

The Case of the Savior, from Start to Finish

Genesis, The Gospels



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and/or prepare storyboard figures, if using. (Included 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 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 Savior, from Start to Finish. 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 Three-in-One?**
- 2. When was His plan?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 2 Corinthians 13:14, ESV

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

I need to know:

- 1. How did God the Father show His love to people?**
- 2. What wonderful gift of grace did Jesus give us? How did He make it possible for us to have the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in our hearts?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story.

They are: a guitar, a hammer, a tomato, a soldier, a dove, and a man named John.

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. What did God give John to help people repent of their sins and get ready for Jesus?**

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 Amazing Plan of the Three-in-One

Matthew 3:11-17; Mark 1:7-11; Luke 3:15-18, 21-23; John 1:19-34

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 order 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.

Long, long ago, there was a time before this world was made.

There were no mountains, no stars, no oceans, no plants. There were no birds, no animals, no fish, and no people. There was just the LORD, the one, true God.

Now that might sound very lonely, but actually it was (SB1) Perfect Wonderfulness—the most wonderful thing anyone can ever know. Why? Because while the LORD IS just one, true God, He is something else that is very, very special. He is God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit: three Persons, but just one God. Three-in-One. And the friendship—the fellowship—that He enjoyed in Himself was better than anything we can ever imagine. And that's why I call it "Perfect Wonderfulness."

The LORD did not need this world or anything in it to be happy. He was perfectly happy in Himself. But nonetheless, He wanted to make this world. He had a plan for it. A plan to create (SB2) a people for Himself. A people to share in His Perfect Wonderfulness with Him forever.

So way back in the beginning, God began His plan for the world and for His people. He created it all beautifully and perfectly--both the heavens and the earth (SB3,SB4). And last of all, He made (SB5) the first people who would share in that Perfect Wonderfulness with Him.

Do you know the names of those first people who God created?

What are their names?

They were named Adam and Eve.

How wonderful life was for Adam and Eve! God placed them in a beautiful garden with everything they needed. Best of all, He gave them Himself. (SB6) He gave them a spirit--a special heart. And through this spirit, Adam and Eve knew and loved God. They enjoyed His Perfect Wonderfulness. They obeyed Him and trusted Him. They loved their beautiful home. Yes, life was very wonderful with nothing wrong in it at all!

But then (SB7) God's enemy came. He tricked Adam and Eve into disobeying God. They thought they would be happier doing things their own way; but, oh, they were not! They lost their beautiful home and the perfect love they had for each other. Now, their bodies would get sick and one day would die. (SB8) Now, they and all their children after them would live in world broken with sin. Worst of all, they lost the bit of God's Perfect Wonderfulness they had in their hearts... and they deserved to stay separated from God forever. Oh, what a very, very sad day!

But God is so kind. He knew what people would do even before He even created them. And back then, before the beginning, He had already woven their RESCUE into His plans for the world. And what an amazing rescue it would be! Can you guess who He would send?

Can you guess?

He planned to send (SB9) Jesus, the Son of God. Yes, Jesus would choose to leave heaven and the full, close fellowship of Perfect Wonderfulness with God, His Father and the Holy Spirit. Down, down, down to earth He would go. He would make the way to save God's people. He would rescue them, so they could share in God's Perfect Wonderfulness once more.

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

So, at just the right time, (SB10) Jesus was born a baby in Bethlehem. He was still the Son of God, but now He was a human, too.

Life on earth was not like the Perfect Wonderfulness Jesus fully enjoyed in heaven. Can you imagine what it would be like to leave behind all that Perfect Wonderfulness and live in this broken world? Oh, how God must love us, that He would choose to do this to save us!

Every day, Jesus prayed to His Father and was helped by the Holy Spirit. But He looked forward to the day when He would once more enjoy that full, Perfect Wonderfulness with God, His Father and the Holy Spirit in heaven. And Jesus knew that because of what He was doing for God's people on earth, that they would get to be in heaven with Him, knowing and enjoying God fully. That was worth it all!

So for thirty, long years, (SB11) Jesus lived here on earth. He grew up, up, up until He was a man. He slept and he played. He did His chores and learned a job. And all the while, Jesus never, ever did anything wrong. He was preparing to be our perfect Savior.

Then one day, Jesus was done playing. He stopped doing His chores and put down His tools. He left His home in Galilee and He (SB12, SB13) headed to the River Jordan, far away in the wilderness.

Why did Jesus leave His home and go to the River Jordan? Was He hot and wanted to cool off? Did He want to go fishing? Was He going on vacation?

Why do you think Jesus went to the River Jordan?

No, Jesus wasn't going there for any of those reasons. Jesus was going down to the River Jordan because it was time to complete God's amazing rescue plan. And, it would start out there, at the River Jordan, with His funny-looking, funny-living cousin who lived there.

Do you know his name?

It was (SB14) a man named John.

Yes, John certainly looked funny! He never cut his hair or his beard. And he wore camel's hair for clothes!

John certainly lived funny, too...out there in the desert-y wilderness, eating nothing but (SB15) wild honey and hoppy, bumpy, crunchy locusts for food. Yum! Yum!

But John looked this way and lived this way for a very good reason: God had told him, too. God was preparing John for a special job. God would use him to get the people ready for Jesus.

John started preaching the message God gave him: (SB16) "It's time! The LORD is sending His Savior! Repent! Stop disobeying God and turn back to Him! Be baptized! Show that you want to live for God! Make sure you are ready for the Savior when He comes!" John told all who came out to the River Jordan to listen to him.

