

The Case of the Amazed, Mad Man

Acts 8-9

**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

"Our story is called: The Case of the Amazed, Mad Man. 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:

1. **Who was the man who was so mad? What was he so mad about?**
2. **What amazing thing happened to him? How did he change when it happened?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Romans 10:9-10**

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified."

I need to know:

1. **Who told people to stop saying Jesus is the Savior?**
2. **Why did he change his mind?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story.

They are: a barrel, a soldier, a jail, an apple, a high priest, and a bright light.

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 surprising person praised Jesus for being God's Son, the Savior? 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 Amazed, Mad Man Acts 8-9

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.

(SB1) Jesus' followers had good news to tell the people of Jerusalem: "Jesus is God's Son. He died on the cross to pay for the sins of God's people. On Day Three, He rose from the dead, beating sin and death for them," they said. "Turn away from disobeying God. Trust in Jesus as your Savior, and God will forgive your sins. You will be saved!" they exclaimed. "You can become one of God's people, too," they told everyone.

(SB2) Many people in Jerusalem listened, and they believed. They turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their own Savior. God forgave their sins and saved them. How happy they were to become God's people!

But some people listened to Jesus' followers, and they were NOT happy. They were ANGRY. Saul was one of those angry people. He HATED Jesus and the people who believed in Him.

"(SB4) Be quiet! Stop saying Jesus is God's Son! Stop saying He died on the cross for the sins of God's people and rose from the dead! Stop saying He's the Savior," Saul told Jesus' followers. "Jesus is just a fake!" he exclaimed. "You are all wrong. And if you don't stop telling people about Jesus, I'm going to have you hurt and put you in jail," he warned them. Oh, no! What would Jesus' followers do now?

What do you think they did? Did they stop telling others about Jesus?

But no matter what Saul said, Jesus' followers didn't stop. They kept spreading the good news of Jesus. They kept urging everyone to turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. Uh, oh! NOW, what would Saul do?

What do you think he did?

Saul did exactly what he said he would do. (SB5) He went from house to house with soldiers to arrest them. "Bang, bang, bang!" they knocked on the door. "Open up!" Saul and the soldiers dragged Jesus' followers out of their houses. (SB6) They hurt them and put them in jail.

Saul kept making it hard to tell the good news of Jesus in Jerusalem, but even this was part of God's plan. "Jesus told us to tell the whole world about Him," Jesus' followers remembered. "Now it's time to go. A few of us will stay here in Jerusalem, but everyone else should move away to other cities," they decided. "People in those cities need to hear the good news of Jesus, too."

So, (SB7) they packed up their things and moved to other cities. (SB8) Some went to nearby cities. (SB9) Others went to faraway cities. But wherever they went, they told everyone the gospel, the good news of Jesus.

Can you tell me the gospel, the good news about Jesus?

"Jesus is God's Son. He died on the cross to pay for the sins of God's people," they told everyone. "Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. He beat sin and death for God's people!" they explained. "So, turn away from your sins! Trust in Jesus as your Savior! God will forgive your sins and make you one of His people, too. You will be saved!" they exclaimed.

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

What good news this was! (SB10, SB11) Many people in these cities listened and received the gospel with joy. They turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. How happy Jesus' followers were to see the people in these new cities believing in Jesus, too!

But there was someone who was very angry when he heard about this. Can you guess who it was?

Can you guess?

It was Saul! He heard what was going on and he was furious! "I will stop these Christians," he vowed. (SB12) So, Saul went to the high priest, the leader of Jesus' enemies, and said, "If you give me men to go to these other cities, I will arrest the Christians. I will bring them back to Jerusalem and put them in jail. I will stop them," Saul promised.

The high priest agreed. He gave Saul men to help him arrest the Christians in these other cities. Saul was pleased.

"March, march, march!" (SB13) Saul and the men headed straight for the first city: Damascus. Saul could hardly wait to arrest those Christians and put them in jail! Now, he would stop all this talk about Jesus... or would he?

What do you think happened to Saul next?

Well, as it turned out, God, Himself, had very, very different plans for Saul. God was about change Saul's life completely. He would use Saul to spread the gospel, not stop it. Saul believed Jesus was a fake; but, of course, He wasn't. Jesus was the REAL Son of God. He really died on the cross and rose from the dead, beating sin and death for God's people.

And now, God was going to give Saul the gift of faith in Jesus. He would make Saul one of His people, then use Saul to spread the good news to many. Aren't God's plans amazing?

But how would Saul, a man who HATED Jesus and His followers, change into someone who trusted Jesus as his own Savior? God chose to change Saul in a most amazing way.

Just as Saul and the men were almost to Damascus, (SB14, SB15) a light from heaven, much brighter than the sun, suddenly shone down on them. (SB16) Saul shut his eyes tight and he fell to the ground. Then, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you hurting me?"

Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are hurting," Jesus told Saul. "But get up now and go to Damascus and you will be told what to do."

The men with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the voice, but didn't see anyone. The bright, heavenly light vanished as quickly as it came, but not without leaving Saul with a problem. When he stood up and went to open his eyes, he couldn't see anything. Saul was blind!

