



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** God in the Storms of Life  
Spring Year 4, Lesson 52

# Prisoner in Jerusalem

**Take Home Point:** \*Take a stand for Jesus.

\*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

**Bible Event:** Acts 20:22-24, 21:40 through 22:29

**Key Verse:** 1 Corinthians 15:58, "So, then, brothers and sisters, don't let anyone move you off the foundation of your faith. Always excel in the work you do for the Lord. You know that the hard work you do for the Lord is not pointless."

**We will help kids know:**

- The Bible Event of Paul's bold witness before the Sanhedrin counsel in Jerusalem.
- God calls us to take a stand for him.
- God's strength helps us stand firm.




**We will help kids feel:**

- Inspired to be bold about taking a stand.
- Challenged to do what God wants.

**We will help kids do:**

- Play the game "Off Balance" that challenges them to keep their footing.
- Read the Bible for verses that talk about standing firm.
- Help complete story examples of kids taking a stand.

## THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<b>Small Group Warm-Up</b> 	3	Kids play the game “Off Balance” and share examples of standing firm for Jesus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• none</li> </ul>
<b>Large Group</b> 	4  8  10  12	<b>Overview</b>  <b>Puppet Presentation:</b> “Gordy’s Ready to Win”— Gordy wants a chance to win at “Off Balance” but cheats in doing so.  <b>Video:</b> <i>Visual Bible: Acts</i> ---Acts 21:40-22:29 shows Paul’s example of standing up for Jesus.  <b>Puppet Conclusion:</b> “Gordy’s Ready to Win”—Gordy learns that God gives us the power to stand up for Jesus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gordy</li> <li>• rain gear for the presenter such as a raincoat, boots, umbrella, goggles</li> <li>• squirt gun or spray bottle</li> <li>• masking tape</li> <li>• tacks</li> <li>• video, <i>Visual Bible: Acts</i>, published by Visual Bible International, 1997—order from <a href="http://www.gocccc.com/vi/biacdvd1of.html">http://www.gocccc.com/vi/biacdvd1of.html</a></li> </ul>
<b>Small Group Application</b> 	4	Kids tell how they can take a stand for Jesus in specific situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• none</li> </ul>

# Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



**Purpose:** *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

## Play the Game: Off Balance

To play the game “Off Balance,” have the kids find a partner and face each other about a yard apart. Have them stand with their feet shoulder width apart and lightly lean on each other’s hands with palms together.

The object is to try to get the other person off balance or to move one foot. When you say, “go,” kids can push harder or possibly bring their hands back quickly to make their partner move.

Play several rounds of this. Kids may change partners after a couple of rounds. Then gather together to discuss the following:

**Sometimes we use the words “take a stand” to mean that we stand up for what is right. We do the right thing even though others may put pressure on us *not* to do the right thing.**

**For example, let’s pretend that someone at school asked you to share your answers on a paper to help them cheat. You said, “No” but they continued to say, “Please, just this once. Please.” If you continued to say “no” and not give in to the pressure, you took a stand for something that was right.**

**Can you think of another example of taking a stand for what is right?**

Give kids time to share. Then say:

**Today we will learn that God wants us to *\*take a stand for Jesus*. This is more than just doing something that is right or wrong. This is taking a stand and being known as one who follows Jesus.**

**Today we will look at the life of the apostle Paul. He took a stand for Jesus even though people wanted to beat him up because of it.**

# Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible Event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

**Puppet Presentation:** “Gordy’s Ready to Win”—Gordy wants a chance to win at “Off Balance” but cheats in doing so.

**Video:** *Visual Bible: Acts---Acts 21:40-22:29* shows Paul’s example of standing up for Jesus.

**Puppet Conclusion:** “Gordy’s Ready to Win”—Gordy learns that God gives us the power to stand up for Jesus.

# Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible Event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

*Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.*

## Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Acts 21:40-22:29 in their Bibles.

