

Bible Story for Big Question 12, Bible Truth 1

use with all THREE lessons

Place
story in

take out

P.1**The Case of the Day of Hardest Thing***Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 18-21***Story-telling Tips**

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and prepare storyboard figures/story scenes, if using. (In Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues/hold up storybook scenes as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
4. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

"Our story is called: The Case of the Hardest Thing. Here is your listening assignment." Read from Detective Dan's Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to find out:

1. Who did the hardest thing? What was it?
2. Who helped Him do it?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Hebrews 4:16, ESV**

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

I need to find out:

1. What was the very hard thing Jesus was called to do? Who did Jesus cry out to for help?
2. Did he receive the help he needed to do the hard thing God was calling him to do?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.

Our six clues were: a dress, an angel, the cross, Jesus, an enemy, and a spider.

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to figure out:

1. Which four belong in the story and which two don't?
2. What did Jesus ask God to do for him? How did God answer His prayer?

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

"Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan's questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions."

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

Bible Story for Big Question 12, Bible Truth 1

use with all THREE lessons

P.2**The Case of the Hardest Thing** *Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 18-21*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture. Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture. OR, if using the Story Scenes to tell the story, disregard the storyboard picture references listed below.

It was late at night and (SB1) Jesus knew He needed help. And not just help from anyone. No! There was only ONE who could help Him. Do you know who the only one was who could help Jesus?

Who do you think it was?

(SB2) It was God, His Father.

(SB3) Very, very soon, Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' disciples, one of His very closest friends, would bring enemies to arrest Him. These enemies would hurt Jesus. They would say mean things to Him. And then, they would nail Him to a cross to die.

All of this would be hard enough. Everyone back in those days knew that dying on a cross was the worst, most painful way to die. But Jesus knew that dying on the cross wouldn't be the hardest part for Him. There was something far harder that Jesus would do upon that cross. Jesus would take upon Himself all of God's punishment for sin that God's people deserved. Oh, how, very, very, VERY terrible all that punishment would be!

In some ways, Jesus wasn't that different from us. He didn't like to suffer. He thought about all that pain He would have to bear and He didn't want to do it. Yet, how Jesus loved God, His Father! He always wanted to obey Him! And how Jesus loved God's people! He wanted to save them! This was how He would do it.

And so, late that night, Jesus knew that He needed help—God, His Father's help—to do all that He was about to do.

(SB4) Jesus and all of His other disciples walked down the streets of the big city of Jerusalem, then out through the city wall, and up to a garden called Gethsemane. Jesus knew He needed help from His Father, and it was here that He was going to ask for it. Do you know how?

What do you think Jesus did?

Jesus would pray! (SB5) "Sit here, while I go over there and pray," He told the disciples.

(SB6) Taking Peter, James and John with Him, Jesus walked further into the dark garden. As He walked, He began to get very sad and upset. "I am so sad! It makes me feel like I could die right now!" Jesus told them. "Stay here with me and keep watch," He asked them.

(SB7) Jesus went even further into the garden, then fell face down on the ground and prayed to God, His Father. "My Father, if it be possible, don't let me have to suffer like this for the sins of Your people!" Jesus pleaded. "This is going to be so hard! This is going to hurt so much! But most of all I want Your will, not Mine, Father," Jesus exclaimed.

After praying, Jesus went to check up on Peter, James and John. He was not happy with what they were doing! While Jesus had been face down on the ground praying, they had been face down on the ground doing something else? Can you guess what it was?

(SB8) They were sound asleep!

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

(SB9) “Peter, wake up! Couldn’t you watch with Me this one hour?” Jesus exclaimed to him and the others. “Watch and pray that you might say ‘no’ to temptation. You want to stay faithful to Me. You want to do God’s will, but you are very weak. You will need God’s help to live it out,” Jesus warned them.

Jesus knew that He wasn’t the only one who would need God’s help to do God’s will. His disciples would need God’s help, too. When the soldiers came for Jesus, it would be easy for them to become afraid and not stay faithful to Jesus. But God could give them the strength they needed, if they would ask.

(SB10) Jesus went and prayed again. “My Father, if suffering and dying on the cross is the only way to save Your people, then I want to do it,” Jesus said to God, His Father. “I want to obey You more than anything else. I will even suffer and die like this, if it is Your will.”

What a prayer! What a very, very hard thing Jesus would have to do to save God’s people! It was the hardest thing anyone would EVER have to do. COULD God, His Father, answer this prayer? WOULD God, His Father, answer this prayer?

What do you think?

