

Bible Story: The Case of the Scaredy Cat Scat*Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 13-21; Acts 1-2***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 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/hold up storybook 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 Scaredy Cat Scats. 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: A “scaredy cat” is a funny way to say someone is very scared. To “scat” means to run away.

- 1. Who was very afraid, like a scaredy cat?**
- 2. Why didn’t they stay scaredy cats? Who changed them?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 2 Timothy 1:6,7, ESV:**

“...fan into flame the gift of God...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”

I need to know:

- 1. Who was very afraid to be known as Jesus’ disciple? Why?**
- 2. What wonderful gift did God give to them to help them become bold (unafraid to be known as Jesus’ disciples? What did these men become bold 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 servant girl, Jesus’ enemies, a policeman, Jesus praying, a rooster, and a farmer.

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 Jesus pray to help Peter? Who did Jesus send to help Peter?**

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 Scaredy Cat Scat *Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 13-21; Acts 1-2*

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. OR, if using the Story Scenes to tell the story, disregard the storyboard picture references listed below.

One evening, (SB1) Peter, John, and Jesus' other disciples walked with Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane. Under the olive trees, Jesus shared what was about to happen. "My enemies are coming to arrest Me and kill Me. You will all run away and leave Me," He told them. "But after I rise from the dead, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

Peter heard Jesus' words, but he refused to believe them. (SB2) "No! Even if everyone else runs away and leaves You, I won't," he told Jesus. Peter was sure he would never do something as terrible as leaving Jesus!

But Jesus knew the truth. "(SB3) Peter, before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you'll say you never knew Me THREE times! God's enemy, Satan, wants to crush you, Peter, but I have prayed that your faith won't fail. When you turn back, encourage the others," Jesus told him.

Peter heard Jesus' words again, but he still refused to believe. "It's not true!" Peter insisted. "I won't leave You, even if they put me in jail and kill me along with You!" The other disciples agreed with Peter. "We will never leave You, Jesus. We will stay with You no matter what!" they promised.

Jesus' words made the disciples sad. They hated to think that Jesus would be killed by His enemies. They hated to think that they might all leave Him!

Jesus knew this and comforted them. "Don't be worried," Jesus told them. "I'm going to heaven to make a place for you to live with Me forever! I'm going to ask God, My Father, to send Someone very special to help You. I won't leave you alone!" Jesus promised them.

Who was this special Someone who would help them? Do you know?

Can you tell me who?

It was God, the Holy Spirit. How amazing! God, Himself, coming to live inside of them!

"(SB4) Yes, the Holy Spirit will come live inside of you and He will help you," Jesus told His disciples. "It's better for you that I go, so that He can come and live inside of you," Jesus comforted them.

Soon, everything happened just as Jesus said it would. (SB5) Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' twelve disciples, had gone to Jesus' enemies and offered to help them get rid of Jesus. Judas loved money, and when they promised him thirty, silver coins to help them catch Jesus, Judas agreed. Now, the time came for him to earn his money and lead them to Jesus.

"(SB6) March, march, march," Jesus and the other disciples heard men coming. The light of their blazing torches and lanterns lit up the darkness, revealing a BIG crowd of men, armed with swords and clubs. "(SB7) Rabbi, teacher," Judas exclaimed, going up to Jesus and giving Him the usual, brotherly kiss. This was the sign the crowd of soldiers was waiting for. Now, they knew who Jesus was. (SB8) They seized and arrested Him.

"Judas, will you really turn Me over to My enemies with a kiss?" Jesus said to him. "If you are looking for Me, then let My disciples go free," Jesus told the crowd.

(SB9) Peter and the other disciples could see what was happening. What would they do? Would they run like Jesus said they would, or would they be arrested with Him, and maybe die, too?

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

Peter had another idea. He would fight! (SB10) He took his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of Jesus' most powerful and most important enemy --the high priest. Peter wouldn't let this crowd wouldn't take away Jesus without a struggle!

"No, put your sword away, Peter," Jesus exclaimed. "Will I run away from what God, My Father, has planned? No, I will not! I will do it, even though it will be very hard!" (SB11) Then, Jesus reached out and healed the very ear Peter had just cut off! Amazing!

Now Peter's "fight" quickly turned to "fear"! Now he understood. Jesus would not fight! Jesus was choosing to die!