**What did Saul, before his name was changed to Paul, do to followers of Jesus?** (*Acts 22:4. He persecuted them and had them thrown into prison until they were killed.*)

**What happened to Paul (Saul) on his trip to Damascus?** (*Acts 22:6-11. A bright light from heaven flashed and he fell to the ground blinded.*)

**Whose voice did Paul hear in the bright light and what did he say?** (*Acts 22:7-8. Paul heard Jesus say, “Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?... I’m Jesus from Nazareth, the one you’re persecuting.”*)

**When Paul went to Ananias to have his sight restored, what did Ananias say God had chosen Paul to do?** (*Acts 22:14-16. To be a witness of Jesus and tell everyone what he had seen and heard.*)

## **Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?**

**Why do you think Paul was able to *\*take a stand for Jesus* even when he was criticized and beaten?** *(It must have been an amazing experience to see Jesus on the road to Damascus, and to hear him speak. Paul's conversion changed his beliefs. Knowing God had chosen him and Jesus was with him gave him strength.)*

## **Application Questions: What does this mean to me?**

**What experiences have you had that make you strong in knowing Jesus as your Savior?**

**How can we be like Paul and stand up for Jesus?** *(Have faith and believe Jesus is who he says he is and that he is always with us. He has chosen us to share our stories about him with others, too. Jesus will give us his strength.)*

**The key verse for today from 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, “So, then, brothers and sisters, don’t let anyone move you off the foundation of your faith. Always excel in the work you do for the Lord. You know that the hard work you do for the Lord is not pointless.”**

Explain to kids that you will read a few situations and would like them to share how they might take a stand for Jesus in those situations. Have kids think about not doing just the right thing, but that they are doing so to be a witness for Jesus.

### Situation #1

**Kiley was invited to her friend Ellie’s house for a sleep over party. All the girls were playing in the basement when Ellie found a movie. “You have got to see this movie,” she said to her friends. “When my mom and dad go to bed, we’ll watch this.”**

**She put the movie in as soon as her parents were in bed and they began to watch. Before the first minute of the movie was done, Kiley heard several bad words that let her know that this movie was not a movie her parents would approve of her watching.**

**Kiley asked, “What is this movie rated?”**

**“It’s rated R, but its okay. I’ve seen it before. It’s not really that bad. Let’s just go ahead and watch the rest of it,” Ellie told her friends.**

**If you were Kiley in this situation, what would you do? How would you take a stand and do what Jesus wants?**

### Situation #2

Chloe was standing with her friends on the playground when one of her friends pointed out another girl sitting all by herself. Chloe knew this girl, Sadie, because they rode the same bus. Chloe liked her a lot. Sadie was very quiet and Chloe knew it was tough in her home because her mom and dad were getting a divorce.

Chloe's friends began to make fun of Sadie and say things about Sadie that were not true. If you were in this situation, what would you do?

How would you *\*take a stand for Jesus?*

### Situation #3

John was going to have a few friends over for the afternoon. He was so excited because he always had so much fun with these friends. His mom asked him to pick up in the family room before his friends came and reminded him that they were not allowed to throw balls in the house.

The room was cleaned and John's friends began to arrive. They were all excited about getting together. "What should we do first?" one friend asked. Another friend picked up a football and began throwing it around.

John was a little nervous about tossing the football, but he was sure that nothing would happen. John's little brother came into the family room just as John passed the football a little too hard and hit a lamp. Everyone was quiet as they saw the broken lamp on the floor.

"Are you going to tell your mom?" one friend asked. "Why don't you tell her your little brother did it?" said someone else. "We can help you make up a story about what happened," said a third friend.

What would you do in this situation? How would you *\*take a stand for Jesus?*

### Situation #4

Joshua noticed that a good friend, Jacob, was not in school today. He hoped that Jacob was just sick and not that his grandfather had died. You see, his grandfather had been sick with cancer for a while and was not doing very well.

When Joshua got home, he called Jacob right away. Jacob said his grandfather died early that morning. He began telling Joshua about

all the things he and his grandfather use to do together. He was really going to miss him.

Jacob said that someone who had come to visit told him he would see his grandfather in heaven some day. But Jacob really didn't know what that meant. "I am a good person. I'm sure I will go to heaven someday and see my grandfather again," he told Joshua.