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

(SB17) The men took Saul by hand the rest of the way to Judas' house in Damascus. For three days, Saul didn't eat or drink. He just prayed and thought about everything Jesus said. (SB18) Now, Saul knew the truth. He thought Jesus was a fake, and His believers were wrong. Now, Saul knew HE was the one who was wrong. Jesus WAS the Savior. He WAS God's Son. And Jesus' followers, they were GOD'S people!

Oh my! He had been hurting God's people! Saul knew he deserved God's punishment for all the terrible things he had done. But as Saul prayed, he asked God for more than he deserved. He asked for forgiveness. And what did God do? (SB19) God helped Saul turn away from his sins and trust in Jesus as his own Savior. Saul was forgiven! He was saved! How kind God is to sinners like Saul, and like us!

Do you think God forgave Saul?

And sure enough, God gave Saul just what he prayed for. (SB19) God helped Saul to turn away from disobeying God and to trust in Jesus as his own Savior. How kind God is to sinners like Saul...and like us!

After three days, (SB20) God sent a Christian named Ananias to Saul. "Brother Saul, Jesus, who appeared to you, has sent me so you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit," he told Saul. Ananias laid his hands on Saul and something like scales fell off his eyes. God had healed him! But what happened next was even better: God's Holy Spirit came to live in Saul's heart.

Saul was so happy. God had saved him from his sins through Jesus. He had made Saul one of His people. Saul was a new man! (SB21) Saul got up and was baptized as a sign that he was beginning a new life of living for God, with Jesus as his Savior. Then, Saul went out and did something else. Something he never, ever dreamed he would do. Can you guess what he did?

Can you guess?

(SB22) Saul went out to tell the good news of Jesus to the people of Damascus. "Jesus is God's Son. He died on the cross to pay for the sins of God's people," Saul told them. "On the third day, He rose from the dead. He beat sin and death for God's people!" he exclaimed. "Turn away from disobeying God! Trust in Jesus as your Savior. God will forgive your sins and save you. You can be one of God's people!"

How surprised the people were! "Wasn't this the man who hated Jesus and His followers? Wasn't this the man who hurt them and put them in jail? And now HE is one of THEM!" they exclaimed. And as Saul preached about Jesus, the Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many. (SB23) They turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior.

Yes, all of God's good plans were coming true. His good plans for Saul and His good plans for the many others, who would trust in Jesus as their Savior through Saul's message. How amazing God is!

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 man who was so mad? What was he so mad about? Saul. He was mad that Jesus' followers were telling people to trust in Jesus as their Savior.

2. What amazing thing happened to him? How did he change when it happened? Jesus appeared to Saul and Saul knew that He really was the Savior. Saul turned away from his sins and trusted in Jesus as his Savior. He started telling everyone the good news of Jesus.

For You and Me:

God turned Saul from a man who hated Jesus and wanted to hurt God's people, to someone who loved Jesus and served Him his whole life. God can work powerfully in our lives, too, 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 Romans 10:9-10**

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified."

I need to know:

1. Who told people to stop saying Jesus is the Savior? Saul did.

2. Why did he change his mind? Jesus appeared to Saul and Saul knew that He really was the Savior. Saul turned away from his sins and trusted in Jesus as his Savior.

For You and Me:

How amazing it is that God could change someone like Saul from a man who hated Jesus to a man who loved Him and trusted in Him as his Savior. God can change us, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

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 soldier, the jail, the high priest and the bright light belong. The barrel and the apple do not.

2. What surprising person praised Jesus for being God's Son, the Savior? What did God do for this man? Saul did. God showed him that Jesus really was the Son of God. He helped him to turn away from his sins and trust in Jesus as his Savior. God forgave his sins!

For You and Me:

Everyone was so surprised to see Saul change from a man who hated Jesus to a man who loved him and trusted in him as his Savior! God is able to change the heart of anyone! He's able to change our hearts to, ask him to change your heart! Ask him to help you turn away from your sins and trust in Jesus as your Savior. He loves to answer this prayer!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****How Can We Be Saved?****It Is God's Free Gift...****When We Trust in Jesus as Our Own Savior!**

How kind God was to save Saul! Saul had hated had hated God's people and he had hated the good news of Jesus. He had done terribly mean things. But, oh, how God had loved Saul anyway! He came to Saul in a special way. He worked in Saul's heart, helping him to turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as His own Savior. God chose to have Jesus appear to Saul to help Saul believe in Him. He changed Saul's life and made him one of His people!

But God doesn't need to do such amazing things to change our hearts. If we ask Him, He will send the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts. He can help us to turn away from disobeying God and help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then, we will be God's people, too.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** God, we praise You for being good and just. We honor You as the One we should all obey.
- C** God, we confess that we are all sinners who have disobeyed You. We know that we can never deserve to be Your people by good things we do. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for sending Jesus as the Savior we need. Thank You that He made the way for us to become Your people with His perfect life given as the full payment for the sins of God's people.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to confess our sins to You and turn away from them. Help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior that we might become Your people. Help us to know and love You. Help us to live for You.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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