

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life
Acts 28:16-31

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

The Bible studies in this Unit may tend to run long in time. Feel free to cut activities, limit extended lists, or do whatever you think wise to "watch" your time. Otherwise, the person in charge of the Worship Time will not have sufficient time to properly call the church to commitment to God's guidance through this passage of His Word.

Decide whether to use the suggested music or select a song or songs that better fit your group.

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How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life – 03-09-13-en

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Read the suggestion in the **Gathering Time** regarding the children's choral reading. Make sufficient copies of the reading. You will find the printable version on the final page of the Worship Time (end of the total session).

Bible Study Leader:

Have two large pieces of newsprint or craft paper available for making a list. If you are using a blackboard or white board, you will need to erase list #1 before starting list #2

Worship Time Leader:

Involve new people in the music today. Ask someone to lead the singing or sing a special song, play an instrument, or simply talk about one of his/her favourite hymns or choruses.

Music Sources:

"Open Our Eyes", **Maranatha Praise** Chorus Book, Extended 3rd Edition, #215.

"Jesus, Name Above All Names", **Maranatha Praise** Chorus, Expanded 3rd Edition #47.

"Jesus Is the Sweetest Name I Know", **The Worship Hymnal**, (2008), #205.

"His Name Is Wonderful", **The Worship Hymnal**, (2008), #315.

"A Shield About Me", **Maranatha Praise** Chorus, Expanded 3rd Edition, #23.

"Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross", (Various hymnals)

Be sure to select songs that are enjoyed by your home church. Suggestions are made, but it is up to each group to select songs appropriate for the particular group. Introduce new hymns or choruses from time to time.

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life

Focal Text

Acts 28:16-31

Background Text

Acts 27 - 28

Main Idea

Paul's ministry in Rome suggests the accomplishment of his mission and also of the church's mission of being Jesus' witnesses to all people.

Questions to Explore

What am I doing with my life? What is my church doing with its life?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to decide on ways they can accomplish more faithfully their mission in life.

Gathering together:

Sing "Open Our Eyes", **Maranatha Praise** Chorus Book, Extended 3rd Edition, #215

Have the children in your group prepare the following choral reading before the group meets together. If you do not have children in your group, ask men and women to do the reading.

Boys: **Go to this people and say,
You listen, but you don't understand.
You see, but don't know what you are seeing.
Because people's hearts are not listening to God.**

Girls: **If they would listen and understand
And think about what they see,**

**They would stop and turn to God
And He would help them.**

Boys and Girls together:

**Help us, Lord, to listen and see
the things that you will teach us today.**

Paraphrased from Acts 28:26-27

First thoughts:

There are McDonald's Restaurants all over the world. Ask the group to tell of unusual places they have encountered or heard of a McDonald's Restaurant. This chain of restaurants is very successful at what it does. Can you name some things that all McDonald's Restaurants do to be so successful? (Take several suggestions. Be sure to include these: People need to eat, they serve food that people like, they advertise, and their goal is to sell as much food as possible).

Ask: What must a Christian do to be successful in serving God? (Allow several suggestions). Would it be too much to expect that Christianity could go to all of the places that McDonald's restaurants have gone? If this has not happened, who is at fault?

Closing the Gathering Time:

Say: Today we will focus on learning to accomplish your mission in life. Whether we are young or older, we must constantly evaluate our priorities to be sure we are doing the things God has called us to do.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life

Focal Text

Acts 28:16-31

Background Text

Acts 27 - 28

Main Idea

Paul's ministry in Rome suggests the accomplishment of his mission and also of the church's mission of being Jesus' witnesses to all people.

Questions to Explore

What am I doing with my life? What is my church doing with its life?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to decide on ways they can accomplish more faithfully their mission in life.

