

The Case of the Faithful Leader*Acts 16:1; 1 & 2 Timothy***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 figures/Story Scenes, 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 Story 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 Faithful Leader. 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 know:

1. Who was the leader who went to care for the believers in Ephesus?
2. What did Paul tell him to be faithful to do for those believers?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 1 Timothy 4:13, ESV**

"Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

I need to know:

1. Who did Paul write to as he sat in prison, about to die?
2. What did Paul tell this person to be faithful to do for the believers in Ephesus?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story.

They are: a cake, Paul, a car, a letter, a coat, and God's Word.

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

I need to know:

1. Which four belong in the story and which two don't?
2. Who did Paul thank God for? What did Paul asked God to help this person do?

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.

The Case of the Faithful Leader *Acts 16:1; 1 & 2 Timothy*

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.

(SB1) Paul was an old man who was about to die. His enemies had put him in jail for telling people about Jesus and now they planned to kill him. Paul sat in his cold cell making the best of the little bit of time he had left. But what could Paul do in that cold, little room that would help anyone?

Can you think of what he could do?

(SB2) Paul prayed. And he shared the good news of Jesus with the soldiers who guarded him and many others, too. And he wrote letters to the little churches of believers in many places.

How very different it was being stuck in a jail from what Paul used to do! (SB3, SB4, SB5) For many years Paul had traveled to faraway places, preaching the good news of Jesus from the Bible to all who would listen. Many people had turned away from disobeying God and trusted in Jesus as their Savior when they heard Paul preach. (SB6, SB7, SB8) Soon, there were little churches of these new Christians all over. They gathered together each week to worship God and love one another.

Godly people were chosen to take care of each little church. (SB9, SB10, SB11) Some of the godly leaders they called "deacons." They were people who were called by God to serve their little church in a special way. They spent their time caring for the needs of others in the church. Men like Stephen, made sure everyone had enough to eat. Women like Phoebe, spent their days making clothes for those who needed clothes.

Other godly leaders were men called "pastors" or "elders. These men were called by God to serve their little church by teaching God's Word and guiding everyone in what it means to keep on loving God and living for Him. Sometimes they brought words of comfort to those who were discouraged. Sometimes they warned those forgetting to live for God and urged them to turn away from their sins. They prayed for God to help them all. They preached God's Word when the Christians in each little church gathered together.

(SB12) One of these godly pastors was a young man named Timothy.

Paul met Timothy on one of his traveling trips and asked him to be his helper. Mile after mile after mile Timothy walked with Paul. (SB13) Up mountains and down valleys. (SB14) Over land and over sea. (SB15) Through every kind of weather. To every kind of people—(SB16) happy, friendly people who wanted to hear about Jesus and welcomed them... and (SB17) angry, fierce people who wanted to hurt Paul and make him stop telling about Jesus. They hurt Paul and Timothy and even sent them to cold, prison cells. Timothy stayed by Paul through it all.

But there was something else that made Timothy an especially good helper for Paul. (SB18) It was what was in Timothy's heart. Timothy had a heart devoted to God and His good plans. Timothy knew God's Word well. He loved God and Paul and God's people. He loved them so much, that he put them first before the things he needed and wanted. So, you can see why Paul loved Timothy so much. And, why Timothy was such a good helper for Paul. And why, after a while, Paul treated Timothy not just as a helper or even as just a very good friend, but like he was his very own son.

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

Yes, Timothy was a big help to Paul, but did you know that Paul was a big help to Timothy, too? As Timothy was there with Paul, he was listening and learning. He listened to Paul preach from God's Word and share the good news of Jesus. He saw many people turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

(SB19) Timothy listened to Paul teach these new believers how to live as Jesus' disciples--how to keep on loving God and living for Him their whole lives. (SB20) He listened to Paul comfort some with God's Word who were sad, and (SB21) to warn others, who had forgotten to live for God. He listened to Paul pray for all the people in the little churches, too.

And as Timothy listened and watched, God was preparing him to do something special one day. Can you guess what Timothy would be?

Can you guess?

To be a pastor, himself!

(SB22) One day, Paul and Timothy came to big city of Ephesus. They had come to check up on the little church of believers there. Uh oh, Paul could see there was a problem! This little church of believers needed the help of a good pastor. Who could help them? Who knew God's Word well enough to help them grow to worship God and love one another the way God wanted them to? It seemed there was no one in that little church fit for the job.

Yes, perhaps there was no one in the little church who could be that leader, but there WAS someone with Paul who could stay and be that leader. Can you guess who?

Can you guess?

It was Timothy!

"Timothy, would you stay and care for this little church of believers?" Paul asked Timothy. "You are young, but I know that God will help you do a good job preaching the Bible and leading them," he said. (SB23) Timothy said "yes." He would miss Paul, but he was happy to help. The little church in Ephesus was happy, too! Now they had a godly leader who could help them love God and live for Him. Paul was so glad that he could leave the little church in Ephesus under Timothy's care!

But years had passed since that day when Paul said goodbye and left his dear friend, Timothy, in Ephesus. What journeys Paul had made by land and sea since then! What a lot of people had heard the good news of Jesus! How many little churches had grown up as people heard Paul preach the good news of Jesus from God's Word since that day!

And what troubles Paul had suffered since then, too. And now, here he was, back in jail in Rome. Sad and old and shivering in his cold jail room, soon to die.

Who did Paul wish to see most of all? (SB24) That dearest, closest friend of his. What's his name?

Can you tell me?

It was Timothy! Paul missed his dear Timothy so very much! Paul wanted him to come and care for him. He wanted him to bring him his heavy cloak to keep him warm, and his books and papers, so he could study.

