

The Case of the Up and Down Sign*Matthew 28; Acts 1-2, 8:35-36, 10:47, 16:14-15,31-34***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 Up and Down Sign. 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. What did Jesus tell new believers to do to show they had begun a new life of following Him?
2. Why did they go up and down in the water when they did the special sign?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Acts 2:38**

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

I need to find out:

1. Who repented of their sins? How did their lives look different?
2. What did they do as a sign that their lives have changed?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: a banana, the Holy Spirit living in a heart, a Bible, water, a tree, and listeners.

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 the new believers confess to God? How did they ask him to help them live?

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 Up and Down Sign *Matthew 28; Acts 1-2, 8:35-36, 10:47, 16:14-15,31-34*

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) Wait, then go!” Jesus told His disciples. “Wait in Jerusalem until you receive God’s Holy Spirit. He will live in your heart and give you the power to do everything God wants you to do,” Jesus told them. “Then go! Go into all the world, to all peoples, everywhere. Tell them about Me.” Jesus told His disciples.

“Tell them to repent—to turn away from disobeying God!” Jesus said. “Tell them to trust in Me as their Savior that they may be forgiven their sins and saved. Teach them everything I’ve taught you and baptize them as a sign they have turned away from their old life and become God’s people, who live to please God,” Jesus urged them. “You won’t see me with your eyes anymore. I’m going to heaven now,” Jesus told His disciples. “But I will be with you always until the end of time when I come back to earth,” He promised.

And that’s just what happened. (SB2) Jesus went up, up, up to heaven. (SB3) And the disciples went back to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit to come.

And wait, they did. One day, two days, three days, a week, even nine days! Still no Holy Spirit! Would He ever come? Had Jesus forgotten His promise?

What do you think?

YES, the Holy Spirit would come! And, NO, Jesus had not forgotten. (SB4) He was waiting for the perfect time. DAY 10! The Day of Pentecost. (SB5) “Whoosh,” there was a sound like a great wind... inside their house! “Sparkle, sparkle,” something that looked like flames of fire appeared over their heads. (SB6) After this grand announcement, the Holy Spirit came quietly to live in the hearts of every one of those believers who gathered together that day.

The Holy Spirit might have come quietly, but He came powerfully, too! He gave the believers strength and courage and wisdom to do everything God wanted them to do.

The believers had waited. The Holy Spirit had come. Now what it was time to do? Can you remember what Jesus told them to do?

Can you remember?

Now it was time to GO!

But, go WHERE? WHERE were they to go?

Can you remember?

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

Jesus told them to go to the whole world. And go to the whole world with WHAT? Can you tell me what their special message was?

Can you tell me?

The good news of JESUS!

So, that's what they did, starting right there in Jerusalem.(SB7, SB8) "Jesus is God's Son He is the Savior who came to save sinners from God's punishment that they deserve," Peter told a huge crowd in Jerusalem."Turn away from disobeying God! Trust in Jesus as your Savior!" he urged them. "Be baptized as a sign that God has forgiven you and you are living a new life for Him."

The Holy Spirit wasn't just helping Peter that day. He was helping the people who listened to him preach, too. Many people heard and believed Peter's message—about 3000 of them, the Bible tells us!

But they didn't just believe and go about life the same way. They were changed people. They needed a special sign for this and Jesus had given them one. Can you remember what it was?

Can you remember?

It was baptism. (SB9) One by one, Peter led these new believers into the water. "I baptize you in the name of God, the Father, Jesus, the Son of God, and God, the Holy Spirit," he told each person. (flip to SB10) Then he carefully lowered him down into the water. Down they went, as a sign of their old life gone and their sins forgiven. Taken away by Jesus when He died on the cross and was buried in a grave. (flip back to SB9) Then a moment later, Peter lifted them back up out of the water. Up they came, as a sign of their new life for God begun. A new life given them by Jesus, who rose from the dead, proving He had beaten sin and death for them.

Baptism was a big step for these believers. No, it didn't make them God's people. It didn't save them from their sins. Salvation was the gift God gives to all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior, whether they are baptized or not. But baptism was a sign to the world... a very big sign. It told the world: "(SB11) This person is a follower of Jesus now. Watch him! Watch her! They will show you what Jesus is like and how God wants us to live. How He wants us to love Him and love one another."

(SB12) This sign of baptism would get them in trouble with Jesus' enemies. They didn't want more people to believe in Jesus. (SB13) And this sign would make more people curious to hear the good news of Jesus. They would see these changed, joyful, forgiven lives and want to know more.

(SB14) But perhaps best of all, this sign would make them welcomed as new brothers and sisters into the growing church family. And welcomed, they were. All three thousand. They gathered together with the rest of the little church of believers, learning from Peter and the other elders how to live as God's people, and listening to them preach God's Word. Praising God together and caring for each other's needs. Oh, how the church in Jerusalem was growing and enjoying new life in Jesus!

But Jerusalem was just the beginning of the "Go" Jesus had given them. To who else did Jesus tell them to take the gospel and make disciples?

Can you tell me?

To the WHOLE WORLD! So away they went!

