

Sumo of the Opera



What is the STORY about?

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! Big Idea welcomes you to the ultimate Veggie event as The Italian Scallion takes on Apollo Gourd for the World Veggie-Weight Title! As the Italian Scallion, Larry is a joking pro wrestler who never manages to finish what he starts. But Larry finds that it's no laughing matter when he lands in the ring with Apollo Gourd. Can Larry stick with it and finish the match? How does a cucumber look in wrestling gear anyway? In this zany tale of perseverance, Larry learns that when you finish what you start, you always come out a winner!

- *A Lesson in Perseverance*
- *Key Passage: Acts 16:16-40 (A Lesson-related Bible story)*
- *Running time: 20 minutes*
- *Bonus Show: "Going Up" (5 minutes)*
- *"Lufti's Fanciful Flannelgraph" (St. Patrick's Day) (8 minutes)*



What do you THINK?

- *What bad habit does The Italian Scallion have? (He never finishes anything)*
- *How does Scallion end up in the ring with Apollo Gourd? (Po falls out of the ring and hurts his back. Scallion volunteers to take Po's place and wrestle Apollo because he wants to win the Tiger Bike)*
- *Scallion stopped training for the World Veggie-Weight Title because it was too hard. What inspired him to start training again? (He talked with Hadrian who had worked hard to finish a show-and-tell project and commented, "If Scallion can stick to something, so can I.")*
- *Who won the Sumo wrestling title? (Apollo and Scallion both fell out of the ring, so it was a tie)*
- *Because the wrestling match ended in a tie, Apollo Gourd retained his title as World Veggie-Weight Title. Why wasn't Scallion disappointed? (Because no challenger had ever lasted that long against Apollo)*



What does the BIBLE say?

Paul's story of PERSEVERANCE can be found in Acts 16:16-40. Read portions from a Bible translation that is easy for children to comprehend OR tell this abbreviated version.

Paul was a man of God and a missionary who preached about Jesus everywhere he went. Many people did not like Paul because he proclaimed that Jesus was the way of salvation. He encouraged believers and warned them that difficult times were coming. One day when Paul and his friend, Silas, were headed to a place of prayer, they were dragged to the authorities by some men who did not like them. A crowd joined in the attack of Paul and Silas, and they were beaten and thrown into prison. The guard placed them in an inner cell and fastened their feet in chains so they could not escape. But even in prison, Paul kept the faith and persevered. He and Silas continued to pray and sing hymns, and the other prisoners began listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake. Immediately the doors of the prison were opened and everyone's chains came loose. The keeper of the prison was afraid that all of the prisoners had escaped. But Paul called out in a loud voice to say that everyone was still in the prison. The guard realized that Paul and Silas were men of God. He took them to his house and washed their wounds and gave them food. Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to the guard and all his family...and they were baptized. The next day Paul and Silas were released from prison, and they continued to spread the Good News of Jesus.

The Story of Paul



ACTIVITY

Talk about the meaning of the word “perseverance.” Encourage conversation about what causes us to give up as well as ways that we can overcome those obstacles (chains) that make us want to quit. After the discussion, distribute strips of paper (1 inch by 6 inches) for the children to make a paper chain large enough to encircle the whole group OR create shorter chain lengths to fit around each child’s wrists. Gather everyone inside the large chain OR place smaller chains securely around the children’s wrists. Refer to Paul’s earthquake encounter in prison and instruct the children to “break out of the chains” when they hear a loud noise. (Beat on a pan with a wooden spoon, clap your hands loudly, drop a large book, etc.)



What can we DO?

Read and discuss Hebrews 10:36. God asks us to do lots of hard things, but they’re good things, and they make us better people. God wants us to persevere—even when it’s hard. Finishing has its rewards.

Challenge the children to:

- Commit to persevere in one goal or task that needs to be completed.
- Choose one friend to encourage and help them reach their goal.

Help the children find these Bible verses to read aloud.

- **2 Timothy 4:7** “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”
- **James 1:12** “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”
- **2 Thessalonians 3:5** “May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance.”

3 Things to remember about Paul

1. Paul was a **MISSIONARY** for the Lord
2. Throughout his troubles, trials, and imprisonments, he **PERSEVERED**
3. Paul **ENCOURAGED** everyone he met to be faithful to the Lord

KEY VERSE

(Hebrews 10:36) “You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised.”

KEY NUGGET

God wants us to persevere—even when it’s hard!