Joshua had known Jacob for a long time and knew that he never went to church. Talking about God was something they never discussed. He didn't want to hinder his relationship with his best friend by possibly offending him with the truth about heaven and telling Jacob about Jesus.

What would you do in this situation? How would you *\*take a stand for Jesus?*

Just like in our game of "Off Balance" and standing firm, our Bible verse reminds us "*....don't let anyone move you off the foundation of your faith.*"

Let's end with a word of prayer and ask God to help us *\*take a stand for Jesus* this week.

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for giving us the power to take a stand for you. We pray you will give us the boldness we need to take that stand this week. Help us know what to say in each situation we face this week. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

Encourage kids to pray for any challenges they may be facing especially if it would cause them not to stand up for Jesus. Also let them pray for any other specific needs.

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# Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

*The presenter in this series will be dressed in a raincoat with appropriate rain gear such as an umbrella, boots, and goggles. He/she needs a squirt gun or spray bottle to illustrate the storms of life.*

## Gordy's Ready to Win Puppet Presentation

*Supplies: two tacks taped onto Gordy's palms with the pointed ends sticking outward;  
video: The Visual Bible: Acts, produced by Visual Bible International*

**Presenter:** Boys and girls, should we call for Gordy?

*Kids call Gordy. Gordy... Gordy... Gordy.*

Gordy: Hi, guys. Well, I am finally ready.

**Presenter:** Ready for what?

Gordy: I am ready *now* to play *Off Balance*.

**Presenter:** Didn't we just get done playing that game?

Gordy: We did. But I wasn't ready then. *Now* I am ready to go. I didn't win any of those games.

**Presenter:** So, *now* you are ready?

Gordy: You bet, and I am going to win! I am tired of losing.

**Presenter:** Do you want to play a match right now? We could do that.

Take notice of Gordy's hands.

**Hold on a minute. What is taped on your hands?**

Gordy: Nothin'. *(Tries to hide hands.)*

**Presenter:** It looks like something.

Gordy: Just a little bit of tape.

Take hold of Gordy's hand and look closer.



**Presenter:** It looks like it is more than just “a little bit of tape!” What else is on your hands?

Gordy: Nothin’!

**Presenter:** It looks like there are sharp things poking through.

Gordy: Oh, that! It’s nothin’.

Show the kids Gordy’s hands.

**Presenter:** Gordy, those are tacks taped to your hands.

Gordy: (*Trying to sound surprised.*) How did they get there?

**Presenter:** Gordy, did you tape tacks onto your hands so you could cheat and win at *Off Balance*?

Gordy: Well, I was just getting tired of being pushed around.

**Presenter:** Gordy, cheating is not the answer. Today we played that game so we could learn about something more important.

Gordy: Like how not to be pushed around?

**Presenter:** No, like how to take a stand.

Gordy: Same difference!

**Presenter:** Not really. Let me explain it to you another way. First, let’s go ahead and have someone come up and play *Off Balance* with you.

Gordy: Wait a minute. I said I am tired of being pushed around.

**Presenter:** Gordy, let me talk to you for just a second.

Whisper into Gordy’s ear.

Gordy: (*Nodding.*) Oh, I see. I’m ready to play.

**Presenter:** Okay, let’s invite someone to come up. But first we need to take these off your hands.

Remove the tape and tacks and select a volunteer.

**I need the two of you to get into position for *Off Balance*.**

Gordy: I'm ready, but you will have to trust me that my feet are in the right place. I know I am going to win this time.

**Presenter: What do you think, kids? Can Gordy win this time?**

Wait for response.

**Okay. When I count to three, then you both can begin. One, two...**

On "three," push the volunteer so he/she loses his/her footing

**.... three.**

Gordy: That's right, that's right, I win, I win!

*The kids will probably say that you cheated or it's not fair.*

**Presenter: What do you mean it's not fair? I didn't explain to you *all* the rules. You see, in this game you can have someone help you. It may not be fair, but it's not cheating. When someone else helps one person, there is no way the other can win.**

Gordy: Oh, yeah, Gordy wins, Gordy wins!