Introduction to your personal study:

Difficulties, problems, obstacles, etc. can be used as excuses to keep us from serving Christ. We can say, “If only things had been another way,” “If I had more time,” “If I had more talent,” “If people had only acted another way;” - then I could serve God. Paul demonstrates in this passage that nothing was going to keep him from being a good minister of Jesus Christ. He illustrates with his manner of life that we should be good followers.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

This study concludes our brief series on the Book of Acts. The study focused on the expansion of the Gospel, the establishment of all those many new Christian congregations (churches) throughout the Mediterranean region and into near Asia. The convictions and actions of the Apostles served us as the means to see how it all happened. Those convictions and acts led us to understand better the decisions made by the church leaders to bless the expansion of the Kingdom of God among the world of people who were not Jews. We conclude, therefore, that God depends on us, Christ's disciples today, to continue witnessing to everyone, everywhere in the world—and to disciple those new believers so that they are equipped to continue our work until Jesus returns (Matthew 28:18-20).

Focusing on the Meaning:

Paul's First Meeting With Jewish Leaders

Acts 28:16 On returning to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey Paul discussed with the non-believing Jews his preaching of Jesus Christ. This eventually led to Paul being accused by Jewish leaders of actions seen as crimes by Jewish law. So, they took him to be tried before Felix and Festus—Roman appointed rulers. As a Roman citizen, he appealed to Caesar and now had arrived in Rome for trial. Since he was not accused of a major crime against the Roman government, he was permitted to live in private quarters and not be confined in a jail. As was customary under Roman house arrest, He was chained to a soldier. Soldiers served in shifts and guarded Paul so he became acquainted with many different men.

Acts 28:17 Paul, wanting to fulfill his mission of sharing Christ, asked to meet with the leaders of the Jews. This was only three days after his arrival. The Jews here are not Christian Jews but the unbelieving Jews and were the leading men among that group. He began his explanation to them about why he was in Rome and chained by his right hand to the soldier. He said that, even though he had done nothing against the Jews or their customs, he had been arrested and turned over to the Roman authorities. Festus forced him to appeal to Caesar. It was not because he had come to Rome to make an attack on the Jewish people. He wanted them to understand that this appeal to Caesar was forced upon him by Festus.

Acts 28:18 The Roman authorities in Jerusalem had questioned Paul and wanted to turn him loose. They had not found Paul guilty of any crime that would cause him to be put to death.

Acts 28:19 After the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem objected, Paul found it necessary to plead to Caesar to avoid assassination or judicial murder. If he had not appealed to

Caesar he would have been the victim of Jewish hate when he had done no wrong. It was not because Paul had any charge against the Jews.

Acts 28:20 He had asked to see the Jews to make the explanation. He wanted to speak to them about the hope of a messiah that the Jews had. He explains that this hope was the reason he was chained to the soldier.

Acts 28:21 The Jewish leaders responded with the news that they had no letters from Jerusalem about the charges against Paul or the news of his appeal. Maybe the Jerusalem Jews had written, but if so, the letter was delayed or miscarried. Also, none of the Jews coming from there had brought any news of Paul and none had said anything negative about him.

Acts 28:22 The Jews told Paul that they wanted to hear Paul's understanding about the Christians. They thought it was only fair that they heard his viewpoint since he connected Christianity with Judaism. They had been informed that it was being spoken against everywhere. We do not know if they had not had any exchange with the Jewish Christians in Rome or they were ignoring their personal encounters with them. They did know that there was much being said about the Christians. It would seem that Christianity had no impact at all on them.

Paul Proclaims the Gospel from Moses and the Prophets

Acts 28:23 Plans were made to meet Paul. A larger group than the previous group came together at Paul's lodging place. Paul took the day explaining God's Kingdom and tried to show them that Jesus was the Christ by using Moses' law and the words of the prophets. He made a careful and detailed explanation. He tried to persuade them through his teaching the same way he had approached Jews in all the cities he had visited.

The Jews Response to Paul's Message

Acts 28:24 Some of those attending were convinced by Paul's explanation. Some began to be persuaded. Others would not believe. They continued to disbelieve.

