

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 only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16, ESV

Bible Truth 4 Concept: Salvation through Faith in Jesus Christ...God Saves All Who Repent of Their Sins and Trust in Jesus as Their Savior!

God is our good Creator and King. He made us to know Him, love Him and obey His good laws. But sadly, we all have chosen to disobey God and His good laws. We deserve His punishment for our sins. We have all turned away from Him.

But God has made a way for us to be forgiven our sins and to become His people. In His great love and mercy, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Jesus lived a perfect life. He never disobeyed God. He offered up His life as the full payment for sin when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead. Jesus had done it! He had beaten sin and death for God's people!

How can we become one of God's people? Who can receive God's gift of forgiveness? All who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. Repent means to stop living a life full of disobeying God and to start living to please God, instead. God can help us repent and believe. Ask Him!

How wonderful it is to be one of God's people! To have special closeness with God by His Holy Spirit living in your heart now. And one day, to go live with God forever. That will be best of all!

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Mark 1:15, ESV

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel!"

Learn a Little: "Repent and believe in the gospel!"

Meaning

For years and years, God had promised to send a Savior to save us from our sins. For years and years, people waited and watched...and they watched and waited. At last, Jesus came! He taught the people about God and did amazing things. He showed them that He was God's Son, the Savior God had promised.

But what did people have to do, if they were to be forgiven by God for their sins? Jesus told them: "Repent and believe in the gospel--the good news that Jesus was God's Son, the Savior, sent to save them. We can be forgiven, too, when we repent (that is, turning away disobeying God and turning to live for God, instead) and believe that Jesus is God's Son, the Savior. God loves to help us do this. Ask Him!"

Bible Truth 4 ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being so full of love and mercy! You call us to repent and believe in Jesus that we might be saved.
- C** We confess that we often disobey You and Your good ways. We choose to live life our own way, not Yours. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for offering us salvation through Jesus, when we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to joyfully obey You. You know what is best for us and what brings You glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Bible Truth 4 Story**The Case of the Changes in Cruddy Crete***Titus*

Songs Used in Bible Truth 4

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

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

Extra Big Question 3 Bible Verse Song: For God So Loved the World John 3:16 ESV (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 4 Bible Verse Song: The Time Is Fulfilled Mark 1:15, ESV

Bible Truth 4 Extra Bible Verse Song: The Time Mark 1:15, ESV (other version)

Bible Truth 4 Extra Bible Verse Song: Everyone Who Names the Name 2 Timothy 2:19,22, ESV

Bible Truth 4 Extra Bible Verse Song: Help Us, O God of Our Salvation Psalm 79:9, ESV

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

The Case of the Changes in Cruddy Crete*Titus***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 Changes in Cruddy Crete. 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 find out:

Cruddy is a word that means something is no good.

- 1. What was Crete and what was so cruddy about it?**
- 2. Who changed in Crete? How did they change?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Mark 1:15, ESV:***“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”*

I need to find out:

- 1. Who went to Crete to tell the people to repent and believe?**
- 2. What was the gospel that he wanted them to repent and believe in?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: A liar; a palm tree; a pizza; a pair of shoes; a man named Titus; and, a lazy, over-eater.

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

I need to figure out:

- 1. Which four belong in our story?**
- 2. Who repented of their sins and asked God for forgiveness? Who helped them do this?**

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 Changes in Cruddy Crete *Titus*

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

This story is an island story. Do you know what an island is?

What can you tell me about an island?

It's a little piece of land stuck out in the middle of a big piece of water, such as a sea or an ocean. The island in this story was very famous for something. Let's think what it might be.

Some islands are famous for their tall, volcano mountains that spray out smoke and hot lava. THIS island had tall, volcano mountains with smoke and lava... but that's not what it was famous for.

Some islands are famous for their beautiful, sandy beaches with palm trees blowing in the breeze and colorful fish swimming in the clear, blue water. THIS island had beautiful beaches with swaying palm trees. It had colorful fish swimming in the clear water... but that's not what it was famous for.

Some islands are even famous for their tasty, island food and their good, island people. Ah...and NOW we're getting very close to what THIS island was famous for. Because, while this island DID have tasty, island food that was yummy in your tummy, it was famous for NOT having that other thing I just told you about. Can you remember what it was?

Can you remember?

It was good, island people! Yes, THIS island was famous for its BAD, island people. And that's why, though the name of this island was really just "Crete," most people thought of it more like "Cruddy Crete." (Cruddy is a word that means something is no good.) This island was filled with many bad people doing many bad things. There were liars and cheaters, and lazy, over-eaters, just to name a few. And that's why "Cruddy Crete" was really a very good nickname for the island of Crete.