**Presenter: Hold on, Gordy. The only reason you won is that you had someone stronger than you helping you. That is the secret to taking a stand.**

**The reason we can take a stand for Jesus is because he gives us power when we trust him.**

**Let's give a hand clap to our volunteer.**

Have volunteer return to his/her seat.

## **Video**

**Presenter: Today we are beginning a new series called, "God in the Storms of Life."**

Gordy: Is that why you are wearing that goofy outfit?

**Presenter: It sure is. For the next few weeks, we will study Paul's third missionary journey in the book of Acts. We will see that he went through many storms just like we do. Paul went through hard times in his life, not just outside storms. We will see how God is always**

with us during storms, or hard times, to help us. This raincoat reminds us that God is here to help and protect us.

The Bible video we will watch today begins in Acts 21:40 with Paul returning to Jerusalem. He said this before he got there. Acts 20:22-24:

***“I am determined to go to Jerusalem now. I don’t know what will happen to me there. However, the Holy Spirit warns me in every city that imprisonment and suffering are waiting for me. But I don’t place any value on my own life. I want to finish the race I’m running. I want to carry out the mission I received from the Lord Jesus--- the mission of testifying to the Good News of God’s kindness.”***

Paul knew he was going to go through a storm, but it didn’t matter. He still wanted to go to Jerusalem and testify to the Good News of Jesus. This is what happened when he got there.

The religious leaders grabbed Paul in the temple. They said mean things about him and tried to kill him. A big fight broke out and the Roman soldiers came to see what was going on. They calmed things down and Paul was able to talk.

He told the people listening how he met Jesus and that his life had changed.

Show the video, *Visual Bible: Acts*, produced by Visual Bible International. The clip covers Acts 21:40 through 22:29. Approximately 6 minutes.

### Video Review

After the video, say to kids:

**I am going to ask a couple of questions to see how well you listened.**

Choose three kids to answer questions and bring them up front. Take out your spray bottle or squirt gun.

**There is a bit of a catch in how you answer the questions. If you answer your question correctly, you get to squirt me, but if *you* get it wrong, I get to squirt you! Let’s find out what it means to *\*take a stand for Jesus*.**

**Question 1: What was Paul doing before he met Jesus on the road to Damascus? (*He was persecuting Christians.*)**

If the volunteer answers correctly, he/she gets to squirt you. If not, you get to squirt him/her.

**Question 2: This is a harder question. Why do you think the counsel of religious leaders in Jerusalem were trying to kill Paul?** *(They had killed Jesus and thought that all followers of Jesus were false teachers.)*

Do the squirting.

**Question 3: This is the hardest question of all. Are you ready? What side of the chicken has the most feathers?** *(The outside. ☺)*

Do the squirting.

## **Gordy's Ready to Win**

### **Puppet Conclusion**

**Gordy:** You pulled a funny one there!! That sounded like something I would do.

**Presenter:** I was just playing a joke, but I wanted to make a point about something.

**Gordy:** That you should know your jokes better when you get up on stage?

**Presenter:** Ha, ha. No, that we have to be ready. Sometimes, even when it is not quite fair, we might have someone get at us.

**Gordy:** What do you mean?

**Presenter:** Well, did Paul have people trying to get at him?

**Gordy:** Yeah, he did.

**Presenter:** Did he do anything wrong?

**Gordy:** No, he was just talking about Jesus.

**Presenter:** Right. So, it wasn't fair that people tried to get at him. But what did he do?

**Gordy:** He took a stand.

**Presenter:** Gordy, the reason we can take a stand is because Jesus took a stand for us. He took a stand for us when he gave his life for us on the cross. Because he gave his life for us, and if we trust him as our Savior, we can say we want to take a stand for him. We want other people to know how he has helped us and how he can help them.

**Gordy, would you pray for that now?**

Gordy: Sure. Let's pray. Dear God, we need help when we take a stand for Jesus. Sometimes it is hard and we don't want to say anything, so we need your help. Help us be like Paul who took a stand for Jesus even if people tried to beat him up. In Jesus' name, Amen.