

Unit 3: The Good News of God, the Gospel

Unit Big Question (and Answer): What Is the Gospel? It's Salvation through Faith in Jesus Christ!

Unit Bible Verse: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

Bible Truth 2 Concept: Salvation through Faith in Jesus Christ...We Have All Disobeyed God and Deserve His Punishment

God is our good Creator. He made us with a spirit, so we can know and love Him. He is our good King. He gave us good laws that show us how to love Him and love each other. The most wonderful life we can have is knowing and loving God. We were made to know Him and to live as He wants us to live.

But instead of choosing God and His wonderful way of life, we have all chosen to disobey Him and His good laws. We have chosen to live life our own, selfish way, instead. This is what the Bible calls "sin". Because God is good, He hates sin, and He will punish it. And oh, how terrible is God's punishment for sin! It is to live apart from Him and everything good forever! Every single one of us deserve this punishment for our sins.

But God isn't only good; He's merciful, too. Merciful means treating us better than we deserve, and that's just exactly how God offers to treat us. Yes, our sins must be punished, but God has chosen to take that punishment on Himself. That's why He sent Jesus, His own dear Son, to earth. Jesus came to take the punishment we deserved for our sins when He suffered and died on the cross. God promises to forgive all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. That can even include you and me! Isn't God amazing? How great is God's love for us!

Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Ecclesiastes 7:20,29

"There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins... This only have I found: God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes."

Learn a Little: "There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins."

Meaning

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. He created it all good. Oh, how wonderful was the love that those first people had for God! Oh, how wonderful it was to know Him and to obey Him! The big Bible word for loving God and living His good way is "righteous."

But that's not the way things are now. Sadly, we all have chosen to disobey God. We want to do things our own way, not God's good way. We make sneaky schemes and plan how we can get what we want or do what we want, instead of what God wants. Our hearts are not full of love for God or for others as they should be.

No one is righteous anymore. No one, that is, except Jesus, God's Son. God sent Jesus live a perfect, righteous life and give it as the payment for our sins. We can have Jesus' righteousness and become one of God's people, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. God loves to help us do this. Ask Him!

Bible Truth 2 ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being the good God who hates sin.
- C** We confess that we have all rebelled against You and Your good ways. We have all chosen to live life our own way instead. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You for not just being good, but for being merciful, too. Thank You for taking the punishment we deserve on Yourself that we might be saved. Thank You for offering us salvation through Jesus, when we repent of our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from living against You and Your good ways. Help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You and know You. Help us to obey Your good laws. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Bible Truth 2 Story**The Case of the Squabbling Brothers and Sisters***Romans***Songs Used in Bible Truth 2**

Big Question 3 Bible Verse Song: For God So Loved the World John 3:16

Extra Big Question 3 Bible Verse Song: For God So Loved the World John 3:16 (version 2)

Extra Big Question 3 Bible Verse Song: For God So Loved the World John 3:16 (version 3)

Big Question 3 Hymn: And Can It Be, v.1 Refrain

Big Question 3 Praise Song: I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse Song: There Is Not a Righteous Man Ecclesiastes 7:20,29

listen to or download songs for free at <https://praisefactory.org>: Deep Down Detectives Music page

The Case of the Squabbling Brothers and Sisters*Romans***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 (Optional)**"Our story is called: The Case of the Squabbling Brothers and Sisters. Here is your listening assignment..."***" Read the assignment for your lesson using Detective Dan's Listening Assignment sign or the text below:***Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:**

I need to know:

To squabble means to argue about something.

- 1. Who were the brothers and sisters who were squabbling?**
- 2. What were they squabbling about?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Ecclesiastes 7:20,29:***"There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins... This only have I found: God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes."*

I need to know:

- 1. What two kinds of families did the believers in Rome come from?**
- 2. What did they need to remember that would help them stop squabbling with each other?**

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

They are: Jews; a jar; Gentiles; fake gods; a bear; and a house.

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 thanked God for saving them through 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 Squabbling Brothers and Sisters *Romans**Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)*

Squibble, squabble, squibble squabble. The believers in the big city of Rome were fighting with each other.

At Priscilla and Aquila's house; and at Aristobulus' house. At Narcissus' house, and two other houses, little groups of believers gathered to worship God. They were all saved through Jesus. They were all part of God's family. And they should have been loving each other like sisters and brothers; but, they weren't! They were fighting with each other, instead. Squibble, squabble!

How do you think they were fighting each other? Hitting with their fists? Kicking with their legs?

What do you think?

No, they weren't hitting each other with their fists. No, they weren't kicking each other with their legs. But, oh, how they were fighting and hurting each other with the squibble-squabbling words that came out of their mouths!

What was all the fuss about? Well, it had to do with what kind of family you came from—a family of Jews or a family of Gentiles.

Jew and Gentile. Have you ever heard of those Bible family names? Let's find out what they are.

Some of the believers were Jews. They came from families who worshipped the LORD. They grew up learning the Bible and trying to obey its laws... ALL of them... and there were A LOT! (Laws is another word for rules.) Let me tell you about them.

There were...the Ten, Big Laws God gave them.

