Eutychus Falls from a Window



Scripture Reference: Acts 20:7-12

Suggested Theme: God wants Christians to gather to worship and learn about him. We should care about each person in our church.

Memory Verse: “Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds. You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing. But you should meet together and encourage each other. Do this even more as you see the Day coming.” Hebrews 10:24-25, ICB

Story Overview:

In the last stages of his third missionary journey, Paul stopped in Troas and met with the church in an upstairs room. During Paul’s very long preaching, a young man named Eutychus went to sleep and fell out of a window and onto the ground below. Paul miraculously brought the boy back to life.

Background Study:

Click here for an overview of the Book of Acts

Paul was both an apostle and a missionary. As he concluded his third journey, he was determined to go to Jerusalem. He could have sailed across to Asia Minor from Greece, but upon hearing of a plot against his life, he changed his plans and took a longer route over land. Paul travelled north through Macedonia and sailed from Philippi to Troas. It was there that he reconnected with his other travel companions.

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Troas is on the east coast of the Aegean Sea in modern-day Turkey. It is 20 kilometres south of the ruins of Ancient Troy. This was the same city where Paul had earlier received the Macedonian Vision.

Here in Troas, we first read about the connection between the "first day of the week" and "breaking bread." Paul and these Christians met specifically to break bread together. Early Christians combined the Lord's Supper with a meal.

These Christians were so eager to meet together and hear Paul's preaching that he stayed with them until dawn! They broke bread together, heard the preaching of the word, gathered together and had fellowship- for a long time! These Christians were happy to gather and learn about God together. We should be just as eager to spend time together worshipping and learning about God.

Paul and the local Christians met on the third floor of a building. The fact that there were "many lamps" might indicate that this was a very large room. It is easy to imagine that the smoke from oil lamps and many people in a small space made for a stuffy room. A small window would have been a nice place for a young man to sit and breathe in fresh air. Perhaps this is why Eutychus was in this precarious location.

We do not know how young Eutychus was. We do know that adults find it challenging to sit quietly and still for long periods and that this is even harder when we are young. It was not misbehaviour that led to Eutychus falling out of the window. He fell asleep. We can all empathise with him.

Anyone who has experienced the unfortunate situation of being sleepy during a sermon, like Eutychus, can relate to Luke's statement, "*Paul talked on and on*." Acts 20:9, NIV. Eutychus must have begun nodding off and eventually fell into a deep sleep. At that point, he fell out of that window.

Falling from the third floor proved fatal. Paul, however, went down to the young man, knelt and put his arms around the dead boy. Through the miraculous power of Jesus, Paul confidently said to the crowd, "Don't worry. He is alive now." Later in the passage, we read that the people took Eutychus away and were deeply comforted.

Notice how important Eutychus was to the believers who were gathered. When he fell, everything stopped. Paul stopped preaching. The people watched as Paul went down to him. The believers were anxious about the young man but Paul healed him. You can emphasise to the children that even though Eutychus was young, he was very important to the church in Lystra. They cared about him and were anxious when he was hurt. We should care about each person in our church, whether they are young or old, mean or kind,

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awkward or easy to talk to.

After he healed Eutychus, Paul went back upstairs to continue talking. It was early morning before Paul left, and everyone went home.

The miraculous power of the Spirit is the most important part of this story, and that should be stressed to the children you teach. However, since children can so easily relate to this young man's situation, it is a great time to talk about what happens when the church assembles together. From a child's perspective, they often have to sit quietly while a preacher seems to go "on and on."

Children are sometimes given "rules of behaviour" for church without any real explanation. Talk to children about the importance of hearing God's Word being preached. It isn't easy to sit quietly, but we show respect to others when we do. Even if we do not understand everything being said, we allow others a chance to hear. Discuss how other signs of respect (manners) show we care for others and their relationship with God.

Ask children how they show self-control. Ask them to compare how they act maturely now to when they were babies or toddlers. Be sure to tell them how proud you are of them. Children can brainstorm other ways to participate and be respectful in worship, but here are a few helpful hints:

- Go to the toilet/bathroom and get a drink before the assembly begins so you won't have to get up while others are listening.
- Sing along with everyone else and use a songbook if one is available. (Looking up song numbers in a hymn book is one way a younger child can participate).
- Bow your head and close your eyes during the prayers.
- When the speaker mentions a verse in the Bible, try looking it up and reading it in your own Bible.
- If you don't understand what is being said and are having trouble listening, then look up other verses in your Bible or find songs in the songbook and sing them silently. This will help you think about God.
- Bring along a notepad to:
  - Write down or draw things the preacher says.
  - Draw the story the preacher is talking about.
  - Copy Bible verses from your Bible.
  - Write down words you don't understand so you can ask your parents or teacher later.
- If you don't understand what's being said, you can ask God to help you understand. If you still don't understand, you can pray and enjoy talking to God silently while the person is speaking.
- If you get tired of sitting, then stretch your muscles in a way that won't disturb the people sitting next to you.

