

The Case of the Costly Children

Exodus 24, Jeremiah 25, Isaiah 9,42,43,49, Ezekiel 37, Daniel 9, Zechariah 8-14



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 Costly Children. 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. Whom did God adopt as His dearly-loved children?**
- 2. What made adopting them so costly to God?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 1 John 4:10, ESV

“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

I need to find out:

- 1. Whom did God love before they loved Him?**
- 2. Whose sins were forgiven by Jesus’ sacrifice?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: a big promise, the sun, a boat, a man named Jeremiah, soldiers, a cross.

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. Who needed to confess their sins to God? Who needed to ask Him to be their Savior?**

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 Costly Children *Exodus 24, Jeremiah 25, Isaiah 9,42,43,49, Ezekiel 37, Daniel 9, Zechariah 8-14*

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.

(SB1, SB2) The LORD gathered the people of Israel near Mt. Sinai and spoke to them: "I have loved you and rescued you from your enemies. I want to be your God. I want you to be my dearly loved people," He told them. "(SB3) I want us to make a covenant together. I want to make big, big promises with you, sealed with blood. Promises that must be kept. "Do or die" promises," the LORD explained.

"(SB4) I want to give you My big promise to always take care of you and give you many good things," the LORD told the people through Moses. "I want to give you homes in your own, very special land. A place where you can worship Me and live happily. I will get rid of all your enemies, so you don't have to worry about them again," the LORD told the people.

"But, I want you to make Me a big promise, too," the LORD told them. "(SB5) A promise to love Me and keep all of My good laws," He said.

What would the people of Israel say? What would the people of Israel do? Did they want the LORD to be their God? Did they want Him to take care of them and give them all these good things? Did they want to be His dearly-loved people?

What do you think?

(SB6) Yes, they did! They wanted the LORD to make His covenant with them. And they wanted these promises to be "Do or die" promises, sealed in blood. They wanted to make sure the LORD really kept His word and gave them all these good things He promised. What a wonderful life He was offering them!

Ahh, but there was also the OTHER question they had to ask themselves: did THEY want to make a covenant with the LORD? Did THEY want to promise to love Him and keep His good laws? Remember: their promises were covenant promises, too. They were also "Do or Die," sealed-with-blood promises which MUST be kept. Did they want to make that kind of promise to the LORD?

What do you think?

Yes, they did! The LORD loved them. His laws were good. Why would they NOT want to make this covenant promise with Him?! So they said to the LORD, "(SB7) Yes, yes, yes! We will be Your dearly loved people! We will keep all of Your good laws. We will make a covenant with You—our "Do or Die" promise. We want You to be our God!" they told the LORD.

So, the LORD and the people made a covenant together. (SB8) Moses built an altar at the base of the mountain and (SB9) set up twelve, stone towers-- one for each of the twelve, family groups among the people. (SB10) Twelve, young men brought twelve large, worship gifts to offer to the LORD. Everyone listened as (SB11) Moses read the LORD's promises and laws to the people. Blood was sprinkled on the altar and on the people. "We will do everything the LORD has said. We will obey Him and keep the covenant... we will do or die," the people promised. The covenant was made. The LORD was their God, and they were His people.

(SB12) The LORD kept all of His covenant with His people--every one of His big, "Do or Die" promises. He (SB13) gave them a special land to live in. He gave them their own homes. He gave them fields full of good food and lots of children. He told them how to build a special worship place so they could meet with Him. And, He protected them from their enemies.

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

But what about the people of Israel? Did they keep the covenant promises they made to the LORD?

What do you think?

(SB14) They did NOT! They did NOT love the LORD or keep His good laws as they promised. You see, it is one thing to MAKE a big promise to the LORD and another thing to KEEP it. The people WANTED to be God's dearly-loved people. They WANTED to love Him and obey Him. They WANTED Him to bless them with all the good things He promised to give them. But there was something that the people of Israel had in their hearts--that we have in our hearts, too—that was causing a big problem. Do you know what it was?

Can you guess?

(SB15) It was sin. Yes, ever since Adam and Eve first disobeyed God in the Garden, there has been sin in everyone's heart. Sin that kept those people of Israel from obeying all of the LORD's good laws. Sin that kept them from worshipping and loving Him as they should. Sin that kept them from loving each other the way they should, too. And so, the people broke their covenant to the LORD –yes, that big "Do or Die" promise, over and over and over. And that meant the people no longer deserved to be the LORD's dearly-loved people and He should no longer be their God. What would the LORD do, now that the people had disobeyed?

What do you think He would do?

What would the LORD do? He did plenty! First, He warned them over and over to turn away from their sin. (SB16) He sent godly men like Jeremiah to them, saying, "Remember your big promise to the LORD! He wants to be your God. He wants you to be His dearly-loved people. Turn away from disobeying His good laws. Turn back to worshipping and loving Him! If you do, He will forgive you. If you do not, then He will send punishments to help you turn back to Him," Jeremiah warned them.

Did the people of Israel listen to the LORD's warnings? Did they turn back to worship and love Him? Not really. (SB17 covers up SB13) So at last, the LORD sent punishments. He let their enemies come into their land and destroy their homes and worship place. (SB18) He let them take the people of Israel far away and made them work very, very hard for them.

(SB19) Boo, hoo! Boo, hoo! How sad the people of Israel were! They missed the good things that God had given them. They missed their homes. They missed the place where they worshipped the LORD. They did not like working for their enemies.

