

The Case of the Rotten Innards

Luke 18:9-14



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 Rotten Innards. 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:

“Innards” is a funny word that means a person’s insides. And in this case, it means a person’s heart, meant to love and obey God.

I need to know:

- 1. Who had a rotten heart and knew it? Who had a rotten heart and DIDN’T know it?**
- 2. What did Jesus want them all to do?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Romans 3:20,21,22,23, HCSB

“For no one will be justified in [God’s] sight by the works of the law...But now, apart from the law, God’s righteousness has been revealed... God’s righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ, to all who believe...For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

I need to know:

- 1. Who thought they were justified (good) in God’s sight? Why weren’t they?**
- 2. What did Jesus want these people to do?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: a drum, a Pharisee, a golden box, a sick man, the Temple, and a bag of money..

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 the bad, bad, bad man pray that pleased God? What did God do for this man?**

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 Rotten Innards *Luke 18:9-14*

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.

Many sick people came to see Jesus. (SB1) They came with their limping legs, their blind eyes, their skin with sores, and their bleeding that wouldn't stop. Some of them were about to die. They all came to Jesus, and what do you think Jesus did?

Can you guess?

(SB2) Jesus healed them with God's power! No doctor or medicine needed! "Who has ever healed sick people the way Jesus does?" they exclaimed.

(SB3) People who wanted to hear about God came to Jesus, too. They crowded around Jesus, listening to everything He had to say. Jesus told them about God and His Kingdom. He told them how God wanted them to live. (SB4) They listened to Jesus and were amazed at what He had to say. "Who has ever told us about God the way Jesus does?" they exclaimed.

(SB5) Even people who had done very sinful things came to Jesus. Men and women who had disobeyed God's Ten Commandments in so many ways: people who had stolen money; people who had not loved their husbands or wives; people who had hurt other people; people who had worshipped other gods, and so many more. They all came to Jesus, and what do you think happened?

What do you think?

(SB6) Jesus gave them God's forgiveness, when they turned away from their sins and trusted in Him. "Who has ever forgiven sins the way Jesus does?" they exclaimed.

Sick people, sinful people, people eager to learn about God, all came to Jesus, and He satisfied them. How wonderful, how amazing was Jesus!

(SB7) But there was another kind of people who came to Jesus, too. These people were different from all the rest. They weren't sick. They weren't eager to learn about God from Jesus. And most of all, they didn't even think they were sinners who needed God's forgiveness. They were the important Bible teachers back in Jesus' day. They had a special name for themselves. Do you know what it was?

Can you remember?

They were called the Pharisees.

The Pharisees were smart students, and they studied hard. (SB8) Not only did they learn and try to obey God's Ten Commandments, but they learned and tried to obey the hundreds of God's other laws, too. They spent day after day, week after week, year after year, learning them all by heart! Wow!

But obeying God's laws wasn't enough for the Pharisees. They wanted to be extra careful to please God, so (SB9) they added a lot of extra, little rules for everyone to obey. Rules that God didn't give His people. They added extra rules about washing your hands just right. (Not to get rid of dirt or germs that might make you sick, as we do, but because they thought these specially cleaned hands were how you pleased God.) Those hand-washing rules were just the beginning of what they added to God's laws. There were rules about food to eat or not eat, about giving extra gifts to God, and about what work you could NOT do on the Sabbath Day of Rest (such as not looking in a mirror because you might be tempted to pluck out a gray hair from your head), and lots of other rules. The Pharisees tried very hard to obey all their extra, little rules. (SB10) They wanted the people to obey them, too. They thought those extra, little rules helped everyone keep God's big laws better. They thought those extra rules pleased God and made them good people.

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

And most of all, the Pharisees thought God might send the Messiah, the Savior, sooner if everyone was very good, and kept all the little, bitty rules as well as God's big laws. Oh, how they wanted the Messiah to come!

But those Pharisees were wrong about so many things! They didn't realize that the Messiah, the Savior, HAD come already. He was right there, living among them, teaching them about God, and doing amazing things by God's power. Can you tell me who God's Savior was?

Can you tell me?

It was Jesus!