Yes, He could; and, yes, He WOULD! God answered Jesus’ prayer. (SB11) He sent an angel to strengthen Him.

God also strengthened Jesus in His heart. (SB12) He helped Jesus remember the joy He would have in heaven after He suffered and died for God’s people. On the third day, He would rise from the dead in victory over sin and death for them. Then, He would return to heaven to enjoy forever the full, Perfect Wonderfulness of the fullest, closest fellowship with God, the Father, and God, the Holy Spirit--just like it had been before He came to earth.

Jesus would be the great King who loved God and always obeyed Him. How great would be the praise for God! How wonderful to never have to suffer again! And how wonderful to know that God’s people would be forgiven of their sins, once and for all!

Jesus went to check up on His friends again. Were they praying? Were they asking God for His help?

What do you think?

They were asleep again! If only they understood how much they were about to need God’s help! “Get up and pray that God will give you the strength you need to stay faithful to Me,” Jesus urged them again.

But just then, even as Jesus as talking to them, (SB13) there came a whole crowd of enemies carrying lanterns, fiery torches and sharp swords! And who was leading them?

Can you guess who?

Why Judas Iscariot, Jesus’ other disciple, that’s who! He had been paid by Jesus’ enemies to take them to Jesus and arrest Him.

The time had come for Jesus to suffer and die. Was Jesus ready? Would He run away? Would He get scared and beg for the His enemies to go away?

What do you think He will do?

Bible Story for Big Question 12, Bible Truth 1

use with all THREE lessons

P.4*Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)*

(SB14) No, He would not. He had asked God, His Father, to help Him; and, God had answered Him. Jesus was ready. God, His Father, was giving Him the strength to keep on doing His will.

In the darkness, it was hard to tell who Jesus was, but Judas knew what to do. He went up to Jesus and greeted Him with a kiss on the cheek. "Friend, do what you came to do," Jesus said to Judas. Then the soldiers came up and grabbed Jesus.

(SB15) "Oh, no you don't!" thought Peter. He took his sword and cut off Malchus' ear—one of the men in the crowd. Somehow, Peter thought he could help Jesus by fighting off His enemies.

But this wasn't the help Jesus wanted or needed. Jesus stretched out His hand and healed Malchus' ear. "Put away your sword," Jesus told Peter. "God, My Father, could send thousands of angels to rescue Me, but how would His will be done if they did that?" Jesus told him. "How would God's people be saved as God has promised in His Word, the Bible? No. I must die on the cross to save them!" Oh, how God was helping His Son, Jesus, to do this hardest thing!

But what about Jesus' close friends? What happened to them? They had not asked for God's help. They had slept, instead. Would they stand with Jesus or run away?

What do you think they did?

Just as Jesus warned, they gave into their fears. They did not have the strength to stay faithful to Jesus. (SB16) They ran away from Jesus. They ran away from the garden and the crowd of enemies. They ran away to save their lives.

After that, everything happened just as Jesus knew it would. (SB17) The crowd took Jesus away. (SB18) They hurt Him and they said mean things to Him. (SB19) They nailed Him to the cross; and there, Jesus suffered and died for the sins of God's people—all who would ever turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior.

Jesus' suffering on that cross was just as terrible as He thought it would be, but He did it anyway! He had asked God, His Father, for help; and God, His Father, gave it to Him! (SB20) He helped Jesus endure the punishment for the sins of God's people that day! He helped Jesus do the hardest thing!

How do we know Jesus paid for all those sins when He suffered and died on that cross? Because of what Jesus did on the third day. Do you know what He did?

Can you tell me?

(SB21) Jesus rose up from the grave to live forevermore! Jesus had really beaten sin and death for God's people! They were really forgiven all their sins! They would really get to live with God, loving Him and enjoying Him forever and ever.

But what about Jesus' close friends? What happened to them after they had run away and left Jesus? Would God forgive them now? COULD God forgive them now?

What do you think? Could God really forgive these men for leaving Jesus' all alone like this?

Yes, He could and He WOULD! When Jesus died on the cross, He paid for all of their sins, even this sin of running away and leaving Him.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

And, even though Jesus' disciples had not asked God for help that night, the Bible tells us that Jesus had remembered THEM and asked God to help them.

Yes, (SB22) Jesus had prayed for them and for all of God's people that night before He died on the cross. He had asked His Father to help them to know and obey Him more. He had asked His Father to help them tell others how they could be saved through trusting in Him as their Savior. And, He had asked His Father to send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and help them to live for Him.

Wow! What big prayers Jesus prayed for His disciples and all of God's people! Could God possible answer these?