But most of all, they were sad that they had not kept their big promise to the LORD. They knew that they had not worshipped or loved Him as they promised they would. They knew that they had not loved others as they promised they would, either. They knew that they should not be His dearly-loved people anymore and He should not be their God. This is what they deserved for breaking their "Do or Die" promises with the LORD. They knew they had sin in their hearts; and at last, they began to turn away from their sins. But was it too late? Was this really the end of the LORD's love for His people?

What do you think?

No, it was not! Even though they should not be God's dearly loved people anymore, God kept on loving His sinful people.

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

The LORD sent godly men like Daniel, Ezekiel and Zechariah to encourage the people with wonderful news: “(SB20) You have broken your promises to the LORD, but He still loves you,” they told the people. “Listen to the good plans He has for you: ‘I have punished you so you would turn back to Me, but I won’t keep on punishing you,’ the LORD told them. ‘On just the right day, your punishment will be over. I will free you from your enemies. You won’t have to work for them anymore. (SB21) You will get to go back to your homes in the special land. You can build a new place to worship Me. I will take care of you and give you good things,” the LORD promised them.

“But I have even better plans for you than freeing you from your enemies and bringing you back home,” the LORD told them. “(SB22) I’m going to make a NEW covenant with you. A new “Do or Die” promise sealed with new blood. I’m going to beat your even bigger enemy: the sin in your hearts that keeps you from loving and obeying Me!” He promised.

“Yes, I’m going to send you a Messiah, a Savior. He will be My Son. He is going to come to earth. He is going to take the punishment that all My people deserve for disobeying Me. It will be gone for good. His blood will take away their sins. His blood will seal this new “Do or Die” covenant. (SB23) Then I will give My people new hearts filled with My Holy Spirit. Then all My people, from every place in the whole world, will be saved to know Me and love Me and obey Me. And one day, they will even live with Me, forever happy,” the LORD promised. “This covenant will last forever.”

What wonderful news this was! (SB24) The people of Israel were so happy! They believed God’s big promise to free them from their enemies. They believed His promise to send them back home to their special land.

And, they believed that one day God would send a Messiah, a Savior, to beat their biggest enemy of all: the sin in their hearts that kept them from loving and obeying Him.

The people waited and waited. They looked for the day God promised. And, at last, it came! They left working for their enemies and (remove SB17 and uncover SB13 again) went back home to their special land. They built new homes, and they built a new place to worship God. Then they waited and waited some more. They waited for the day the Savior would come. And while they had to wait a very long time, at last, that day came, too.

Who was the Messiah, the Savior, God’s Son? I bet you know His name?

Can you tell me?

It’s Jesus! That’s right. (SB25) Jesus was born a baby in Bethlehem. He grew up, up, up until He was a man. And what a man Jesus was! He kept all of God’s laws His whole life. (SB26) He was perfect! And what did Jesus do with that perfect life? He did just exactly what God promised He would do. (SB27) He saved all God’s people when He took the punishment for their sins on the cross. (SB28) With His own blood He sealed the new covenant that God was making with His people. A covenant that couldn’t be broken EVER, because it was the blood of God’s perfect Son, Himself, that was keeping the promises for God’s people.

Yes, Jesus suffered and died on the cross that day. (SB29) He was buried in a cave grave and watched over by guards. But that was not the end of the story, was it? What would happen on the third day?

Can you tell me?

On the third day, (SB30) Jesus rose from the dead, never to die again. He had really done it! He had beaten sin and death for God’s people, once and for all! How great is God’s love for His people! Even though they do not love Him or obey Him as they should, He loved them more than they deserved. He loved them so much that He chose to send His Son, Jesus, to save them from their sins, so they (SB30) could know Him in their hearts now, and one day, (SB31) go to live with Him forever. We can be God’s people, too, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you. He loves to answer this prayer!

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. Whom did God adopt as His dearly-loved children?

All who would turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. His promises began with the people of Israel, but have spread out to include people from the whole world.

2. What made adopting them so costly to God? God adopted them by paying for their sins, Himself, when Jesus suffered and died on the cross.

For You and Me:

We, too, can become God's dearly-loved, adopted children when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is: 1 John 4:10, ESV

"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1. Whom did God love before they loved Him? God loved all His people before they loved Him—the people of Israel, and all others who would turn to Him and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

2. Whose sins were forgiven by Jesus' sacrifice? All of God's people—all who would turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

For You and Me:

We, too, are sinners who have broken God's laws. We, too, deserve His punishment for our sins. But the good news is that we, too, can be forgiven our sins when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a big promise, the sun, a boat, a man named Jeremiah, soldiers, and a cross.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The big promise, the man named Jeremiah, the soldiers and the cross belong. The sun and the boat do not.

2. Who needed to confess their sins to God? Who needed to ask Him to be their Savior? The people of Israel.

For You and Me:

Like the people of Israel, we, too, are sinners who have broken God's laws. We, too, deserve His punishment for our sins. But the good news is that we, too, can be forgiven our sins when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)

Our Bible Truth is:

What Is God's Love for His People Like? It's More than They Could Ever Deserve... God Gave His Son, Jesus, to Save Them!

Just like God's people from long ago, we do not love God or obey Him as we should. We deserve God's punishment, too, don't we? But the good news is that when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, He will save us, too! We will be His dearly-loved people—His adopted children. He will give us new hearts that want to love and obey Him. And one day, at just the right time, we will go to live with Him in heaven, forever happy!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for being so full of love for Your people. You were filled with love for them before they loved You or knew You!
- C** God, we should be filled with love for You and Your good ways, but so many times we are not. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You for loving the world so much that You sent Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You for loving sinners, even before they loved You. Thank You for making the way for them to be saved through Jesus.
- S** God, work deep inside our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Give us new hearts full of love for You. Help us to become Your people.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

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