Can you remember the special name of the Ten, Big Laws?

The special name of these laws is the 10 Commandments. They were the LOVE laws. These laws told how to love God and love one another. That was the FIRST kind of laws that God gave the Jews to obey.

But there were more laws than just those! There was a SECOND kind of laws that God gave the Jews. These were the FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD laws. They told the Jews what worship gifts they needed to give to God when they disobeyed Him. These laws kept them in friendship with God.

But there were even more laws than those! There was a THIRD kind of laws that God gave the Jews. These were the LIVE TOGETHER laws. These told the Jews how to live their everyday lives--what clothes they should wear; what food they should eat; how to take care of sick people; what to do when they had arguments; and, other everyday things like that.

Wow! What a lot of laws God gave the Jews! But God had a good purpose for every one of them. These laws helped everyone know what God is like. And, they helped everyone see that the Jews were God's special people, living His way, and waiting for Him to send the Savior one day.

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

And at just the right time, God **DID** send the Savior--His Son, Jesus! Jesus lived a perfect life. He kept all of God's good laws. Then He suffered and died on the cross, giving His life as the final, perfect worship gift that paid for sins. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, showing that He had beaten sin and death for all who would turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. Jesus had made the way for us to be friends with God!

When these Jews heard the good news of Jesus, they were so happy! Here was the Savior they had been waiting for! He had paid for their sins! They trusted in Him as their Savior. Now they were God's people, saved through Jesus.

There is the special name for people who have Jesus as their Savior. Do you know what it is?

Can you tell me?

They are called Christians. And so now, these Jews weren't just Jews anymore. Now they were Christians.

But what should these Jewish Christians do with all those laws from God's Word? They had obeyed them for so long! Should they keep on obeying them now that Jesus had come? They thought about this A LOT!

Let's see... well, they **KNEW** they should keep on obeying God's Ten, Big, Love laws—the 10 Commandments. They still needed to keep on loving God and others, like the LOVE laws taught. That was clear.

And, they **KNEW** that Jesus had paid for their sins. His life had been the final worship gift. He gave them **FOREVER** friendship with God. So they did **NOT** have to keep the **FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD** laws anymore.

But what about all those **LIVE TOGETHER** laws? The ones about what Jews should eat and drink and do in their everyday lives? The Savior Jesus had come. Now they were Christians. Were they supposed to keep on living together like Jews, too?

Do you think God wanted them to keep those laws still?

Many of the Jews **LIKED** those **LIVE TOGETHER** laws. Actually they **LOVED** them. They didn't want to get rid of them...and they wanted everyone else to keep them, too. They thought that **EVERYONE** should become a Christian, saved through Jesus; but, they should keep on living together like Jews... **EVEN** the people who didn't grow up as Jews!

Uh oh, that might just cause a problem or two...especially for the believers who came from that **OTHER** kind of Bible family-- the Gentiles. Let me tell you about them.

Gentiles came from families who had **NOT** grown up knowing the Bible or keeping its laws—not the Ten, Big, Love laws or the Friendship with God laws, or even the Live Together laws. They had grown up worshipping fake gods. And actually, worshipping those fake gods meant doing some very bad things that disobeyed God's good laws--like the big, worship parties they held to honor them.

But when these Gentiles heard the good news of Jesus, they left their fake gods and their bad ways behind. They trusted in Jesus as their Savior and they wanted to live God's way now. They became Christians.

They gathered as a church with the Jewish believers. And as they listened to God's Word, they heard all about all those laws for the first time. Now everyone had a question...

Can you guess what the question was?

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

The question was: what should they--the people from Gentile families-- do with all of those laws?

Like the Jewish Christians, the Gentile Christians KNEW that they should obey God's Ten, Big, Love laws—the 10 Commandments. They still needed to keep on loving God and others, like those LOVE laws taught. That was clear.

And like the Jewish Christians, they KNEW that Jesus had paid for their sins. His life had been the final worship gift. He gave them FOREVER friendship with God. So they did NOT have to keep the FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD laws anymore.

But what about those LIVE TOGETHER laws? The laws that told the Jews how to live together. The Savior had come. Surely Gentiles didn't need to obey THOSE laws! Surely they didn't need to live like Jews to be Christians! That didn't make sense! They were saved through Jesus, not those laws! Nope. They would NOT obey the LIVE TOGETHER laws. No way!

And so came all of the squibble-squabbling.

"We're better than you, Gentiles," the Jewish Christians said. "Long ago, God chose US to be His special people through Abraham. He chose US to write down the Bible, His Word. He gave US the great promises about the Savior Jesus coming. Jesus came from OUR family. He was a Jew! God gave US His good laws—the LOVE laws and the FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD laws and the LIVE TOGETHER laws. All of them! We obey them and so should you! That's what God's people have always done," they told the Gentiles.

"You are NOT better than us!" the Gentile Christians squabbled back. "Yes, you're right. Long ago, you Jews WERE chosen to be God's special people. But now, many people from your family don't even believe in Jesus. Maybe we ARE just Gentiles. Maybe our families didn't come from God's special people, long ago. But we believe in the Savior Jesus NOW! And a lot more of US believe in Him than you, Jews! Look who God is choosing to make into His special people NOW— it's us, Gentiles. And we DON'T have to keep all of your Live Together Laws!" they squabbled back.