What do you think?

Yes, He could; and, yes, He WOULD! (Remove BG2 to reveal BG1/SB23) Jesus appeared to His disciples on that third day after He died on the cross. "I'm alive and I've beaten sin and death for You!" He told them. (SB24) Then, over the next 40 days, Jesus taught them from the Bible and told them about God's great plan to use them to tell the whole world the gospel--the good news of salvation. Jesus left them at the end of those 40 days and (SB25) went to heaven-- home at last, enjoying all the Perfect Wonderfulness He had always known with God, the Father, and God, the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was in heaven, but those first believers weren't forgotten! Just as He had promised, (SB26) He sent the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts. And there, the Holy Spirit would stay, working inside of them and giving them the help they needed to love God and live for Him.

And, oh, how those first believers had learned their lesson to ask God for His help! (SB27) There were many more times when they were tempted to not be faithful to Jesus. And many more times when they would want to run away because their enemies wanted to hurt them. But now when their enemies came, they didn't sleep. No! They prayed to God and asked for His help! And did He give it to them?

What do you think?

Yes, He did! (SB28) And, oh, how those first believers had learned their lesson to ask God for His help! heaven, praying for God's people and helping them to do what God wants them to do?

And that's why God wants His people, even now, to ask Him for help to live for Him. He knows that His people today need just as much help as they did long ago! If we are God's people—those who turn away from disobeying God and who trust in Jesus as our Savior—He will help us to live for Him, too!

Let's ask Him to work in our hearts right now. Let's ask Him to help us to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to help us to live for Him today and every day!

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:

1. Who did the hardest thing? What was it? Jesus did. Jesus lived a perfect life and offered it up on the cross as the full payment for the sins of God's people. He suffered and died for them. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory.

2. Who helped Him do it? God, His Father, helped Jesus do it.

For You and Me:

Jesus did the hardest thing when He suffered and died for the sins of God's people. But did you know that God calls all of His people to do hard things? Things so hard that they can never do them on their own. Who will help them? The very same one who helped Jesus -- God! God will always help His people to do any hard thing they are called to do. We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. If we do, we can know it is His promise to help us to do anything He calls us to.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:
Our Bible Verse is Hebrews 4:16, ESV

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

1. What was the very hard thing Jesus was called to do? Who did Jesus cry out to for help?

Jesus lived a perfect life and offered it up on the cross as the full payment for the sins of God's people. He suffered and died for them. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He asked God, His Father, to help Him do it all.

2. Did he receive the help he needed to do the hard thing God was calling him to do? Yes, He did! God helped Him do it all... perfectly!

For You and Me:

Jesus did the hardest thing when He suffered and died for the sins of God's people. But did you know that God calls all of His people to do hard things? Things so hard that they can never do them on their own. Who will help them? The very same one who helped Jesus -- God! God will always help His people to do any hard thing they are called to do. We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. If we do, we can know it is His promise to help us to do anything He calls us to.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a dress, an angel, the cross, Jesus, an enemy, and a spider.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The angel, the cross, Jesus and the enemy.

2. What did Jesus ask God to do for him? How did God answer His prayer? Jesus asked God, His Father, to help Him carry out the plan to save God's people. God, His Father, answered Him with a "yes"! He helped Him bear the pain of the cross. He helped Him do everything that was needed to save God's people.

For You and Me:

Jesus did the hardest thing when He suffered and died for the sins of God's people. But did you know that God calls all of His people to do hard things? Things so hard that they can never do them on their own. Who will help them? The very same one who helped Jesus -- God! God will always help His people to do any hard thing they are called to do. We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. If we do, we can know it is His promise to help us to do anything He calls us to.

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:**

How Should God's People Live?

They Should Live Like Jesus...

By Asking God for His Help!

How should God's people live each day? They should live like Jesus... by asking God for His help! God's people ask God for His help, knowing that He will help them. After all, He has already helped them in the biggest way: by sending Jesus to save them! Even while they still were choosing to disobey Him, God chose to help them by sending Jesus to save them. How much more, now that they turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior, do they know that God will help them to live for Him! God delights to help you and me, too. If we turn away from disobeying Him and trust Jesus as our Savior, He will gladly save us! And as His people, He will gladly keep helping us to live for Him!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for giving us Jesus so we can know how You want us to live.
- C** God, please forgive us for not asking You to help us live for You. We love to do things by ourselves, in our own way. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for promising to help us live like Jesus. You can help us do what we cannot do ourselves.
- S** God, please work in our hearts. Help us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You. Help us to live like You want us to live.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.

