

The Case of the World's Biggest Building*Genesis; the Gospels; Acts***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 World’s Biggest Building. 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. **Who was the builder?**
2. **What did this builder plan to build? What would it be like when it was finished?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Acts 9:31, NIV 1984:**

“[The church] was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.”

I need to find out:

1. **Who helped Jesus’ disciples obey God’s plan to tell others about Jesus?**
2. **How did Holy Spirit help the Church grow?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: a boat, a kangaroo, a hamburger, a listening man, a big plan, and sunglasses.

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 would one day praise God all together, when God’s plans were finished?**

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 World's Biggest Building *Genesis; the Gospels; Acts*

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.

Do you know what a skyscraper is? (SB1) It's a really tall building that sticks high up into the sky. It takes many bricks to build a building like that. (The Empire State Building in New York City was built out of 10 million bricks. Now THAT is a BIG building!)

(SB2) This is the story of God's plan to build the biggest building in the world. Now, this building wouldn't be a skyscraper made out of bricks or even metal. This would be a very different kind of building. (SB3) And it would be put together not with millions, but with BILLIONS of something. What was the name of this big building God planned to build? (SB4) It was called "the Church." And from what did He plan to build His Church? Do you have any idea?

Can you guess?

Are you ready for this? God was planning to build His Church from lots and lots of one kind of creature. Yes, it would be a HUGE gathering of millions, even billions, of this LIVING, BREATHING creature, all brought together for God's One, Big Plan. What kind of creature do you think God planned to use? Hmmm... would it be (SB5) kangaroos? Or rabbits? Trees or birds or bugs?

What do you think?

(SB6) Nope. God didn't plan to make His Church from any of those creatures. God's Church would be made from a creature who looked a lot like... well... US! Matter a fact, it IS us! People!

That's right! (SB7) "The Church" is God's name for all of His people, from every time and every place in the world, gathered together and living with Him forever. All of their millions and billions of hearts would be full of His love, like one, happy heart. And all of their millions and billions of mouths would be full of His praise, like one, joyful song. (SB8) Together, they would enjoy God's Perfect Wonderfulness. God's big building would be very, very special, wouldn't it?

But there was something else that would make God's Church very special. It was WHAT --or really WHO-- God would use to join all those people together. Can you guess Who?

Can you guess?

It would be God, Himself. (SB9) God, the Father, would send His Son, Jesus, to save them and make them God's people. God, the Holy Spirit, would come live in their hearts, so they could know and love God, and enjoy Him forever, together. What an amazing plan God had!

First comes the plan, then comes the work. God began His work by (SB10) creating our wonderful world and everything in it, including the people He would make into His Church.

God is spirit, and if people were to know Him and be part of His big, beautiful Church, they would need a spirit, too. So, God put a (SB11) special spirit inside of their bodies. Now they could know and love Him, in a way no other creature could. God named the first man, "Adam" and Adam named his wife, "Eve".

God told Adam and Eve to fill the whole earth with children, and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. And that's what they did. These children grew up and spread out across the whole world. (SB12) Some made ships and sailed to faraway islands. (SB13) Some climbed tall mountains and made their homes near snowy peaks. (SB14) Others settled in thick jungles, forests, and many other places. They had families and made their homes throughout the whole world. They had different skin colors and spoke different languages. One day, God's Church would be a great gathering of God's people from all of these different places and languages. Together, they would lift up their praises to God in one, beautiful voice. Together, they would love God and each other perfectly. And it would go on like this forever.

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

But that wonderful day was not yet. From Adam and Eve on down, all people have chosen to turn away from God and live life their own way. (SB15,SB16,SB17,SB18) Their hearts --like ours—have become ugly, broken, and even dead to God, all because of this terrible sin. Every one of them deserved to be shut out from God’s presence and never know Him or His love. Never, ever! How sad!

But sin wouldn’t ruin God’s plans to build His Church! God knew that people would rebel against Him. He had always made it part of His plan to rescue them and make them beautiful, Himself, through His Son, Jesus.

So, at just the right time, Jesus came to redeem God’s people. He would pay for their sins. He would make them beautiful for God. Jesus lived a perfect life here on earth. (SB19) Then on the cross, He suffered and died. Jesus gave up His life as the full payment for the sins of God’s people, so they could be forgiven.

On Day One and Two, Jesus’ body lay dead in a cave-grave; but on Day Three, (SB20) Jesus rose from the dead in victory! He had made the way for sinners to become God’s people, the Church.

(SB21) Now it was time to take the good news of salvation to the world so that God’s Church would be from every people, just as God had always planned. “Go to the whole world, tell them all about Me. Teach them how they can become God’s people,” Jesus told His disciples, after He rose from the dead.

