

I'm Confident

What's It All About?

Viv went to her friend Michelle's house to get the school notes she had missed while out sick.

"Hi Michelle, I came to borrow your notes," Viv said as she came in and sat on the sofa. She noticed a huge pile of books and papers on the end table. "What is that stuff?"

"I'm doing some research for my youth Bible study." "You actually believe that fairy-tale stuff? I thought you were smarter than that."

"Viv, the story of Christ's life, death, and resurrection is no fairy tale. It's truth."

"Not according to my brother, Asmar. He explained it all to me."

Michelle handed Viv her notes. "Here are the notes you need. And here's something more important—a booklet about Christ. You should read it and come with me to Bible study to learn the truth."

Was Michelle right to defend her faith? Why or why not? How do people respond when you share your faith? Are you ever rejected? Why should you defend your faith, regardless of the response you get?



Learning From God

Paul was on trial in front of King Agrippa for preaching the Gospel. His accusers were not believers in Christ and wanted Paul silenced. Agrippa gave Paul the opportunity to speak and what do you think Paul did? He testified about the truth of the Gospel message he preached. Paul demonstrated that you have to be bold when witnessing to nonbelievers.

Acts 26:19–32, NIV—"So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. 20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. 21 That is

why some Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. **22** But God has helped me to this very day; so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen— **23** that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles." **24** At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane." **25** "I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable. **26** The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. **27** King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do." **28** Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" **29** Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains." **30** The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and

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those sitting with them. **31** After they left the room, they began saying to one another, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment." **32** Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

No matter what people may think, you cannot allow their opinions to hinder you from being a witness for Christ. Some people may reject you and your message, but God will never leave nor forsake you. The Holy Spirit will give you strength. Hopefully, some will come to believe as you do through your witness.

What I Have Learned

Answer the following questions.

1. What did Paul tell the people to do (Acts 26:20)?

2. What was Fetus's response to Paul (v. 24)?

3. What did Paul suggest about King Agrippa (v. 27)?

4. What conclusion was made about Paul (vv. 31–32)?

Keep In Mind

"I am not insane, most excellent Festus,' Paul replied. 'What I am saying is true and reasonable'" (Acts 26:25, NIV).

Choosing What's Best

How can you build confidence so you can boldly share your faith?

Doing My Part

This week you are challenged to defend your faith in spite of any rejection and persecution you may face. Jesus will be your defender. If you stand for Him, He will stand with you. 

Help In A Crisis

What's It All About?

"Hey, Mike, wait! I want to talk to you." Alex ran to catch up with Mike on the walk to school. "What's going on? I never see you at choir practice anymore."

"Alex, I don't have time for choir."

"Why? You were one of our best singers. What happened?"

"When I stay after school, I run into Vincent and his friends. They make fun of me and call me all kinds of names. Last week, I got beat up and they broke my eyeglasses. My parents talked to the principal, but he wasn't much help. So, my parents told me to come straight home."

"But what if they bother you during the school day?" Alex asked.

"They won't," Mike said. "I have a plan to make sure they don't. I'll get them before they ever get me."

Alex didn't like what he heard. He had no idea what Mike's plan was, but he didn't like the sound of it. "You know that God doesn't want us taking our problems into our own hands. Whatever you have planned, it's not God's will or way. Come to my house with me. My dad will talk to your parents. The adults will figure this out. Not us."

How do you handle problems? Do you ever panic and act in a way that makes the matter worse? What advice would you give to Mike? Who can he turn to for help? How can God help him?



Learning From God

All people face crises at some point in their lives. Their response may depend on their relationship with Christ. In today's lesson, Paul's behavior serves as an example for all Christians.

Acts 27:1–2, 33–44, NIV—When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. 2 We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. 33 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days,"

he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food—you haven't eaten anything. 34 Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." 35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. 36 They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. 37 Altogether there were 276 of us on board. 38 When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea. 39 When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. 40 Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. **41** But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf. **42** The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. **43** But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. **44** The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land safely.

Paul was confident that God would lead everyone to safety. You, too, must rely on God to help you when faced with a crisis. God will give you the strength you need to confidently face whatever storms come your way. He may also send others to help you deal with your problems.

What I Have Learned

Answer the following questions.

1. Whom were Paul and the other prisoners handed over to (Acts 27:1)?

2. What did Paul promise those on the ship (v. 34)?

3. What happened to the ship (v. 41)?

4. How did the centurion make sure everyone arrived safely (vv. 43–44)?

Keep In Mind

"The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land safely" (Acts 27:44, NIV).

Choosing What's Best

Refer back to the "What's It All About?" story. How do you think the story was resolved? Use additional paper if necessary.

Doing My Part

This week you are challenged to rely on God's strength when facing a crisis. The best way to do that is to think about how God has been faithful to help you through previous crises. If the opportunity presents itself, share your testimony with others to encourage them.