



Paul's journey

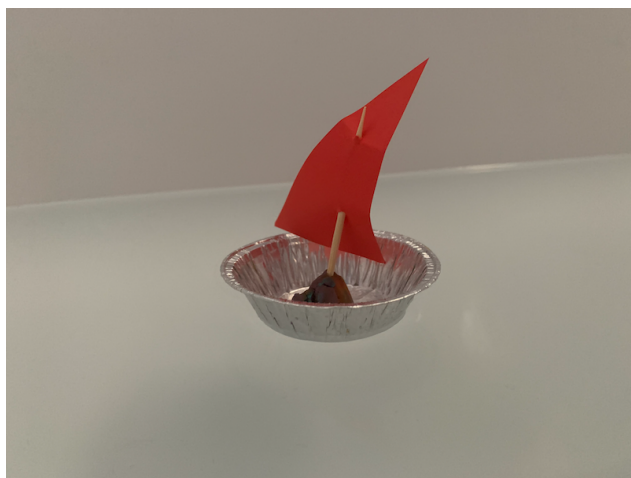
By Becky May

How did Paul keep trusting God even in the storms? How about us?

Activity time

Try these activities and see if you can start guessing what might happen in our story today. If you can't get exactly these materials, just see what you can find around the house instead!

1 Sailing boats



You will need: empty plastic containers or foil dishes; playdough; modelling clay; straws; skewers or cocktail sticks; paper; pens; scissors; sticky tape

Gather together some clean recycling and build some boats together. Can you include a sail? What other boats can you create? Test your sailing boats out together, perhaps in the bath or paddling pool. Will they reach the other side?

Talk about some of the journeys you have been on. Where did you go? How did you get there? Did you have a smooth journey or did something go wrong along the way? Paul set out on many journeys, teaching people about Jesus. Sometimes he travelled over land; other times he set sail across the sea. How do you think he felt as he set out to new places?

2 Storm in a bottle



You will need: an empty plastic bottle; water; washing-up liquid; decorations such as sequins, foil, pom poms, beads; sticky tape (optional)

Fill a plastic bottle almost to the top with water (you may need a funnel for this) and add a tiny drop of washing-up liquid. Choose some small objects to put in, such as shiny beads or sequins, pom poms or even kitchen foil rolled into small balls. Tightly seal the bottle (you may want to add tape around the lid to secure it). Shake the bottle and hold it as the contents settle. Can you see a storm in your bottle?

Talk about how Paul was once caught in a terrible storm which wrecked the ship! How do you think Paul and the crew must have felt? What do you think he said to God about this? The last year has felt 'stormy' for us at times. How does that make you feel? What do you want to say to God about how you are feeling?

3 The floor is ocean!

You will need: sofa cushions; blankets; chairs; anything else you can find around the house

This is a variation of the game 'The floor is lava' and can be played inside or out. Set up some obstacles around your space to represent islands or planks of wood from the wrecked ship. These are safe spaces which you can stand on; the floor or ground in between is ocean and must not be stepped on or you will sink. Set a starting point and a finishing point and try to get your whole group across from one side of the space to the other. If anyone steps on the ground, they should dramatically sink into the water!

Talk about how Paul and the crew may have felt as their ship was wrecked. God kept them safe. What does it mean that God keeps us safe? What does that look like? How does it feel?

Celebration

Paul went on many, many journeys, both close to home and much further away. This is the story of what happened on one of Paul's journeys. Read the story from [Acts 27](#) or share the text below, perhaps forming a blanket ship to sit in, as you tell the story.

Paul and his team decided they would go to Italy, to Rome, the head of the empire all around them. There were some delays in setting out and the weather was getting worse, as winter approached.

‘This will not go well,’ warned Paul. ‘We could lose the ship, the cargo, even our lives!’

But the ship’s captain disagreed. He knew the oceans; all would be well. They decided to set off for Crete, where they could rest over the winter.

The ship set off, with a good wind in their sails. They got closer and closer to Crete when suddenly the wind changed direction and a strong wind blew. The waves on the sea grew larger, the wind grew stronger and the boat rocked side to side, up and down.

The crew started throwing cargo they didn’t need overboard. The storm was so bad, they couldn’t tell if it was day or night. They began to worry that they wouldn’t survive!

Paul stood up and said, ‘You should have listened to me! I told you not to set sail! But do not worry, we will lose this ship, but we will all survive. An angel appeared to me last night and said, “God has promised you that he will save the lives of everyone sailing with you.” So have courage. I trust in God that everything will happen as he has promised.’

The storm continued and the ship was destroyed as it was washed up on to a rocky shore. But everyone on board was saved.

The boat landed in Crete and the men recovered, ready to continue with their good news spreading work.

- How do you think the crew felt on board the ship?
- Why was Paul so confident?
- Why do you think he kept his trust in God, even in the middle of the storm?
- What storms do we experience?
- What does it mean for us to trust God?

You could sing or listen to [‘My Lighthouse’ by Rend Collective](#) and think about what it means for God to bring us safe to shore.

You could finish by saying the [Lord’s Prayer](#) and the [Messy Grace](#).

Mealtime

Have a meal of fish and chips to remind you of Paul’s time at sea, or if you’re feeling more adventurous, try some Maltese foods – perhaps bread, oil, olives and capers.