

The Case of the Faithful Leader*Acts 16:1; 1 & 2 Timothy***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 Faithful Leader. 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 pastor chosen to care for the believers in Ephesus?
2. What did Paul tell him to be faithful to do for those believers?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 1 Timothy 4:13**

"Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching."

I need to know:

1. Whom did Paul write to when he was in prison and about to die?
2. What did Paul tell this person to be faithful to do for the believers in Ephesus?

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

They are: a cake, Paul, a car, a letter, a coat, and God's Word.

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. Who did Paul thank God for? What did Paul asked God to help this person do?

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 Remembered Rescue *Exodus 12; Luke 22; Isaiah 25:6-9*

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) Every year, the people of Israel gathered together to remember how God rescued them from their strong enemies, the Egyptians. (SB2) The Egyptians had made the people of Israel their slaves. They were so mean to them! They made the people of Israel work terribly hard and didn't pay them. They hurt them when they didn't work hard enough, and they planned to never let them go.

(SB3) The people of Israel cried out to God, "Help us, help us! Save us from these strong enemies!" Would the LORD hear them? Would He help them?

What do you think?

Yes, He would! (SB4) The LORD heard them, and He sent Moses to help them. Through Moses, the LORD did many amazing things to show the Egyptians that He was the one, true God. The LORD would make the Egyptians free the people of Israel.

(SB5) On the night before the people of Israel were to be freed, the LORD gave them special instructions through Moses: "I'm going to send a terrible punishment into Egypt tonight," says the LORD. "After this terrible punishment, the Egyptians will free you."

"But there is something you must do, if the terrible punishment is not to come upon you, too," the LORD told them. "Each family must take the blood of a lamb and put it along the top and sides of the door to your home," the LORD said. "If you do this, I promise the terrible punishment will pass over you and you will be saved. Only your enemies, the Egyptians, will be punished," the LORD told them through Moses.

"After the terrible punishment comes to the Egyptians, it will be time for you to go," the LORD said. "Hurry, get everything ready now. You'll be leaving early in the morning. Don't even wait for your bread to get puffy and rise. There's no time. Bake it and eat it flat, so you'll be ready to go," they were told. "Tonight, is your last night in Egypt," the LORD said. "Celebrate! Eat the lamb whose blood you put on your doors and eat the flat bread at dinner tonight. Do this to remember what I'm doing for you."

Their last night in Egypt!? Could this really be true? The king of Egypt had promised to let them go before, but changed his mind every time. Would the king really let them go now? Would the people of Israel believe the LORD's promise and obey Him?

What do you think?

Yes, they would! The people of Israel did everything the LORD told them to do. (SB6) They put lamb's blood on the tops and sides of their doors. (SB7) They packed up their things. They didn't wait for their bread to get puffy, like they usually did, but baked it flat. And that night, they ate the lamb and the flat bread to remember what the LORD was doing for them.

(SB8) Late that night, the terrible punishment came, just as the LORD said. It came upon every single Egyptian family, because there was no lamb's blood around their doors. But the punishment passed over the people of Israel. The LORD had kept His promise and spared them this punishment, thanks to the blood of the lamb.

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

“(SB9) Boo Hoo! Boo Hoo!” cried the Egyptians. **“How terrible is the LORD’s punishment on us! We don’t want the people of Israel to stay here and work for us anymore! Go away, people of Israel! Leave our country!”** they exclaimed.

(SB10) “Yay! Yay!” shouted the people of Israel. **“Praise the LORD! He has freed us!”** They gathered up their belongings and walked out of Egypt. They were so glad to be leaving their enemies!

What a great day this was for the people of Israel. The LORD had rescued them with such powerful signs and wonders. **“Remember this Passover night! Remember this day when I rescued you and freed you from your enemies!”** the LORD told the people through Moses.

“(SB11) Once a year, I want you to eat a special meal to remember,” He told them. **“Drink red wine (juice of grapes) and remember how My punishment passed over you. I kept the promise I made to you through the lamb’s blood,”** the LORD said. **“Eat flat bread and remember how quickly you had to leave when I freed you from the Egyptians. Celebrate the Passover every year, so you won’t forget the great things I did to save you from your enemies,”** the LORD told them.