"Oh, no, we don't want to be arrested! Oh, no, we don't want to be hurt! Oh, no, we don't want to die!" Peter and the other disciples thought. They had to act quickly before it was too late! So, off they ran, away through the olive trees and into the darkness, leaving Jesus all alone. (Remove SB9)

(SB12) From the safety of the darkness, they heard the crowd leave with Jesus. Back to Jerusalem, through the city gates, up its dark streets, and to the (SB13) high priest's house, the crowd took Him. Jesus' enemies gathered there to take Jesus and set up His death.

(SB14) Peter and John snuck along after the crowd, sticking to the shadows. They wanted to know what happened to Jesus, but they didn't want to be noticed. But Peter was cold. So, at last, when he thought it safe, Peter went up the fire to warm himself.

Then, Peter WAS noticed! "(SB15) You, there! YOU were with Jesus. YOU are one of His followers," a servant girl exclaimed when she saw him. Peter panicked. Oh, no! now the soldiers might come for him and kill him, he feared. What would Peter say? Would he tell the truth or lie to protect himself?

What do you think Peter would do?

"(SB16) No, I wasn't! I swear I never knew Him!" Peter lied to the servant girl and the others. Peter lied not just one time or two times, but THREE times!

"(SB17) Cock-a-doodle-doo!" Peter heard the rooster crow, then (SB18) he ran away and cried. It all happened just as Jesus had said it would. Maybe Peter loved Jesus, but he didn't have the courage to suffer and die with Him.

Later that day, (SB19) Jesus was nailed to a cross at Golgotha. There, He suffered and died. Friends took his body and buried it in a cave-grave. How very, very sad Peter and the other disciples were! Sad, that their teacher was gone! Sad, that it seemed Jesus wasn't really the Messiah, the promised Savior sent from God. And sad, that they had not even stood by Him, but had run away. (SB20) Now they huddled in fear in a house in Jerusalem. They didn't want Jesus' enemies to find them. They didn't want to be next to die! Was this the end of the story for Jesus, and for Peter and the other disciples? Jesus was dead and all His disciples had run away like scaredly cats. It certainly looked like the end.

But wasn't the end, was it? For while on Day One and Two, Jesus' body lay dead in that cave-grave, everything changed on Day Three. Can you remember what happened?

Do you remember?

(SB21) Jesus rose up from the dead! He had suffered and died on the cross for the sins of God's people, and He had WON! Jesus rose up to life in VICTORY! Yay!

Jesus appeared to (SB22) the women who came to the cave-grave that Sunday morning! "I'm alive," He told them. "Go, tell Peter and the other disciples!"

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

When Peter and John heard the women's story, (SB23) they ran to the cave-grave to see for themselves. Yes, there were the strips of cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' dead body, now lying in a pile by themselves. And there was the cloth that had been on Jesus' face, now nicely folded up by itself. Could the women's story really be true?

John believed Jesus had risen from the dead, but Peter still could not. Together, they went back to the house where the other disciples were. They locked the door and hid. How scared they were of Jesus' enemies! Maybe Jesus WAS alive, but His disciples were still just scaredy cats.

Yet, this would NOT be the sad end of Jesus' disciples! Jesus had prayed for them and promised them something. Do you remember what?

Do you remember?

Jesus had prayed for His disciples' faith (especially Peter's) to not fail, and it didn't! Jesus' prayers for us are always answered with a "yes"! Peter may have sinned against Jesus, and they may have all been very scared, but they were still loved by God. He would help them to keep on believing.

(Put SB24 on top of SB20, or replace it) That evening, Jesus suddenly appeared to His scared disciples in their locked-up house. He knew right where they were, and no locks could keep Him out!

"I'm alive!" Jesus exclaimed, showing them the scars on His hands and feet. It was Jesus! He really was alive! He had really beaten sin and death for God's people. They were so happy.

Over the next 40 days, (SB25) Jesus taught Peter and the other disciples from the Bible. Jesus showed them how God's promises all came true through His life and death. He told them about God's Big Plan for them: they were to tell everyone how they could become God's people. There was so much to learn and to tell!

But Peter and the others needed more than teaching to be able to obey God's plan for them. The same enemies who killed Jesus would try to hurt them when they spread the good news of Jesus. Once more, they would run away like scaredy cats, if they tried to live for God on their own. They needed that powerful gift that Jesus had promised them. The gift that would come and live inside of them. Can you remember what the powerful gift was?

Can you remember?

It was God's Holy Spirit! "(SB26) Go back to Jerusalem and wait for the gift," Jesus told them, as He went up to heaven. "(SB27) "There, you receive the Holy Spirit," Jesus said. "He will give you the courage to do all of God's plans," Jesus promised.

