

Activity: Bent and Torn

By Karen Noal



Teaching Goal: God is still with us and loves us when bad things happen.

FAMILY TIME
TRAINING

Scripture: Acts 9:8-9 Saul {Paul} got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing...For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

2 Corinthians 11:16-35 – Paul’s many trials and persecutions

2 Corinthians 12:10 “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (KJV)

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed.”

Romans 8:28 “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

Materials: 1 piece of paper per person
Pen or pencil
“Bent and Torn” diagram included with this activity
“Paul’s Trials” and “Our Trials” pages included with this activity

I. Lesson and discussion

✓ Words written in **bold** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.

A. **ACTIVITY #1: On one side of our blank pieces of paper, we are going to make a list of bad things that have happened to each of us, our family and friends. Everyone share a time when something bad happened to you or a time when you were sick or hurt. As each person shares, make a list of challenges right down the center of your paper. Listen to answers. Examples of challenges are included on the “Our Trials” page included with this activity. Everyone has unpleasant experiences. God loves us and hates to see us hurt, but we live in a world where bad things happen. When they do, God can use bad times to help us grow stronger.**

We are going to read a section of the Bible that lists many of the bad things that happened to the Apostle Paul. On the other side of your piece of paper, down the center, make a list of the different challenges Paul faced. Invite a volunteer to read Acts 9:8-9 and II Corinthians 11:16-35. How would you react if someone threw rocks at you for telling them about Jesus? How would you react if you were shipwrecked? Beaten? Whipped? Let’s look and see what Paul’s reaction was. Invite a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 12:10 for Paul’s reaction. Was Paul angry or bitter at God? Why not? Listen to answers.

Look how God used the hard times in Paul’s life so others could learn about Jesus:

FAMILY TIME TRAINING

Paul was blinded on the road to Damascus...
...that is how Paul met Jesus.
Paul put up with hard travel from country to country...
...new churches were established and thousands of people
learned about Jesus and started following him.
Paul was thrown in prison...
...the prison guards learned about Jesus.
Paul was on trial before Emperor Caesar...
...Roman government leaders heard about Jesus.

Can we look back and see how God used hard times in our lives to share Jesus with others? Listen to answers. When we react differently than expected to hard times, others may ask “Why? Why didn’t they get upset? Why were they still at peace?” Then we can share about the peace that Jesus brings to our lives.

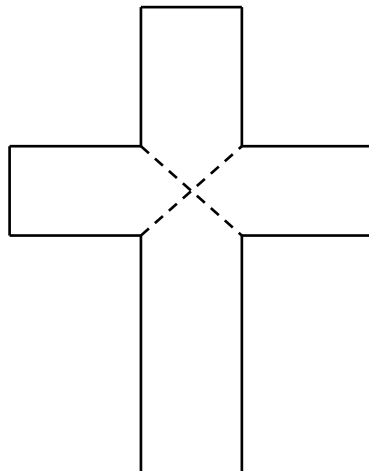
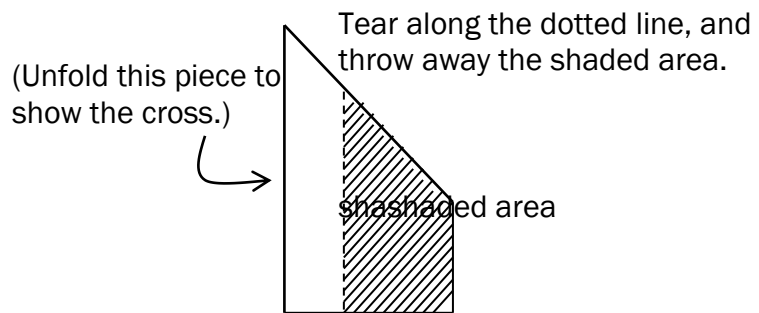
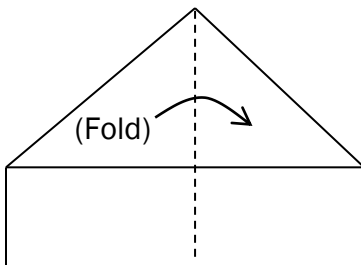
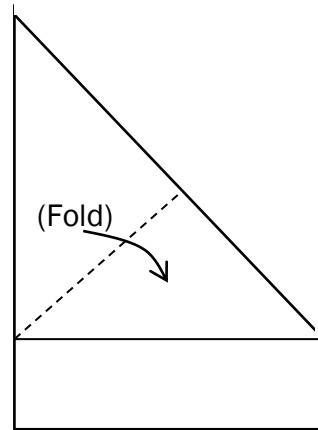
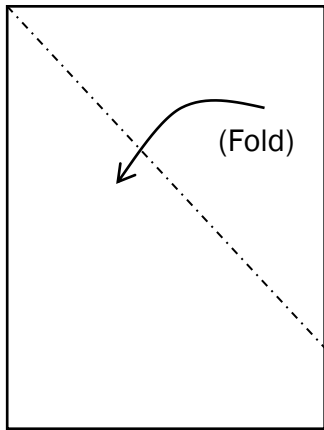
B. ACTIVITY #2: Invite a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 4:8-9. **We are all going to use the piece of paper with our lists on both sides to show how even when we are bent and torn...God loves us and has a purpose for our lives.** Follow the instructions on the diagram. Fold the right upper corner down to the left edge. With each fold discuss how we are often bent, folded, and crushed. Push down...press...and crush with each fold, referring to the verses and lists. Fold the left top pointed edge down, matching the lower edge of your previous fold, forming a peak. Fold paper in half from left to right. The left edge will be straight and the right edge will be angled.

Create a fold one or two inches parallel to the straight left edge. Tear along the fold. Invite a volunteer to read Romans 8:28. **Even when bad things happen to us, God knows and loves us. We don’t always understand but God does and will help us.** Open up the paper. This sheet of paper was folded, bent, crushed and torn but look what happened. What is it now? A cross. It is how we handle the bad times in our lives...if we handle them by trusting God, his love and claiming his supernatural peace...then others are more likely to see Jesus!

II. Close in Prayer

III. Pass It On: Make an extra copy of this lesson and *pass it on* to another family.

Bent and Torn Diagram



Paul's Trials

Acts 9:8-9, 2 Corinthians 11:23-29

Blinded

Prison Frequently

Flogged severely

In Danger from Rivers

In Danger from Bandits

In Danger in the City and in the Country

Gone without Sleep

Hungry and Thirsty

Near Death

5 Times received 39 Lashes

3 Times beaten with rods

Stoned

3 Times Shipwrecked

Night and Day in open sea

Our Trials

Preschool

Learning to share

Punishment for Disobedience

Scared at Night

Sickness

Elementary Age

Divorce in Family

Friend hurts feelings

Kids tease

Teen

Temptation with Drugs

Temptation with Sex

Sickness or death of a friend

Challenges at Work