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

(SB15) Philip went the land of Samaria, the home of their nearby enemies. He told them the good news of Jesus, too: "Jesus is God's Son He is the Savior who came to save sinners from God's punishment that they deserve," Philip told the people of Samaria. "Turn away from disobeying God! Trust in Jesus as your Savior! Be baptized as a sign that God has forgiven you and you are living a new life for Him," he urged them.

But, the Holy Spirit wasn't just helping Philip as he preached that day. (SB16) He was helping the people listening to him, too. Many of the people of Samaria heard and believed Philip's message.

(SB17) Yes, they believed in Jesus and they were baptized. (SB18) Philip gathered them together into a little church of believers. They learned from him how to live as God's people. They listened to him preach God's Word. They praised God together and cared for each other's needs. raising God together and caring for each other's needs. Oh, how the church in Samaria was growing and enjoying new life in Jesus!

But Samaria wasn't the ends of the earth. It was only the land next door to Israel. There were many more people in many other places who needed to hear the good news of Jesus, too.

(SB19) So away went Paul and Barnabas, Luke, Silas and Timothy, over the mountains and across the sea, to these tell these people. (SB20) "Jesus is God's Son He is the Savior who came to save sinners from God's punishment that they deserve," they told all who would listen. "Turn away from disobeying God! Trust in Jesus as your Savior! Be baptized as a sign that God has forgiven you and you are living a new life for Him," they urged them.

Did the Holy Spirit only helped these men as they told the good news of Jesus?

What do you think?

No, He did not! (SB21) The Holy Spirit was helping the people listening to them, too. Many of the people in these other, faraway places heard and believed their message.

Yes, they believed in Jesus and they were what?

Can you tell me?

(SB22) They were baptized. (SB23) Paul and Barnabas, Luke, Silas and Timothy gathered them together into little churches of believers. They learned from them how to live as God's people. They listened to them preach God's Word. They praised God together and cared for each other's needs. Oh, how the church in these faraway places was growing and enjoying new life in Jesus!

Many, many years have gone by since Jesus told those first Christians to go into all the world, to all people, everywhere, with the good news of salvation through Him, but the work is still not done! There are still so many people who live right near us and in faraway places, who right STILL have not heard the good news of Jesus.

And that's why Christians today are still obeying Jesus' command to go. That's why they are still telling people to turn away from disobeying God and to trust in Jesus as their Savior. That's why they are still baptizing all who do as a sign that they have been forgiven by God and are living a new life for Him.

And they will keep on going and telling and baptizing new believers until the church has finished growing and (SB24) Jesus comes back to gather all of God's people together to live with Him forever!

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. What did Jesus tell new believers to do to show they had begun a new life of following Him? To be baptized.

2. Why did they go up and down in the water when they did the special sign? They went down in the water to remember that their sins had been buried down in the grave with Jesus. They went up, out of the water to remember that God had forgiven their sins and was giving them new life with Jesus who rose up from the dead. Jesus had beaten sin and death for them!

For You and Me:

When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, A day will come when we, too, will be baptized. It will be a wonderful day of showing that we have truly turned away from our old life of living for ourselves and have begun a new life of living for God, by the help of His Holy Spirit.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Acts 2:38**

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

1. Who repented of their sins? How did their lives look different? The new believers repented of their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. The Holy Spirit lived inside of them. He helped them to love God and live for Him, instead of living their old way.

2. What did they do as a sign that their lives have changed? They were baptized so the world could know they were choosing to live as a Christian.

For You and Me:

When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, A day will come when we, too, will be baptized. It will be a wonderful day of showing that we have truly turned away from our old life of living for ourselves and have begun a new life of living for God, by the help of His Holy Spirit.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a banana, sin in a heart, a Bible, water, a tree, and listeners.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The Holy Spirit living in a heart, the Bible, the water and the listeners belong. The banana and the tree do not.

2.. What did the new believers confess to God? How did they ask Him to help them live? They confess their sins to God. They asked God to help them love Him and live for Him now.

For You and Me:

When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, A day will come when we, too, will be baptized. It will be a wonderful day of showing that we have truly turned away from our old life of living for ourselves and have begun a new life of living for God, by the help of His Holy Spirit.

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 Baptizing People Who Trust in and Live for Jesus!**

Why do God's people go to church? To worship God and love one another... by baptizing people who trust and live for Jesus!

It is a very special day when one of God's people is baptized. It's a special time that show to others that they have turned away from their sins and have trusted Jesus as their Savior. Their baptism is a sign to the world that their old way of life is gone. They are living for Jesus now. How do we become God's people? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. He will fill you with His Holy Spirit and you will know Him in your heart. And there will come a special day when you get to be baptized and share with the church the story of how God worked in your life and saved you! And even better than that day, will be the day when you leave this life behind and go to live with God forever! That will be best of all! God can help you do this, too! Ask Him to help you! He loves to answer this prayer.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for saving Your people, the Church, through Jesus. He is why we can become Your people.
- C** God, we know that we can never become Your people on our own. We have all turned away from You and Your good ways. We need a Savior!
- T** God, thank You for providing the way for us to become Your people through faith in Jesus. Thank You for giving them a new life when they turn away from their sins and trust in Him. Thank You for giving us baptism to help us remember the new way of life You give to all who do this.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to one day be able to stand before God's people and tell the story of how You saved us. Help us to trust our leaders to know when we are ready to be baptized and when we need to still wait and grow.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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