And the Pharisees were wrong about something else, too. (SB11) Instead of becoming good, good, good people when they kept all of these extra little, bitty, rules, these Pharisees became (SB12) proud, proud, proud people! "We are better than everyone else because we do such a good job obeying all these extra, little, bitty rules," many of them thought. "We're so good that we don't need God's forgiveness, as other people do. God is pleased with us just the way we are!" they believed.

Do you think these Pharisees were right? Did keeping all of these extra, little, bitty rules mean they didn't need God's forgiveness?

How very wrong those Pharisees were! All those extra, little, bitty rules they made up didn't please God. Why, even trying very hard to obey all of God's big laws isn't enough to please God! There is only ONE WAY to please God by obeying His laws. Do you know what it is?

It is being PERFECT. That right! It's obeying God's laws ALL THE TIME! Never disobeying ...EVER! Never saying anything wrong or doing anything wrong. Never thinking anything wrong or BEING anything wrong. Do you think that sounds like something those Pharisees could do?

What do you think?

No, the Pharisees could not be this good. (SB13) They had "rotten innards" --sinful hearts-- just like everyone else. They would never be able to please God by trying to be good.

And guess what? Neither can we. Why? Because every one of us has a sinful heart, too. Every one of us has broken God's laws. We all need God's forgiveness for our sins. That is the only way we can know and please God. That's the only way we can live with God as His people.

But these poor, proud Pharisees would just not see this. They were SURE that they were already good enough to please God, and they were SURE that all those other people who came to Jesus were not. So, what did Jesus do with these proud men who thought they were so good?

What do you think He did?

Jesus loved them, that's what He did. Jesus wanted to help them, just like He wanted to help everyone else who came to Him. So, Jesus told them a story to help them see that they needed God to save them and forgive them, just like everyone else did. Maybe then they would understand that they were sinners and would ask God for forgiveness.

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

And this is the story Jesus told them:

“One day, two men went to God’s Temple (the worship place) to pray. (SB14) One man was a Pharisee. (SB15) The other man was a tax collector,” Jesus said.

“The Pharisee thought of himself as a very good man who pleased God by obeying God’s laws and the teachers’ extra rules. So, he stretched his arms up high and looked up to heaven and proudly prayed, “God, thank You that I am different from other men, like that tax collector over there. I don’t do the bad things they do. (SB16) I am good, good, good. (SB17) I keep all your laws and all the extra rules of my teachers, too,” he prayed.

Can you believe that? That Pharisee didn’t praise GOD for being good! He only boasted to God about his OWN goodness! That Pharisee wasn’t really a good, good, good man at all, was he? No! (SB18) He was really a proud, proud, proud man!

Then, Jesus went on with his story. He told about the other man. “The tax collector came to the Temple knowing he was a bad, bad, bad man. (SB19) He knew he had “rotten innards” --a sinful heart. He knew the sin in his heart showed in how he lived. (SB20) He had chosen to disobey God’s good laws. He had chosen to become rich by taking too much money from people.

And when this tax collector prayed to God, it wasn’t boldly and proudly like the Pharisee. No, this man KNEW he had done lots of bad things and he was sad about them. He was sad he had disobeyed God’s laws and treated others so badly. He KNEW he wasn’t right with God; and oh, how he wanted to be!

The tax collector was too ashamed of his sins to stretch up his arms or look up to heaven to pray. He looked down at his feet, beat his chest, and cried out to God, “God, have mercy on me! I am so bad. I have disobeyed Your laws. I have a sinful heart. Have mercy on me! Please, forgive my sins!”

Then Jesus told the Pharisees listening to Him: “(SB21) The Pharisee went home feeling proud. He was so sure that his life pleased God, but he was wrong. God is not pleased with proud people who don’t see that they are sinners who need His forgiveness,” Jesus told them.

“But that tax collector, who knew he was a sinner,(SB22) went home forgiven by God,” Jesus said. **“God loves to forgive sinners --even very bad sinners-- who confess their sins to Him and humbly ask for His forgiveness,”** Jesus told them.

What did the Pharisees think of Jesus’ story? Did they learn from it? Did they see that everyone has broken God’s laws, even people, like themselves, who tried really hard to be good? Did they, at last, see that no one can ever do enough good things to be proud before God? Did they see their own sins and ask God to forgive them?

What do you think?