(SB17) All kinds of people came. Strong, army soldiers. Bad, cheating men like tax collectors. Other people came to listen, too. What do you think happened as they listened to this funny-looking, funny-living man?

What do you think happened?

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

(SB18) God used John's words to work in the hearts of many and help them repent of their sins. (SB19) Down into the water they waded with John and were baptized. They wanted to be ready for the Savior!

At last came the day everyone was waiting for--the day when Jesus left his home and (SB20) went down to the Jordan River.

"(SB21)He's here! The Savior I told you about," John exclaimed to the crowd down at the river that day. "He's come to take away God's punishment for your sins!"

"I've come for you to baptize Me," Jesus told John.

"Why should I baptize you, Jesus? You don't need to be baptized. You never disobey God," John told Jesus.

"Yes, but this is something I must do to be the Savior." Jesus replied. At last, John agreed.

(SB22) Into the water John and Jesus waded. John lowered Jesus down under the water, then brought Him back up again.

Then (SB23) Jesus prayed to God, His Father. And as He prayed, something amazing happened. (SB24) The heavens opened up and Someone came down. Can you guess who?

The Holy Spirit came down like a dove and rested upon Jesus. Then from heaven, God the Father spoke: (SB25) "This is my dear Son whom I love so much! I am so very pleased with Him," He said. Together, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit--the great God who was Three-in-One-- would carry out God's amazing plan to save His people!

Now it was time for Jesus' work to begin. Now He would begin to tell people how they could be saved. Soon He would suffer and die for their sins. It would be so very hard to complete God's good plan, but Jesus was willing to do it. From start to finish He would be the Savior! He would make the way for us to share in the Perfect Wonderfulness of God once more.

Over the next, three years, everything worked out just exactly as it was supposed to. (SB26) Jesus taught the people about God, His Father. He did amazing things, showing them that He was the Son of God, come to save them. And He promised to one day send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts as their Helper.

Then came the saddest and hardest and most amazing part of God's plan: (SB27) the day when Jesus chose to suffer and die on the cross as the full payment for the sins of God's people. Yes, for all who would every turn from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior, Jesus took their punishment that day so that they could be FORGIVEN once and for all!

Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, showing He had really beaten sin and death for them.

Jesus' work was done. It was time to go back home-- (SB28) back up to heaven to enjoy all of the Perfect Wonderfulness of fellowship with God, the Father and Holy Spirit again. What a wonderful day that was!

And what special helper did Jesus remember to send to God's people?

Can you remember who it is?

(SB29) Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to live in the hearts of God's people. Now, they could share in a little bit of the Perfect Wonderful of fellowship with God, right here on earth! But this was only a beautiful, tiny taste of the life they would have with God forever in heaven. (SB30) There, at last, they will get to enjoy all of the Perfect Wonderfulness of God that they possibly can! Oh, how wonderful!

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 was the Three-in-One? The LORD, the one, true God, is the Three-in-One. He is one God, but three persons—God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. When was His plan? It was a plan to love a people for Himself and save them through Jesus.

For You and Me:

We can be some of those people who God loves and saves when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help you! He loves to do this!

**Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:
Our Bible Verse is 2 Corinthians 13:14**

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

I need to find out:**1. How did God the Father show His love to people?**

God the Father showed His love by always planning to save them through His Son, Jesus.

2. What wonderful gift of grace did Jesus give us?

How did He make it possible for us to have the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in our hearts? Jesus gave us the gift of paying for our sins by He suffering and dying on the cross. When we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, God will forgive our sins and give us a new heart. The Holy Spirit comes to live in this brand-new heart. Without Jesus, no one would ever get to know God, have the Holy Spirit in their hearts, or go to live God in heaven.

For You and Me:

Jesus can be our Savior, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. Then, the Holy Spirit will come and live in our hearts and we will get to enjoy a little of the Perfect Wonderfulness of God now. And one day, when we go to live with God, we will get to enjoy as much of God's Perfect Wonderfulness that we can possibly know.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a guitar, a hammer, a tomato, a soldier, a dove, and a man named John.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The hammer, soldier, dove and John belong. The guitar and the tomato do not.

2. What did God give John to help people repent of their sins and get ready for Jesus?

God used the message He gave John.

For You and Me:

God still uses His messages to help us, today. His messages are written down in His Word, the Bible. He loves to work in our hearts as we hear His Word. He can help us to repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you! He loves to answer this prayer!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****How Can I Know What God Is Like?****He's Not Like Anyone Else!****He is God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
One God, but Three Persons!**

What an amazing plan the LORD, the great Three-in-One, had to save us! How wonderful that Jesus would come to earth to be our Savior! And He will most certainly be our Savior, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Him to save us. And if we do, God will not only forgive us and make us His special, dearly-loved people, but He will send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts. He will help us enjoy a little of the Perfect Wonderfulness of fellowship with God. He will help us know God and live for Him. But the Holy Spirit inside our hearts is only a little of what it will be like when God's people go to live with God. There, they will know all of His Perfect Wonderfulness that they can possibly know. Ask God to help you trust in Jesus as your Savior and become one of His people! He loves to answer this prayer!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, that You are the great and awesome God. There is no god like you. You are God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit: three Persons, but just one God!
- C** God, there is nothing as wonderful as knowing You and living for You, but too many times we choose to turn away from You. We choose to not trust You. We choose to do things our own way, instead of Your good way. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to forgive our sins. Thank You that because of Him, we can enjoy knowing You.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to know Your wonderful love. Give us what we need to live for You, through Jesus. Send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and change us.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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