You can also talk with children about caring for the people in our church. Sometimes it is easy to ignore some people in our church. We might not notice that someone is alone when we gather, or you might realise someone at church seems sad. How can they care for the other people in the church? We should care about everyone in our church.

Way to Introduce the Story:

"What is the longest sermon or speech you have ever heard?" (Let children respond or share your own experiences.) "Was it hard to be still and quiet? Did you get tired or sleepy? In today's lesson we learn about a time that Paul preached a very long sermon. He preached all the way until midnight! There was a boy in the audience that got very tired during the sermon. Let's see what happened."

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The Story:

Paul had a very important job to do. He was a missionary who travelled to many different cities and countries, telling people about Jesus. Being a missionary was a very important job because many people had not even heard about Jesus. They did not know that he had died on the cross so that their sins could be forgiven. They did not know that they could be with him forever if they followed him. They did not even know that Jesus wanted to be their friend.

As a missionary, Paul went on several important trips or journeys. During his third missionary journey, Paul and his friends told many people that Jesus was God's Son. Some people believed what Paul was saying and started following Jesus. Other people did not like what Paul was saying.

Paul knew it was time to conclude this journey and make his way to Jerusalem. He travelled back the same way he had come. Some of his friends went ahead of him, and he caught up with them in the city of Troas.

On the first day of the week (Sunday), Paul and a group of Christians met together to take the Lord's Supper. Everyone was so happy that Paul was with them. They knew that Paul was both an Apostle and a missionary. They had heard how Paul had shared the Good News of Jesus with many people. They had also heard about the miracles he had done to show the power of God and help people believe.

The followers of Jesus met in a room on the third floor of a building. Everyone had to climb stairs to get to the meeting place. Everyone wanted to hear about Jesus and God's word. Paul kept preaching until midnight, so there were many lamps to help everyone see.

One young man named Eutychus found what he thought was a very good place to sit. He didn't sit on a chair, and he didn't sit on the floor. Instead, Eutychus found a window and sat right on the window sill. There was no glass or screen in the window because windows did not have screens or glass in those days. But the window was a nice place to sit because of the fresh air.

The third floor was very high, and the ground was very far down, so Eutychus would have had to pay attention and be careful not to lean too far out of the window. That would be dangerous!

Paul kept preaching on and on, and Eutychus got so sleepy that he could not stay awake any longer. Finally, he fell fast asleep and leaned too far out of the window. He fell all the way down to the ground.

This was very serious! When people went down to him and picked him up, they found that he was dead. Everyone was so sad. Poor Eutychus! While everyone was standing around thinking about this, Paul arrived. He had climbed down the stairs to where Eutychus was.

Paul knelt down and put his arms around Eutychus' dead body. Through the power of Jesus, Eutychus came alive again. Paul told everyone, "Don't worry. He is alive now."

When Eutychus died, everyone was afraid and sad. Now, they were comforted and very happy. If Jesus' power could raise Eutychus from the dead, then Jesus could take care of them, too.

After this, everyone returned up the stairs and continued their time together. They took the Lord's Supper, and Paul talked with them all night. In the morning, Paul left to continue his journey. The followers of Jesus took Eutychus home safe and sound.

Have you ever fallen asleep in church like Eutychus? Or have you had a hard time listening? Sitting still and quiet for a long time is sometimes very difficult. But it is good manners and very respectful to try your best. That way, you and everyone else can listen, too. We want everyone to hear the Good News about Jesus!

When everyone gathers together to worship and learn about God, it is important that we show that we care about each other. This is a way to worship God, too. Even though Eutychus was young, he was very important to the church in Lystra. They showed they cared about him when he fell, and we should care about each person in our church too, no matter their age or what they are like.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

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Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

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Review:

- Who preached so long that it was past midnight? (Paul)
- What happened to Eutychus? (He went to sleep during Paul's preaching, fell out of a third-floor window, and died.)
- What did Paul do when he found Eutychus dead? (He put his arms around him. Then he raised him from the dead)
- After Eutychus was raised from the dead, Paul went back upstairs and did what? (Broke bread, ate, and started talking with the people again)
- When did Paul stop talking with the people? (Dawn)
- Why is it important to listen to the word of God being preached? (Faith comes from hearing God's word (Romans 10:17))
- How can we show respect to everyone who is listening to the preaching of God's word? (There can be a lot of answers, but here are a few: quietly listen, do not get up and walk around during the sermon, only whisper to people during the preaching, quietly look up and write down the scriptures that the preacher says, etc.)