Acts 28:25 There was discord among those present. It was a time that ended like music—out of harmony and discordant. The meeting was over as Paul stated that the Holy Spirit had been right when he had spoken to the Jews' ancestors by quoting from the prophet Isaiah. Paul spoke to the Jews about "your forefathers." By speaking of "your" rather than "our", Paul was disassociating himself from the Jews and aligning himself with the Gentiles.

Paul Announces the Jews' Rejection and the Gospel's Going to the Gentiles

Acts 28:26 Then, Paul quotes from Isaiah 6:9-10 which serves as a sad dirge of the fate of the Jews for their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. This is the same verse

Jesus used in John 12:40—teaching about the disbelief of the Jews. The Jews had heard the news of Jesus but they showed no understanding or acceptance of the truth that had been presented to them.

Acts 28:27 The Jews became hardened and stony (similar to stones). It reminds us of children who take their fingers and hold them over their ears and pretend that they do not hear or hold their hands over their eyes so that they cannot see. The quotation states that, otherwise, the Jews could have seen and heard and, most importantly, understood with their souls. If they had done that, God would have received, forgiven, and saved them.

Acts 28:28 Paul then states that the gospel had been given to the Gentiles and that this group would respond to God. He states that the Gentiles would hear and respond in contrast to the Jews not hearing and rejecting the Gospel.

Acts 28:29 Special note for the Bible Study teacher: Many of the earliest copiers (scribes) of the New Testament documents did not include this verse. A few times, a person who was copying a New Testament book (thinking, perhaps, that he was preparing his copy just for his own family or for just one church) would know something that seemed to him to complete an idea or illuminate an event. On rare occasions he (and it was almost always a male) might be tempted to add that small comment. In modern translations of the Bible, the translating teams review and compare all of the early manuscripts available. Today, that would include at least 70,000 portions of the New Testament that were written in Greek by early scribes.

Sometimes, today's translators must make a judgment call, based on their best knowledge and lots of prayer, whether the original writer (in this case, Dr. Luke) included a comment or whether it was probably added for clarification at a later time by a scribe. In the case of verse 29, the comment obviously is logical and valid as to its truth. However, if it is missing from a number of the major early documents, then that should be noted by either marking it as a probable addition—or by omitting the comment altogether. Most modern translations follow one or the other procedures in this case. **The King James Bible** and the **New King James Bible** both include the verse without comment. The **New International Bible** omits it without comment. The **New American Standard Bible** includes it in brackets and with comments.

Paul Continues His Faithful Witness of Jesus

Acts 28:30 Two years passed while Paul lived in Rome in his rental house. Two years was not an unusual delay of justice. Probably this was due to the loss of official papers in the shipwreck Paul and his fellow passengers had, by the fact that his accusers had not shown up, and by the difficulty of getting the witnesses together. During the two years Paul received graciously all the people who came to him. He did not have the freedom to travel but he did have had the freedom to proclaim the gospel as it had been revealed to him. And he did.

Acts 28:31 It was without interference that he preached and taught. He was not hesitant or timid in proclaiming Jesus Christ as Saviour. Not only did he preach and teach but he wrote the letters to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon. All this time he was chained to a soldier. There is no indication of the number of different Roman guards who heard the gospel as they were chained to Paul during these two years.

They were, in the real sense, a captive audience. Dr. Luke brings his record of the apostles to a triumphant conclusion. The book of Acts ends with the words ***“Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.”***

Your Goal as the leader of this Bible Study:

Re-read the above commentary on verse 31. Guide your congregation to consider that each and every person who knows Jesus as our Saviour and Lord can boldly share Christ with others as God’s Spirit gives us opportunity. The very word “boldly” does not mean that it is easy. The word suggests that we do something in spite of shyness, difficulties, possible retribution, or fear. We simply do it anyway. God offers us many opportunities to minister, serve, and do good deeds. But the primary cause for which we live as a child of God is to share His good news with others. The same rings true for our church.