The Bible doesn’t tell us what happened with those Pharisees that day. But, we DO know that later, some of these very important teachers --like (SB23) Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus-- DID turn away from their sins and asked God to forgive them. (SB24) They put their trust in Jesus as their Savior. And did you know that these two men were the very ones who put Jesus’ body in the cave-grave, after He had suffered and died on the cross?

How amazed and happy they both must have been when (SB25) Jesus rose from the dead on the third day! Jesus really was the Messiah, the Savior, God had sent to save His people and forgive their sins! He had beaten sin and death for all who turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior.

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:

"Innards" is a funny word that means a person's insides. And in this case, it means a person's heart, meant to love and obey God.

I need to know:

1. Who had a rotten heart and knew it? Who had a rotten heart and DIDN'T know it? Many of the people who came to see Jesus knew they had disobeyed God's laws and were sinners. They knew they needed God's forgiveness. The Pharisees were also sinners with "rotten hearts," but they didn't know it. They thought they pleased God with all the laws they kept and all the good things they thought they did.

2. What did Jesus want them all to do? Jesus wanted everyone to turn away from their sins, ask God for forgiveness, and trust in Him as their Savior.

For You and Me:

Just like everyone in Jesus' day, we, too, have sinful "rotten" hearts. We all break God's laws and we need His forgiveness. We can have His forgiveness when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. God will forgive our sins and make us His people. Ask God to help you! He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Romans 3:20,21,22,23, HCSB**

"For no one will be justified in [God's] sight by the works of the law...But now, apart from the law, God's righteousness has been revealed... God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ, to all who believe...For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

I need to know:

1. Who thought they were justified (good) in God's sight? Why weren't they? The Pharisees thought they were justified in God's sight because they obeyed God's laws and all the extra rules. They weren't justified because no one (except Jesus) keeps God's laws perfectly---and that's the only way to be justified by obeying God's law.

2. What did Jesus want these people to do? He wanted them to understand that they were sinners who needed to turn to God and ask for His forgiveness. He wanted them to trust in Him as their Savior, so they might be saved from their sins.

For You and Me:

Just like the Pharisees, we also cannot be justified (made right with God) by doing good things and trying to obey God's laws. We will never obey them perfectly. We all break God's laws and we need His forgiveness. We can have His forgiveness when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. God will forgive our sins and make us His people. Ask God to help you! He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. They are: a drum, a Pharisee, a golden box, a sick man, the Temple, and a bag of money.

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 Pharisee, the sick man, the Temple and the bag of money belong. The drum and the golden box do not.

2. What did the bad, bad, bad man pray that pleased God? What did God do for this man? He told God that he was a sinner and asked for God to show him mercy. He knew he needed God's forgiveness. God forgave his sins.

For You and Me:

Like the tax collector, we, too, have sinned against God. We need God to forgive our sins. And God will! How? When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. God will forgive our sins and make us His people. Ask God to help you! He loves to answer this prayer!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****What Are God's Laws Like?****God's Laws Are Perfect...****They Show Us that We Need God to Save Us!**

How true that is! We learn God's good laws, but we break them! We choose to disobey God. We all deserve God's punishment for our sins! And we know that we can never deserve His forgiveness. How sad! God would have been perfectly fair to give us all the punishment we deserve for breaking His laws. He is holy and good. But God is so rich in mercy. He chose to give us something better than we deserve. He sent His Son Jesus to live a perfect life. Yes! Jesus kept every, single one of God's laws! And on the cross, He suffered and died, giving His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of all who turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. He had really beaten sin and death! Because of Jesus, all who trust in Him as their Savior get to enjoy wonderful, special closeness with God as His special people, even now. And one day, they will go to live with Him forever. We can be God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus. Ask Him to help you! He loves to do this!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for being the Giver of Your perfectly good laws.
- C** God, instead of obeying Your good laws, we have all chosen to break them. Sometimes, we don't obey our parents. Sometimes, we lie. Sometimes, we want things that belong to others. We do not always love you most of all. These are only some of the ways we break Your good laws. Oh, how we need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for giving us Your good laws, so we know how to love and obey You. And thank You for sending Jesus to perfectly live out Your laws and to give His life as the perfect payment for the sins of Your people. Thank You that He can be our Savior when we turn away from our sins and trust in Him.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from disobeying You and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. Help us to know You and love You with the spirit You put inside us. Help us to learn Your good laws and obey them. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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