So, for hundreds of years, all the way down to Jesus’ day, the people of Israel kept on remembering the Passover with the special, red wine (juice from grapes) and the very flat bread. They had so much to celebrate! After all, what greater enemy than the Egyptians would they ever face? And, what greater punishment would they need to be rescued from than the terrible punishment the Egyptians received that Passover night?

What do you think? Could there be a greater enemy or a greater thing the LORD could do for His people?

(SB12) Well, the truth is, there WAS a greater enemy, and a bigger punishment they needed to be rescued from. The enemy was sin. And the punishment was death —being separated from God and all His goodness forever. And this enemy and this punishment weren’t just trouble for the people of Egypt or the people of Israel. These were trouble for the whole world. For you see, we all are sinners who have disobeyed God and we all deserve the LORD’s punishment for our sins.

Yes, the sin in our hearts is a far stronger enemy than those Egyptians ever were! But who could rescue people from this kind of enemy? Who could save us from God’s punishment? Would the blood of an ordinary lamb be enough, like it was for the Passover?

What do you think?

(SB13) No, the blood of that kind of lamb would never be enough! But there WAS blood that WAS enough. The blood of God’s perfect Son. Do you know His name?

Can you tell me?

(SB14) It’s Jesus!

John the Baptist gave Jesus a special nickname: the Lamb of God. John knew Jesus had come to save God’s people. Jesus would live a perfect life, then give it as the full payment for the sins of God’s people. Jesus would take away their sins by taking their punishment. Oh, how God loves His people, that He would give His only Son to do this!

(SB15) Jesus taught His disciples He would die for God’s people, but they never understood. At last, came the night when Jesus would be led away to die. It was the Passover, so He and His disciples gathered together to eat the special meal and remember how God rescued the people of Israel from the Egyptians. Only this time, Jesus used the wine and the flat bread to tell about the even GREATER rescue God was about to do for ALL of God’s people.

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

(SB16) **Jesus took the flat bread, and said, "This Passover flat bread helped you remember God's rescue of Israel long ago. Now, eat it to remember something new," Jesus told His disciples. "This is My body broken for you. Tomorrow, I will give My body as the perfect sacrifice for you and all of God's people when I suffer and die on the cross. Take it and eat it; and, remember Me when you do!"**

Then, Jesus picked up the cup of red wine, and said, "This Passover wine helped you remember the lamb's blood God used, so His punishment would pass over Israel. Now, drink it to remember something new," Jesus told them. "This is My blood poured out for you. Tomorrow, I will pay for the sins of God's people with My blood when I die on the cross," Jesus said. "Take it and drink it; and, remember Me when you do."

"Because of Me, God is making a new, big covenant promise with His people. They will be forgiven their sins forever. And on the Last Day, when God gives out His punishment for sins, He will pass over His people --all those who have turned away from disobeying God and have trusted in Me as their Savior. They won't be punished because I will have already taken God's punishment for them on the cross," Jesus explained.

"After I'm gone, eat this little meal when you gather together with God's people. Use it to remember what I've done for you. Keep on eating it regularly until the day I come back as King, and put an end to sin and death forever," Jesus told them.

The disciples were sad and surprised by Jesus' words. Would He really die as He said He would?

What do you think?

Yes, He would!

(SB17) Would! Later that night, soldiers came and took Jesus away. (SB18) The next day, Jesus was nailed to a cross; and there, He suffered and died for the sins of God's people, just as He said He would. (SB19) He was buried in a cave-grave by friends.

(SB20) But Jesus wouldn't stay there! On Day One, Two, Three, Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus had really paid for the sins of God's people. He had beaten sin and death for them!

Jesus' disciples were so happy! (SB21) They spread the wonderful news to everyone: "Come, repent and believe in Jesus. Because of Him, your sins can be forgiven, and you can become God's people!" they exclaimed.