For Personal Reflection:

1. **What have I learned from this study?**

2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc. Children who stay with their parents in the Youth/Adult study should have the material on worship as suggested in **The Children's Corner** at the beginning of this **Unit** of studies. (Ask your leader who downloads the studies for those suggestions).

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Acts 28:16-31

Background Text

Acts 27 - 28

Main Idea

Paul's ministry in Rome suggests the accomplishment of his mission and also of the church's mission of being Jesus' witnesses to all people.

Questions to Explore

What am I doing with my life? What is my church doing with its life?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to decide on ways they can accomplish more faithfully their mission in life.

Connect with Life:

Begin with sharing this comment: If you want to learn to play golf you will want to watch a beginning golfer play. By watching this beginning golfer, you will learn how to play great golf. You can expect to win many tournaments using the knowledge you gain from this individual who has just started playing golf and knows very little about the game.

Urge the group to question the idea: Is this what you would do? Get responses.

Seek responses: Why? (You will get answers like, “You can’t learn best from a person who doesn’t know how.” “You’d only learn bad habits.” “You need more help than that.”)

Question the congregation: From whom could you best learn golf or any other game? Keep probing until someone suggests that you could learn best from an experienced, successful golfer.

Then ask: Why?

State: A person needs a good model; a good example; a good pattern. This is true not only in learning golf but in Christian living. Today we will look at the model Christian life that Paul lived. He is a successful model and pattern for our Christian living today.

Guide the Study:

Leader: As much as possible, have another person read the Scripture each time that it needs to be read. But, use good judgment. Unless a non-reader or a poor reader knows for sure that you will not call on him/her—that person may lose the whole lesson while worrying that you might call on him/her to read. Know who of your people are comfortable reading aloud.

Comment: Paul was on trial before Festus and Felix in Jerusalem. To avoid being killed by the Jews he appeals to Caesar and is sent to Rome for trial. Today’s passage tells of his experiences in Rome.

Continue: Let’s read in Acts 28:16 to see what Paul’s living situation was in Rome.

Solicit an answer: Where did he live? (He lived by himself).

Now ask: Who lived with him? (The soldier who was guarding him).

Explain this further by using the commentary on v. 16 in the **Teacher Preparation**.

Look for honest opinions to this: How would you feel if you had to do your work with your right hand chained to a soldier?

Allow time for responses.

Guide the group: Let’s look at Acts 28:17 to see Paul’s response to the chains that held him.

Read Acts 28:17.

Ask: What did Paul do even though he was chained to a soldier? (He called a meeting of the leaders of the Jews).

Now ask: What did he say to them? (He explained that he had done nothing against the Jewish people or the customs of their ancestors).

Share: Let's look at Paul's defense before these Jewish leaders.

Call on someone to read Acts 28:17b-20.

Explain: Paul is telling this story from Rome where he has arrived under house arrest. He tells it to the Jewish leadership who have gathered at Paul's rented house.

On a sheet of newsprint, craft paper, etc. list the actions in this passage and summarize them.

- Arrested in Jerusalem
- Turned over to Romans
- Examined
- They wanted to release Paul
- The Jews objected
- Paul appealed to Caesar

Ask: Why did Paul call this meeting of the Jews? Look in v. 20 for the answer.

Pause to receive answers. (Because of the hope of Israel- that is, the promised Messiah).

Add to this understanding by having someone look up Acts 26:6 to find another of Paul's references to this hope.

Seek answers to the following questions:

1. What did the Jewish leaders answer in v.21-22? (They had no news from Jerusalem and they wanted to hear more).
2. What did they do as recorded in v. 22-23? (They called a meeting).
3. What was the response? (Came in larger numbers to the meeting).
4. Where was this meeting? (In Paul's house).

5. What happened at this meeting? (Paul preached all day. He tried to convince them about Jesus. He used the Law of Moses and the Prophets to try to persuade them).