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

Paul wondered if he would get to see Timothy again before he died. Ephesus was so far away from Rome, where Paul was in jail. He hoped that he would. But what could Paul do? Was there anything?

Can you think of what Paul could do?

Yes, there was something Paul could do. He could write to Timothy. Perhaps Timothy would not get all the way to Rome before he died, but at least he could write him one last letter. And so that's what he did.

(SB25) A messenger set off with Paul's letter. Walk, walk, walk, he went. At last, after many days, he handed the letter to Timothy to read. How happy Timothy was to hear from Paul! How he missed Paul and loved him! Here was news at last!

Timothy eagerly opened the letter and read.

(SB26) "Timothy, my dear son," Paul started. "I thank God every time I think of you. I long with tears to see you! Do your best to come to me soon!"

"Here are some important things I want you to remember that will help you lead the little church in Ephesus," Paul wrote. "You were my helper for many years. You watched me preach about Jesus from the Bible. You watched people try to get me to stop talking about Jesus by hurting me," Paul wrote. "You saw how God gave me strength to keep on preaching and loving and caring for all the Christians in the little churches we went to. Don't forget what you saw me do! Do these same things for the people in your little church."

"Keep on learning God's Word! Keep on preaching God's Word!" Paul told Timothy. "Sometimes this will be really hard. Sometimes people won't want to hear what the Bible says. But keep on teaching it to them, no matter what!" Paul urged Timothy. "Only the Bible is God's Word. It makes God's people ready for everything God wants them to do."

"Don't forget these things and please, come see me soon—before winter comes. Paul!"

Did Timothy ever make it to see Paul before he died? We don't know. But we DO know that Timothy did what Paul wanted him to do most of all: be a good leader for the little church in Ephesus and teach them God's Word.

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:

I need to know:

- 1. Who was the leader who went to care for the believers in Ephesus?** Timothy.
- 2. What did Paul tell him to be faithful to do for those believers?** Paul told Timothy to be faithful to preach God's Word to them and help them keep on loving God and living for Him.

For You and Me:

Paul encouraged Timothy to be faithful to teach God's Word to the believers who gathered together as a little church in Ephesus. By being faithful like this, God could use Timothy powerfully. Timothy could help the believers know how to keep on loving God and living for Him. When we go to church and listen to faithful teachers tell us about God's Word, God can use it to help us to love Him and live for Him, too. And the very first thing that every faithful teacher hopes and prays that you will do when you hear God's Word is to turn away from your sins and trust in Jesus as your Savior. This is how we become God's people. It is the best, first step in loving God and living for Him.

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 1 Timothy 4:13, ESV:**

"Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

I need to know:

- 1. Who did Paul write to as he sat in prison, about to die?** Timothy.
- 2. What did Paul tell this person to be faithful to do for the believers in Ephesus?** Paul told Timothy to be faithful to preach God's Word to them and help them keep on loving God and living for Him.

For You and Me:

Paul encouraged Timothy to be faithful to teach God's Word to the believers who gathered together as a little church in Ephesus. By being faithful like this, God could use Timothy powerfully. Timothy could help the believers know how to keep on loving God and living for Him. When we go to church and listen to faithful teachers tell us about God's Word, God can use it to help us to love Him and live for Him, too. And the very first thing that every faithful teacher hopes and prays that you will do when you hear God's Word is to turn away from your sins and trust in Jesus as your Savior. This is how we become God's people. It is the best, first step in loving God and living for Him.

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. They were: a cake, Paul, a car, a letter, a coat, and God's Word. *Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.*

I need to know:

- 1. Which four belong in the story and which two don't?** Paul, the letter, the coat and God's Word belong. The cake and the car do not.
- 2. Who did Paul thank God for? What did Paul asked God to help this person do?** Paul thanked God for Timothy. To keep being a good pastor to the people in Ephesus, but also to come and comfort him before he died.

For You and Me:

Paul thanked God for giving him Timothy. Timothy had been such a good helper to him; and, Timothy now was a faithful leader to the believers in Ephesus, who Paul cared about so much. We, too, should thank God for the faithful leaders he gives us. They help us know God's Word and know how to live it out. We can ask God to help those leaders teach us well. And, we can ask God to work in our hearts as we listen to the leaders at our church teach from God's Word. We can ask God to use these leaders and His Word to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. That's how we can become God's people, too.

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

**Why Do God's People Go to Church?
To Worship God and Love One Another...
By Learning from God's Word, the Bible!**

Why do God's people go to church? To worship God and love one another... by learning from God's Word, the Bible! God's people love the Bible! Each time when they gather together they want to learn more from it. The Bible is how they learned they were sinners who deserved God's punishment for disobeying Him. The Bible is how they learned about God's rich mercy in sending Jesus to die as the Savior for all who would ever turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as their Savior. Through the Bible, they know God will teach them more and more about how to love Him and how to live to please Him. The Bible teaches us these things, too. We can also turn away from disobeying God and trust Jesus as our Savior. We can learn from it how to love God and live to please Him more and more. This is how we can become God's people and live as God's people! *Close in prayer.*

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You, God, for saving Your people, the Church. We praise You for giving us the Bible and godly leaders to teach it to us.
- C** God, sometimes we don't want to learn from the Bible. Sometimes we don't want to listen to the pastors preach from Your Word. There are other things we would rather do. We need a Savior!
- T** God, thank You for not leaving us on our own, but giving us the Bible, Your Word to learn from and to live by. Thank You for all the people in church who help us understand Your Word and help us to live it out. Thank You for our pastors and teachers.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love Your Word and learn it. Help us to live it out. Help our pastors and teachers to teach us well about You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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