Far away in the city of Corinth, Paul heard about these squabbles. Paul had come from a Jewish family. He had grown up reading the Bible and learning God's laws. He had tried as hard as he could to keep them all, but he could never obey them as God required. Nope, if there was one thing Paul knew, it was only by trusting in Jesus as their Savior that ANYONE can be forgiven of their sins. That was the only way to become one of God's people. These believers needed to remember this; so, Paul decided to do something about it.

Can you guess what Paul did?

Paul wrote them a letter.

"Help me write to the believers in Rome," Paul asked his friend, Tertius. So Tertius got out his scroll and wrote down Paul's words:

**"Dear believers in Rome,
I thank God for saving you! I can't wait for the day when I will get to see you and we can encourage each other in our faith in God! God has given me the job of preaching to all of you--both Jews and Gentiles. One day, I hope to come and preach more of the good news of Jesus to you in Rome, face-to-face.**

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

I know you are squabbling about who comes from a better family—the Jews or the Gentiles. I know you are squabbling about the Live Together Laws from God’s Word. But remember: all people have sinned against God—both Jews and Gentiles. EVERYONE! None of us is righteous. None of us does what is good and never sins. NO ONE! We all deserve God’s punishment.

Jews: God may have chosen your family to write down His Word, the Bible. He may have given your family His laws to live by. But you couldn’t obey them all, could you? Nope! You were all law breakers! You needed a Savior to save you from your sins. Only Jesus could do that for you. Be thankful, not proud!

And you, Gentiles: Yes, maybe a lot more people from your Gentile families are trusting in Jesus as their Savior than the Jews these days, but it’s not because Gentiles are better than Jews. It’s only because God has been kind enough to save you through Jesus, too. Be thankful, not proud!

You are ALL part of God’s family. The Holy Spirit lives in ALL of you. Stop your squibble-squabbling! Love each other like sisters and brothers should! Use the gifts God has given each of you to care for each other and to show others how great God is!

Praise God together with me! He gives us everything we need through Jesus, our Savior!

Paul

Paul rolled up the letter and gave it to Phoebe to take to the believers in faraway Rome.

What happened when Paul’s letter was read to the believers in Rome? We don’t really know. The Bible doesn’t tell us. How Paul hoped it would help them remember that they ALL needed Jesus to be their Savior. How he hoped it would stop their squibble-squabbling over who is best and over those LIVE TOGETHER laws!

Paul wanted them to love God and love one another. He wanted them to live out the good news of Jesus together, and share it with others. And I hope that’s exactly what they did!

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:

To squabble means to argue about something.

1. Who were the brothers and sisters who were squabbling? The believers in Rome.

2. What were they squabbling about?

They were squabbling about who was best--the Jews or the Gentiles. And, if all believers should keep the Live Together laws of the Jews.

For You and Me:

Just like the believers in Rome, we need to remember that it is only through God's free gift of forgiveness through Jesus that anyone can become one of God's people. This can be His gift to us, too, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Ecclesiastes 7:20, 29:**

"There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins... This only have I found: God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes."

I need to know:

1. What two kinds of families did the believers in Rome come from? From Jew and Gentile families.

2. What did they need to remember that would help them stop squabbling with each other? That none of them had been righteous. None of them had pleased God by their own, good works. They were saved only through the Savior, Jesus. That's what mattered. Not the Live Together laws.

For You and Me:

None of us can ever be good enough to please God. None of us would ever be able to know God or be His people on our own. But the good news is that Jesus did live a perfect life. He offered up His righteous to pay for the sins of God's people--all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. God loves to help us do this. Ask Him!

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. They are: Jews; a jar; Gentiles; fake gods; a bear; and a house.

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? The Jews; Gentiles; fake gods; and the house belong in the story. The jar and bear were not.

2. Who thanked God for saving them through Jesus? Paul and the believers in Rome all thanked God for saving them through Jesus.

For You and Me:

God's people know that they could never live good enough lives to get to be God's people. They thank God for sending Jesus to pay for their sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Jesus can pay for our sins, too, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. Then we can thank God for saving us and making us His people, too!

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

It's Salvation through Faith in Jesus Christ...

we have all disobeyed God and deserve His punishment!

Did you know that Paul's letter to those believers in Rome became part of God's Word, the Bible? Millions and millions of people have read his letter to those people in Rome and learned from them. Why, even you are learning from them today! What is the most important thing that we can learn from Paul's letter? It is that all of us are lawbreakers who have chosen to disobey God. We all need to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. And if we do, God will forgive us and make us His dearly-loved people forever!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being the good God who hates sin.
- C** We confess that we have all rebelled against You and Your good ways. We have all chosen to live life our own way instead. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You for not just being good, but for being merciful, too. Thank You for taking the punishment we deserve on Yourself that we might be saved. Thank You for offering us salvation through Jesus, when we repent of our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from living against You and Your good ways. Help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You and know You. Help us to obey Your good laws.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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