6. What was the response as shown in v. 24? (Some were convinced. Others were not convinced).

Tell how the meeting ended by reading v. 25-27. Explain Paul's use of the verses from Isaiah. See commentary in your "**Teacher Preparation**" material for help.

Ask: Is it possible today to hear and not understand?

Allow time for members to discuss how we can hear the truth of God and not respond to it. Comment on God's grace in our lives that allowed us to hear and understand. That grace may have come through Godly parents, good friends or a life circumstance that brought us to salvation. It is a gift of God for which we cannot take credit.

Read v. 28. Paul indicates in this verse that although many of the Jews had rejected the good news that it would go to the Gentiles many of whom would respond to it.

Again refer to scripture: Let's look at Paul's ministry there in Rome as recorded in v. 30-31. Have a person read Acts 28:30-31.

Solicit a response to each of the following questions about the passage:

1. How long was he there? (Two years).
2. Where was he? (In his own rented house).
3. What was his reception of guests who came to see him? (Welcomed all who came).
4. What did he do? (Preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ).
5. How did he preach and teach? (Boldly and without hindrance).

Leader: Check your time at this point. If you are out of time, simply read the following list of Paul's attitudes and actions and then ask someone to pray that each participant would learn to imitate Paul in boldly sharing the gospel. Then close the session and move into the "Worship Time".

Investigate this question with the church: What are some of the qualities Paul had and some of the actions he performed?

Help your members list these. It would be helpful to write these on a sheet of paper or on a white board. **Teacher suggestion: If you write while listing these, just summarize them on the board or paper using key words suggested with underlining below.**

He did not let his being a prisoner and being chained to a soldier hinder his ministry.

He immediately began proclaiming the Gospel.

He witnessed even though not all responded.

He spent long hours in his witnessing.

He used scripture to attempt to persuade people to accept Christ.

He did not hesitate to confront opposition.

He boldly witnessed.

His message was about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Go down the above list of qualities and actions one by one and ask these questions that match each item.

How much do you let obstacles hinder your ministry?

How much do you put off witnessing?

Does a lack of response keep you from ministry?

Do you limit your time in ministry?

Are you able to use scripture adequately in witnessing?

Are you able to confront opposition?

Are you a bold witness?

Does your ministry point to Jesus?

Give an adequate amount of time for members to contemplate on each question.

Have a time of prayer that we might follow the example of Paul in being faithful to our mission for Jesus.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life **Acts 28:16-31**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Chained to Someone

Imagine how it would be to be tied by the right hand to a soldier all day and night for two years. Do you think you could become friends with that soldier? How comfortable would you be carrying on conversations with people who came to visit with you?

What difference would it make in the way you go about your daily life if you were chained to someone who was watching to see if your life measured up to the words you had been preaching?

How does your actual life compare to the above hypothetical situation?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***How to Accomplish Your Mission in Life***
Acts 28:16-31**Beginning the Service:**

Sing "Jesus, Name Above All Names", **Maranatha Praise Chorus**, Expanded 3rd Edition, #47.

Read Luke 1:32 ***"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High"***.

Sing "Jesus Is the Sweetest Name I Know", **The Worship Hymnal**, (2008), #205.

Sing "His Name Is Wonderful", **The Worship Hymnal**, (2008), #315.

Offering:

Pray: Lord, we thank you for the beauty of your name, for the comfort and strength it brings just to say "Jesus". Bless our offering today, Lord, and use it in your kingdom's work as you will use us today and everyday.