What? THOSE disciples do ALL THIS? How? They were so fearful, so weak. They didn’t know what to say. There were so few of them. They could never do this big job!

Do you think they could do it?

No! There was NO WAY they could do this job ALONE, but God never planned for them to. He would send His Holy Spirit to live inside of them and help them tell others about Jesus. He would send the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of those who listened, helping them turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. The Holy Spirit would help them all grow to love God more and live for Him each day, full of boldness and full of wisdom.

(SB22) And that’s just what happened. (SB23) Filled with God’s Holy Spirit, the disciples went out and told the good news of Jesus to everyone who would listen! And as the disciples spoke, (SB24) the Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of the listeners. He helped them turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior, too. He changed and filled their hearts. He turned their ugly, broken, sinful hearts into the new, beautiful, God-loving hearts of God’s people. God’s Church was becoming bigger and bigger and bigger! God’s plan was coming true!

Now these new believers joined the first disciples in sharing the good news of Jesus. Further and further away they went to new parts of the world.

(SB25) Some got in ships and sailed to far-away islands. (SB26) Others climbed over the snowy mountains. (SB27) Still others made their way through thick jungles, forests, and many other places. Everywhere they went, they shared the good news of Jesus. And everywhere they went, (SB28, SB29, SB30) the Holy Spirit worked. People turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. The Holy Spirit came to live in their hearts. God was building His Church from people of every nation and language.

On and on, (SB31, SB32) for thousands of years now, Jesus’ followers have kept on telling the people of the world the good news of Jesus. On and on, the Holy Spirit has been working in their hearts of listeners, building God’s Church as more and more people turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

One day, God will be finished building His Church. When will that be? When the good news of Jesus has gone out to the whole world; God’s plans for building His Church are completed; and, all His people are saved and filled with His Holy Spirit. And on that day, (SB33) Jesus will return here to earth. He will take away every last speck of sin in God’s people. (SB34) Sin and pain, sickness and death will be gone for good! Jesus will gather them all together to live with Him in the new heaven and earth He will make for them. What a beautiful, happy sight will be God’s people, the Church, in that perfectly happy, new world! They will be the biggest, most beautiful building that has ever been built, made up of people from the whole world. Too many people to count! And they will enjoy God’s Perfect Wonderfulness and praise Him FOREVER!

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. Who was the builder? The LORD.

2. What did this builder plan to build? What would it be like when it was finished? His Church. It would be a huge gathering of all of God's people, loving Him and praising Him forever.

For You and Me:

Did you know that we can be a part of God's people, the Church, too? How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. God will fill us with His Holy Spirit, and we can join in loving Him and praising Him now and forever.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is: Acts 9:31, NIV 1984:**

"[The church] was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord."

1. Who helped Jesus' disciples obey God's plan to tell others about Jesus? God's Holy Spirit.

2. How did Holy Spirit help the Church grow? He helped the believers be bold to tell others about Jesus and He gave them words to say. He worked in the hearts of those listening and helped them put their trust in Jesus, too.

For You and Me

God's Holy Spirit can help us become a part of God's people, the Church, too. We can ask Him to work in our hearts and help us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to help us to love God and live for Him.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a boat, a kangaroo, a hamburger, a listening man, a big plan, and sunglasses.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The boat, the kangaroo, the listening man and the big plan belong. The hamburger and the sunglasses do not.

2. Who would one day praise God all together, when God's plans were finished? All of God's people, the Church!

For You and Me:

Did you know that we can be a part of God's people, the Church, too? How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. God will fill us with His Holy Spirit, and we can join in loving Him and praising Him now and forever.

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 Builds God's Church!

Isn't it amazing that God chose to build His Church out of people like us? He is our good God, yet we have all chosen to disobey God. We deserve His punishment, but instead, He offers to make us His people.

God sent Jesus to live the perfect life that we should have lived, but never did. On the cross, Jesus gave His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of God's people so they could be forgiven and know special closeness with God as their Heavenly Father.

On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, proving He had really beaten sin and death for them, once and for all! That's how God could make sinful people like us into His dearly-loved people, the Church!

We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him to help you. He loves to do this!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being the Builder of Your Church by Your Holy Spirit.
- C** God, we confess that we have sinful hearts. We need You to give us faith to believe in Jesus. We need Your Holy Spirit to work in our hearts. We need Jesus to be our Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for calling people from every tribe, nation, and language to be Your people, the Church.
- 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, so we might know and love You. Build Your Church, in us and in people throughout the whole world!

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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