And as they told the good news of Jesus, many people turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. God was growing His Church! (SB22) The believers gathered together to worship God and love one another. (SB23) And when they gathered, they ate the special meal of flat bread and red wine. They called it (SB24) "the Lord's Supper"; and through it, they remembered how Jesus gave His life that God's punishment would pass over them.

Even today, God's people still gather together to worship God and love one another. And they STILL take the Lord's Supper together. They eat the flat bread and drink the red wine (or grape juice) and remember what Jesus did for them when He suffered and died on the cross. And they will keep on eating and drinking this special meal until Jesus comes back when His plans for this world are finished.

(SB25) Then, at last, this meal will never be eaten again. Instead, God's people will have a NEW meal, called the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. The food will be the best food anyone has ever tasted! The drink will be rich and delicious, too. And it will be the biggest and best party EVER, to celebrate the best day EVER: the day when God's people will be joined with Jesus, all together, face-to-face, forever! Sin, sadness, and death will be gone. Sin, sadness, and death will be gone. And God's people will go on enjoying the Perfect Wonderfulness of God forever. Forever happy. Forever together. Forever praising God.

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:

1. Who was the pastor chosen to care for the believers in Ephesus? Timothy.

2. What did Paul tell him to be faithful to do for those believers? Paul told Timothy to be faithful to preach God's Word to them and help them keep on loving God and living for Him.

For You and Me:

Paul encouraged Timothy to be faithful to teach God's Word to the believers who gathered together as a little church in Ephesus. By being faithful like this, God could use Timothy powerfully. Timothy could help the believers know how to keep on loving God and living for Him. When we go to church and listen to faithful teachers tell us about God's Word, God can use it to help us to love Him and live for Him, too. And the very first thing that every faithful teacher hopes and prays that you will do when you hear God's Word is to turn away from your sins and trust in Jesus as your Savior. This is how we become God's people. It is the best, first step in loving God and living for Him.

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 1 Timothy 4:13:**

"Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching."

I need to know:

1. Whom did Paul write to when he was in prison and about to die? Timothy.

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Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. They were: a cake, Paul, a car, a letter, a coat, and God's Word. *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? Paul, the letter, the coat and God's Word belong. The cake and the car do not.

2. Who did Paul thank God for? What did Paul asked God to help this person do? Paul thanked God for Timothy. To keep being a good pastor to the people in Ephesus, but also to come and comfort him before he died.

For You and Me:

Paul thanked God for giving him Timothy. Timothy had been such a good helper to him; and, Timothy now was a faithful leader to the believers in Ephesus, who Paul cared about so much. We, too, should thank God for the faithful leaders he gives us. They help us know God's Word and know how to live it out. We can ask God to help those leaders teach us well. And, we can ask God to work in our hearts as we listen to the leaders at our church teach from God's Word. We can ask God to use these leaders and His Word to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. That's how we can become God's people, too.

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****Why Do God's People Go to Church?****To Worship God and Love One Another...****By Learning from God's Word, the Bible!**

Why do God's people go to church? To worship God and love one another... by learning from God's Word, the Bible! God's people love the Bible. Each time they gather together, they want to learn more from it. The Bible is how they learned they were sinners who deserved God's punishment for disobeying Him, and of God's rich mercy in sending Jesus to be our Savior. It tells how Jesus lived a perfect life and offered it on the cross as the full payment for the sins of God's people. And, how He rose from the dead on the third day, beating sin and death for them. The Bible tells us how we can become God's people by turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. And, how we can know and love God better, and live for Him. Ask God to use the Bible to teach you and help you do these things, too. He loves to answer this prayer!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for saving Your people, the Church. We praise You for giving us the Bible and godly leaders to teach it to us.
- C** God, sometimes we don't want to learn from the Bible. Sometimes, we don't want to listen to the pastors preach from Your Word. There are other things we would rather do. We need a Savior!
- T** God, thank You for not leaving us on our own, but giving us Your Word, the Bible, to learn from and to live by. Thank You for all the people in church who help us understand Your Word and live it out. Thank You for our pastors and teachers.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love Your Word and learn it. Help us live it out. Help our pastors and teachers to teach us well about You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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