Reflection:

- The Bible says the room Paul and the people met in had many lamps in it. How do you think these lamps smelled or looked? What might the room have looked like with all these lamps?
- Why do you think Eutychus was at this gathering with Christians? Did he choose to come or not?
- Have you ever felt like Eutychus? How so?

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- How do you think the people felt when they realised Eutychus had fallen and died? What about when he came back to life?
- What do you think Eutychus thought or felt when he fell and died?
- When you are with other Christians and listening to preaching, teaching, or talks about God, what do you enjoy hearing about most?
- How can we be respectful of those speaking when someone is talking about God and we're struggling to pay attention? What isn't respectful? How can we still worship or spend time with God when we struggle to pay attention or don't understand what's being said? (Suggestion: share examples from the Background Study section and brainstorm with the children.)
- How do people in your church show you they care about you?
- Is there someone in our church who gets left out or isn't cared about? How could we show them we care?
- What question do you have for God about this story?
- What is something you wonder about in this story?

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a lifelong friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

Song Suggestions:

- God is Listening When We Pray (Song) English/Cubuano
- ABC: Jesus Died for You and Me Song
- J-E-S-U-S Song
- He's Still Working on Me Song
- I Can Be a Missionary
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Trace Paul's third missionary journey on a map you enlarged last week.
- Write the word "RESPECT" on the board or a large sheet of paper. Ask the children to list ways of showing respect to others during the Sunday Worship Assembly. Some ideas might be:
  - Be friendly and talk to people before and after church.

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- Be seated and ready when it is time to begin.
- Participate appropriately (sing, pray, listen, and respond respectfully if the preacher asks the audience questions).
- Be quiet so others can hear the sermon.
- Stay in your seat and do not leave during the assembly. Go to the toilet and get a drink before the assembly begins so you don't have to get up.
- Turn your cell phone off.
- Wear clothes that are clean and tidy.

- Take the time to show the children some "quiet activities" that can be done during the worship assembly to help little minds stay occupied: colouring sheets, copying songs or scriptures onto paper, making mazes or puzzles out of words from verses, or keeping tallies of how many times the preacher uses certain words (God, Jesus, bible, etc.). Notice children who are especially "good" during the assembly. Ask those children or their parents to share their helpful practices.
- If a tall building is nearby, take a walk and look at a window on the 3rd floor. This will give the children a better understanding of how far Eutychus fell.
- To review, you or the children can draw a large outline of Paul on a whiteboard or piece of paper (even drawing with a stick in the sand works fine if you are outside). Then, after you have taught the lesson, ask the children to think about what they have just learned from the Bible. Have them write descriptive words or draw pictures inside and around the outlined illustration of Paul. When you see what the children are writing or drawing, you may be surprised or encouraged by what insights they have picked up from the story. This is also a good opportunity to correct or add to anything you might not have covered as well as you could have when you were teaching.



- If you prefer, you can download and print the illustration of Paul provided here and then have the children write and draw on it for the review.
- Click here for the 16 lessons about the Life of Paul grouped together.

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable "God's Story" printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

Crafts:

- Use Sharpie markers or fabric paint to decorate pillowcases. The children could write "Remember Eutychus" or the Scripture reference "Acts 20:7-12" on the pillowcase.

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- Make a relief map of Paul's Journeys featuring the place in today's story. If you are studying Paul's journeys over a few lessons, you could add more details to the map each time you learn about another stop on the journey. Instructions on how to make a relief map at https://www.weirdunsocializedhomeschoolers.com/step-by-step-to-making-salt-dough-map/

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

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Other Online Resources:

- Simple colouring page (abigbowloflife.blogspot.com)
- Games: Games that help children learn to listen (playingwithwords365.com)
- Games: More games and activities for helping children learn to listen (kidsactivitiesblog.com)
- Review: Create a "passport" that covers Paul's life. Good visual ideas and activities. It could be split up to go with several lessons or taught all together as a review of previous lessons concerning Paul (kidsbibledebjackson.blogspot.co.nz)

The map above is by Sweet Publishing and can be accessed through Free Bible Images.
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