Many people stayed away from Cruddy Crete. After all, why would anyone want to go to a place like this with all these bad people doing all these bad things? Surely there were other islands with beaches and fish and volcanoes and tasty food that had GOOD island people. So why go to one with such BAD people on it?

Does this sound like an island you would like to visit?

Cruddy Crete certainly doesn't sound like any place I would like to visit; but, our story is about two men—Paul and Titus-- who very much wanted to go there. And as crazy as it sounds, they wanted to go there for the very reason that you and I might NOT want to: all those bad people! There was something very important that Paul and Titus wanted to tell them.

Can you guess what it was that Paul and Titus wanted to tell them?

What do you think they wanted to tell them?

Paul and Titus wanted to tell the people of Cruddy Crete the gospel—the good news that Jesus, the Savior had come and could save them--even them--from their sins.

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

You see, sinners—people who disobey God and His good ways—were exactly the kind of people Jesus had come to save. And Jesus was such a great Savior that there were no people too cruddy and no hearts too full of sin that Jesus could not save them. Jesus could save even the WORST of sinners—even people as bad as those on Cruddy Crete.

Perhaps that's why Paul wanted to go to Crete so very much. Paul had once been a bad sinner like them. He had been a hater of Jesus. He had done many bad things to hurt Jesus' followers. He had even wanted them dead! Paul deserved God's punishment for all the bad things he had done; but, God chose to forgive Paul's sins through Jesus, instead. Paul trusted in Jesus as his Savior and repented of his sins. God saved Paul and changed him. Paul was so grateful to God for forgiving his sins! And if there was one thing Paul loved to tell others, it was how God could save and change them, too.

So off Paul went with his young friend, Titus. They headed by boat to Cruddy Crete to tell the people the good news of the gospel. Paul and Titus sailed over the wavy seas for many days. At last they were so far out to sea that there was nothing to see but water. Where was Crete? Were they lost? Then, "Land, ho!" Someone spotted an island in the distance. It was Crete—Cruddy Crete--at last!

When Paul and Titus got to Crete, they saw the volcano mountains, and the sandy beaches, and the colorful fishes swimming in the clear waters. They saw the swaying palm trees and tasted the good, island food. Then they met the island people; and yep, those people were cruddy, all right! Liars and cheaters and lazy, over-eaters, just to name a few. Oh, how these people needed to know about the Savior, Jesus!

Paul and Titus went right to work. From town to town they walked, sharing the good news of Jesus everywhere they went--with the liars and the cheaters and the lazy, over-eaters and everyone else who would listen. And this is the good news of the gospel they shared:

God is the good King and Creator of the world. He made us and gave us His good laws to live by. But we have all chosen to disobey God and we deserve His punishment! We need a Savior to save us from our sins. God, Himself, provided that Savior-- His very, own Son, Jesus. Jesus came to earth. He lived a perfect life, then on the cross He suffered and died as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of God's people. Jesus rose up from the dead on the third day in victory. Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will be saved! They will be God's special people and live with Him forever. "Come, repent; come, believe in Jesus! Come, be saved from your sins!" Paul urged the people of Cruddy Crete.

What would happen? Would they believe? Would they repent?

What do you think happened?

God worked in the hearts of the liars, and the cheaters, and the lazy over-eaters as they listened to Paul preach. They could see that they were sinners. They could see that they needed a Savior. They wanted God's forgiveness through Jesus.

But what ELSE had Paul told these people they needed to do to be saved? It wasn't only BELIEVE. There was something else they needed to do. Can you remember what it was?

Can you tell me what it was?

They needed to REPENT and believe. Uh oh! Now THAT might be trouble for the people of Cruddy Crete. That meant it wasn't enough for those cruddy people of Crete to just BELIEVE that Jesus was the Savior. That meant it wasn't enough for them just to TRUST in Him as their Savior. It might be easy to just believe and trust.

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

They needed to **REPENT** of their sins, too. They needed to **change the way they were living**, too. It didn't mean they would be perfect and never sin again. Only Jesus could live a perfect life. But, it **DID** mean that they turned away from lying and cheating and lazy, over-eating as their way of life. They would choose to live for God, instead.

WOULD the people of Cruddy Crete do this? **COULD** they do this? They had been such bad people, living their own way for so long!

What do you think? Could they turn away from their sins?

Yes, they **COULD**; and yes, they **WOULD**! How? God, Himself, would help them live for Him! He was working in their hearts. He was helping them not only trust in Jesus as their Savior, but also to repent of their sins. This is the power of the gospel! He would help those liars turn from their lying, and those cheaters to turn from their cheating, and those lazy over-eaters to turn away from their lazy over-eating! Yes! He would help them **ALL** to turn away from living their bad lives...and He would keep on helping them trust in Jesus and live for Him the **REST** of their lives. God would always be their helper!