So, back to Jerusalem they went, and prayed, and waited. Then, at last, (SB28) the Holy Spirit came! God sent Him to live inside the hearts of Peter and the other believers. The Holy Spirit gave them peace and joy in God. And, He gave them POWER and COURAGE! Peter and the others were changed people. No longer were they scared to speak up for Jesus in front of Jesus' enemies or anyone else. Here was the Helper they needed to live boldly for Jesus for the rest of their lives!

And even right then and there, (SB29) The Holy Spirit gave Peter the courage to boldly preach God's Word to a crowd of thousands of people (SB30) "Turn away from your sins! Trust in Jesus as your Savior!" Peter urged them. "Then you, too, will receive this wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit that God has given us," he told them. And that's what three thousand people did that day. They turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. (SB31) Then, God's wonderful gift of His Holy Spirit came to live in the hearts of these new believers, too.

Oh, what changes the Holy Spirit had made in Peter and the others! No longer were they scaredy cats. Now, they were brave followers of Jesus, thanks to the Holy Spirit. And He would help them boldly live for God for the rest of their lives.

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: A "scaredy cat" is a funny way to say someone is very scared. To "scat" means to run away.

1. Who was very afraid, like a scaredy cat? Peter and Jesus' other disciples.

2. Why didn't they stay scaredy cats? Who changed them? Jesus prayed for Peter and the others. The Holy Spirit came to live inside of them all. He changed their hearts and gave them boldness to tell others about Jesus.

For You and Me

Like Jesus' disciples, we need Jesus to help us. We need Him to pray for us. We need the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts, and help us to boldly live for God. How can the Holy Spirit come to live in our hearts? When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help you. He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 2 Timothy 1:6,7, ESV:**

"...fan into flame the gift of God...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

I need to know:

1. Who was very afraid to be known as Jesus' disciple? Why? Peter and the other disciples were. They were afraid the soldiers would arrest them and kill them.

2. What wonderful gift did God give to them to help them become bold (unafraid to be known as Jesus' disciples? What did these men become bold to do? The gift of The gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts and helped them to be bold to live for God and to tell others about God, even if enemies threatened to hurt them. That's boldness!

For You and Me

Peter isn't the only one who may struggle with fear to live for God and to tell others about Jesus. We may, too. But God offers His Holy Spirit to all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He will come to live inside of them and help them be bold, too. And He will come to live inside us and help us, too, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus. What a wonderful gift is the Holy Spirit living 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 servant girl, Jesus' enemies, a policeman, Jesus praying, a rooster, and a farmer.

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 servant girl, Jesus' enemies, Jesus praying, and the rooster belong. The policeman and the farmer do not.

2. What did Jesus pray to help Peter? Who did Jesus send to help Peter? Jesus prayed for Peter to be kept safe and to keep on believing in Jesus, even when God's enemy, Satan, would tempt him to be act like he didn't know Jesus and run away.

For You and Me

Peter isn't the only one who may struggle with fear to live for God and to tell others about Jesus. We may, too. But God offers His Holy Spirit to all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He will come to live inside of them and help them be bold, too. And He will come to live inside us and help us, too, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus. What a wonderful gift is the Holy Spirit living in our hearts!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****What Does the Holy Spirit Do in God's People?****He Changes Their Hearts to Be Like Jesus...****The Holy Spirit Gives God's People Courage!**

What a wonderful gift the Holy Spirit was to Peter and the rest of Jesus' disciples! He helped them have courage to live their lives for God. He helped them boldly tell others the good news of Jesus.

Peter and Jesus' other disciples needed Jesus to be their Savior. They needed the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts, and so do we! You see, we all have chosen to disobey God. We all deserve God's punishment for our sins. God would have been perfectly fair to His punish us for breaking His laws and leave it at that. But He is so rich in mercy that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and take the punishment for God's people. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. He had beaten sin and death for them. We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. Our sins will be forgiven and God's Holy Spirit will come live inside of us. And one day, we will get to live with Him forever. Ask Him to help you! He loves to answer this prayer! *Close in prayer.*

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being the Giver of courage to Your people through the Holy Spirit.
- C** God, we confess that many times we fear, instead of trusting You to give us courage by Your Holy Spirit. We need Jesus to be our Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for giving Your people the Holy Spirit to give them courage to do everything You want them to do.
- S** God, work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts that we might live courageously for You. Help us to boldly do everything You want us to do, no matter how hard it is.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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