Praying for the World

We thought last week about the 10/40 window. (Ask: Who remembers what is meant by the 10/40 window?) Included in this group are countries in West Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and East Asia. Those who have been involved in bringing the gospel to these countries emphasize the power and importance of prayer. In every example of a mighty work of the Spirit of the Lord, prayer was the key factor. In some cases, volunteer teams traveled to a country in the 10/40 window for the purpose of praying on-site for the people and work there. In others, intercessors at home and in churches were instrumental in the work of the Holy Spirit. May we pray today that the people of the 10/40 window have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond

to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Serving God Successfully **Acts 28:30-31**

Introduction:

Have you ever watched children measure their height? They want to record their growth progress. Parents often use marks on the wall to see this growth. A missionary family once lived in the same home for several years. They carefully marked the growth progress of their three children on a convenient bedroom door frame. When they changed ministries to another city, another missionary couple moved into the home. Several years later, the first missionary family visited the other couple in their former home. They discovered that, when the new family repainted the walls of the house, they carefully painted around the children's height chart. They said that it made them feel close to those children whenever they looked at the record of how they had grown up in that home.

Luke closes Acts with a great progress report. His account begins in chapter one with a few believers and closes with the Gospel being preached without hindrance. Thousands are carrying the good news of Jesus to the entire world. Paul served God successfully. We can also serve God successfully if we follow Paul's principles in Acts 28:30-31.

I. We can serve God successfully when we share his message.

Paul is under house arrest as Acts ends. Luke summarizes two years in our text's two verses. Paul is chained to a guard and under house arrest (Philippians 1:13-14, Acts 28:20, Ephesians 6:20). He continues to share God's message effectively. He was able to explain the gospel to Hebrew and Gentile visitors. While he was there, he wrote Colossians, Philemon, Philippians, and Ephesians. Among the many church leaders that spent time with him were Luke, Timothy, Tychicus, Epaphroditus, Aristarchus, and Mark. He was constantly witnessing and many of his guards were saved! Luke tells us that he proclaimed the Kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are also able to share the same message. If we will, we can serve God successfully.

II. We can serve God successfully when we follow his method.

Like Paul, we can also serve God successfully if we follow this method. Paul boldly preached and taught about the Kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Preaching, or proclamation, is a powerful declaration of the truth about Jesus. Teaching is instruction that leads to a forceful witness and persuasion of the truth. Both are similar

and essential to serve God successfully. We need to take every opportunity to preach and teach the truth to anyone. Are you ready?

III. We can serve God successfully when we accept his mission.

We must accept God's mission if we serve him successfully. Paul spent his entire life after his conversion carrying out God's mission. He accepted the mission as a life long assignment with the unlimited power God gives (Philippians 4:13). He took his assignment (Acts 1:8) personally. He set no limits on what Christ could do. He shared with boldness. He did not let shyness get in his way. As each elite soldier took his shift with Paul, he received the gospel as Paul shared with his listeners. Many people responded to the gospel, including many of his guards (Philippians 1:13).

Call to Commitment:

Paul asks us, ***"How can they hear without someone preaching to them?"*** (Romans 10:14) How many people have we taught? To whom have we preached? We must ***"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season...."*** (2 Timothy 4:2).

We can serve God successfully if we follow Paul's example of sharing God's message of grace, follow his method of preaching and teaching, and accept his mission of winning our world with the gospel.

Concluding the Service:

We have thought today of people in the 10/40 window. We have prayed for an effective witness and ministry there and for the listeners to have eyes to see and ears to hear. As we conclude today, let us pray for ourselves, our church and our ministry. May we preach and teach this week as God gives us opportunity. May we remember that there are in our circle of influence people who may only listen to us. How can they hear without our preaching to them?

Close by singing "A Shield About Me", **Maranatha Praise** Chorus, Expanded 3rd Edition, #23 or "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross". (Various hymnals)

Have the children in your group prepare the following choral reading before the group meets together.

**Boys: Go to this people and say,
You listen, but you don't understand.
You see, but don't know what you are seeing.
Because people's hearts are not listening to God.**

**Girls: If they would listen and understand
And think about what they see,
They would stop and turn to God
And He would help them.**

**Boys and Girls together:
Help us, Lord, to listen and see
the things that you will teach us today.**

Paraphrased from Acts 28:26-27