So right then and there, many people in Cruddy Crete repented of their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. And before long, there were little groups of believers in every town on the island. How happy that made Paul and Titus!

Paul soon set sail for other lands. There were so many more people he wanted to share the good news of Jesus with!

But Titus stayed right there in Crete, caring for these new believers as their pastor. Titus loved them and prayed for them and taught them the Bible. What a lot of help these people needed! After all, this was Cruddy Crete, where wicked ways were right at home. All around them were people who **STILL** were liars and cheaters and lazy, over-eaters! And that cruddy, ole sin was so tempting! It kept wanting to creep right back into their lives and it made it very hard for those new believers to keep on loving God and living for Him. Oh, how they wanted to love God and live for Him; but oh, how they struggled!

Far away in Corinth, Paul heard about their struggles. He wrote a letter to encourage them. Zenas and Apollos sailed over the wavy seas to Crete and gave it to Titus. This is what Titus read:

Dear Titus,

I know things are hard in Cruddy Crete. Remind the new believers that the gospel they heard us preach was to repent **AND** believe. That means God's people need to keep on turning away from their sins **AND** keep on believing in Jesus every day. This can be very hard, especially on Cruddy Crete—where wicked ways are right at home. Urge the new believers to keep on turning away from their sins. Urge them to use their lives to do good to each other, to love God, and to hold onto God's Word, the Bible. Remind them that they don't have to do this on their own. The God who helped them repent and believe in Him at the beginning, promises to always be with them. He will help them keep on believing in and living for Him every day.

Say hello to everyone for me. And may God help you live for Him!

Paul

What happened on Cruddy Crete after Titus read Paul's letter and shared it with the believers? Did the new believers keep on repenting of their sins as well as believing in Jesus? The Bible doesn't tell us. It would have been hard to do on Cruddy Crete, but not impossible. Why? Because God doesn't just help people repent and believe in Jesus at the beginning. He promises to keep helping them to believe in Him and live for Him their whole lives—even in a place like Cruddy Crete, where wicked ways were right at home.

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:

Cruddy is a word that means something is no good.

1. What was Crete and what was so cruddy about it? Crete was an island. It was filled with people who rebelled against God and His good ways. They are what made the island so cruddy.

2. Who changed in Crete? How did they change?

Many people changed in Crete when they heard the good news of Jesus. God's Holy Spirit worked in their hearts and helped them to repent of their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

For You and Me:

Maybe we don't live in Cruddy Crete, but we need Jesus to be our Savior, just as much as they did. God can help us repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, just like He helped them! Ask Him to help you!

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is: Mark 1:15, ESV**

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

1. Who went to Crete to tell the people to repent and believe? Paul with his young friend, Titus.

2. What was the gospel that he wanted them to repent and believe in?

The good news that we can be forgiven our sins and become God's people through Jesus. Paul wanted the people of Crete to repent of their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He wanted them to become God's people, too.

For You and Me:

The gospel Paul shared with the people of Crete is for us, too. God offers to forgive our sins and make us His people when repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you! He loves to do this!

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a liar; a palm tree; a pizza; a pair of shoes; a man named Titus; and, a lazy, over-eater.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The liar; the palm tree; Titus; and, the lazy, over-eater.

2. Who repented of their sins and asked God for forgiveness? Who helped them do this?

Many people in Crete. Paul helped them do this, by telling the gospel and preaching God's Word. God's Holy Spirit helped them do this by working in their hearts as they listened to Paul.

For You and Me:

Just like the people in Crete, we have heard the good news of Jesus. Just like them, God calls us to repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. God helped the people of Crete repent and believe. He can help us, too. Ask Him to help you!

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...

God Saves All Who Repent of Their Sins and Trust in Jesus as Their Savior!

Like the people in Cruddy Crete, we have all chosen to disobey God and live our own way. We, too, deserve God's punishment for rebelling against Him. What good news is it to hear that God sent Jesus to be our Savior, too. Jesus died on the cross as the perfect payment for sins. On the third day, He rose from the dead, proving He had really beaten sin and death for us!

How can Jesus be our Savior? When we turn away from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. God delighted to help many people in Crete do this. He can help you, too. Ask Him!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being so full of love and mercy! You call us to repent and believe in Jesus that we might be saved.
- C** We confess that we often disobey You and Your good ways. We choose to live life our own way, not Yours. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for offering us salvation through Jesus, when we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to joyfully obey You. You know what is best for us and what brings You glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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