in our eyes as a photograph is taken the memory of that flashbulb stays in our eyes for a while.

A flashbulb memory is a moment that has such a big impact on us it is like a photograph being taken in our minds.

- ◆ We will remember where we were and what we were doing
- ◆ The moment might be very personal to us and our families or it might be something that many people around the world experience together
- ◆ The moment might be a happy memory (e.g. a family wedding or receiving a birthday gift) or it might be a sad memory (e.g. the death of a pet or getting lost at the shopping centre)

Discuss with the group these questions:

- ◆ Does anyone in the group have a happy flashbulb memory or a sad flashbulb memory they would be willing to share?
- ◆ Does anyone in the group have a flashbulb memory from the lockdown period in Scotland?

As a leader you might bring to the group a photograph or an item associated with a flashbulb memory for you e.g. a photograph, a holiday souvenir, a programme from a concert.

If you have a smaller group or a group that might be less willing to share their stories select two or three of the moments on this website that have become flashbulb memories for people across the world.

Discuss if they are happy or sad flashbulb memories.

blog.myheritage.com/2018/04/flashbulb-memories-10-historic-events-that-everyone-remembers

BIBLE (12 minutes)

For many people in Scotland the lockdown period is full of flashbulb memories. Some of these flashbulb memories are happy and some of these flashbulb memories are sad. The sad ones might relate to us feeling like we were trapped! In the Bible we discover that God can help us when we feel trapped in the same way he helped a man called Paul.

Talk about Paul and explain that he was a Christian, a friend of Jesus, and God used him to tell people in many different places about who Jesus was. Some people heard Paul's message and were excited by it, but some people heard what he said and would attack him and get him put in jail. We join the story of Paul when he is in a place called Caesarea and he has been arrested because he was telling people about Jesus. Felix is the name of the ruling governor and judge. It is Felix who will decide if what Paul has done is good or bad.

Read Acts 24:22-27

There are pictures to illustrate these verses at freebibleimages.org/illustrations/paul-felix

Show the group a selection of emojis that display different emotions. You could hand draw these or find a ready-made set by searching online.

Discuss with the group which emoji or emojis they think best describes how Paul would be feeling after two years of being kept in prison.

Read Acts 28:16; 28:30-31

There are pictures to illustrate these verses at freebibleimages.org/illustrations/paul-rome

Next, Paul is taken on a long journey to Rome where he ends up for two more years being

under house arrest. This means he was locked down in his house and not allowed to go out. Perhaps that sounds slightly familiar to the lockdown period in Scotland.

Discuss with the group which emoji or emojis they think best describes how Paul would be feeling after two years of being kept under house arrest.

Explain how, apart from being in lockdown, there is a connection between when Paul was in Caesarea and Rome. In both places, even although he is in lockdown for a total of four years, he wants to have good flashbulb memories by talking to people about Jesus.

Paul tells Felix and his wife about being a Christian (Acts 24:24) and he does the same every time he and Felix have a conversation (Acts 24:26). Then when Paul is in Rome, although he is in lockdown, he has many visitors and yet again he shares with them about what it means when God is in charge and who Jesus is (Acts 28:31).

If a period of lockdown happened again there would be some things we would not be allowed to do. However, we could be like Paul and have flashbulb memories by talking with a friend or a family member about who Jesus is and what we discover about him in the Bible. Not everyone will agree with what we say but if they do that can become a good flashbulb memory.

CHAT (10 minutes)

Use the following questions as a guide for conversation with the group.

- ◆ Which emoji or emojis describe how you would feel if Scotland had another period of lockdown? Why?
- ◆ When you have been less able to visit family members or friends in their homes what have you done to keep in contact with them?
- ◆ If we had been to visit Paul while he was in lockdown in Rome (as in Acts 28:30-31) what advice would he give us about

keeping going even if we feel trapped?

- ◆ If you are a Christian, who could you tell about having Jesus as your friend, even if there is someone like Felix who disagrees with what you are talking about?

PRAY (2 minute)

Read Colossians 2:2-4

Explain to the group that Paul wrote these words to Christians in a place called Colossae while he was under lockdown in Rome. Use them as part of a prayer to finish the session.

- ◆ Give thanks for the good flashbulb memories we have got from the lockdown period in Scotland
- ◆ Pray for the children who have found the lockdown period in Scotland particularly difficult
- ◆ Pray that God gives us opportunities to tell other people about Jesus