

Unit 8: The God Who Loves

Unit Big Question (and Answer): What Is God's Love for His People Like?
It's More than They Could Ever Deserve!

Unit Bible Verse: "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." -- 1 Chronicles 16:34

Bible Truth 4 Concept: God Will Never Stop Loving His People

Our love for others changes. Sometimes we love others a lot. Sometimes we don't love them very much.

But God's love for His people is not like that. God's love for His people never changes. God loved His people before they loved Him or even knew Him. He paid for their sins through Jesus' perfect life, when He suffered and died on the cross. He adopts them as His people, when they turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. Nothing will ever stop God from loving His people! They are bound in love to Him through Jesus, and that is a love that will never, ever end! We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Hosea 2:19

"I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion."

Learn a Little: "I will betroth you to me forever... in love."

Meaning

To be betrothed to someone is to make a special promise to love them always. Men and women in Bible times used to make special betrothal promises to each other before they got married.

In the Bible, God tells us that He betroths Himself to His people. That means He promises to always love them. He will always be faithful to them. He will always love and care for them. He will always be righteous and just in how He treats them--that means He will always love His people by doing the right thing. He will never do anything evil or treat them badly. He will always show them mercy and treat them with tenderness and kindness.

The Bible also tells us that at the end of time, all of God's people will live with God forever. Jesus will be like the bridegroom who greets his bride on his wedding day with great joy and begins his life with the one he loves. There will never be anything better than this life with God!

We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Bible Truth 4 ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for being so full of love for Your people. You love them with a love that will never, ever end.
- C** God, You offer us a love that will never end, but many times, we choose to not love You. We choose to live life our own way, even if it means breaking Your good laws. Please forgive us! We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You that all who put their trust in You can rest in Your love forever.
- S** God, work deep inside our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You and help us to know Your love. Make us Your people who enjoy Your love forever. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

Bible Truth 4 Story

The Case of the One Who Would Not Stop

1 & 2 Samuel, Psalms 16, 23

Songs Used in Bible Truth 4

Big Q & A 8 Song

Big Question 8 Song: What Is God's Love for His People Like?

Big Question 8 Bible Verse Song: Forever and Ever 1 Chronicles 16:34

Big Question 8 Hymn: And Can It Be, v.1 refrain

Big Question 8 Praise Song: God Is So Good

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse Song: I Will Betroth You to Me Hosea 2:19, NIV 1984

Bible Truth 4 Extra Bible Verse: For He Chose Us Ephesians 1:4-5, NIV 1984

listen to or download songs for free at <https://praisefactory.org>: Deep Down Detectives Music page

The Case of the One Who Would Not Stop

1 & 2 Samuel, Psalms 16, 23



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 One Who Would Not Stop. 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 One who would not stop loving David?**
- 2. Why was it surprising that He would not stop loving him?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Hosea 2:19:

“I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.”

I need to find out:

- 1. Who did the LORD love with this kind of unstoppable love in our story?**
- 2. How did the LORD show His love and compassion to this person?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: A harp, a very tall man, a butterfly, a son named Absalom, a cake, and a cave.

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 asked God to forgive his sins? Who sang praises to God?**

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 One Who Would Not Stop *1 & 2 Samuel, Psalms 16, 23*

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

Our story today is about one of the most famous people in the whole Bible. Let me tell you some of the good things he is famous for. Maybe you can guess his name.

When this man was just a boy, he took care of his father's sheep. He made up many beautiful songs about God. He sang them and played them on his harp as he watched the sheep. This boy was a very good and very brave shepherd. He even fought off lions and bears with his sling and sometimes with his bare hands!

A few years later, this young man faced a giant soldier named Goliath. Goliath was threatening the armies of Israel and shouting out terrible things about the LORD. All the soldiers of Israel were too scared to fight Goliath, but not this young man. With his sling and one, smooth stone, the LORD helped him fight Goliath and win. King Saul saw how brave he was and made him one of his greatest soldiers!

This young man grew up to be a great king, himself. He took good care of the people of Israel for many years. He captured the beautiful city of Jerusalem and built a fine palace there. How God blessed the people of Israel through this man!

But even though life was so good, this man never forgot the LORD. He kept writing songs to the LORD. He sang them and he shared them with other people to sing, too. Sometimes thousands of people would sing his songs as they gathered together to worship the LORD. Many of his songs are written down in the Bible, God's Word, and we still enjoy reading them and singing them today.

Can you guess the name of this very famous Bible man? I bet you can!

Can you guess?

His name was David! And yes, he was a man who did many good things, even great things.

But did you know that David was also a man who suffered some very sad things, too? David had many enemies who tried to kill him, including King Saul, the very king David had once served so faithfully. Saul was jealous of David and wanted him dead. He and his soldiers chased David for years, trying to kill him, even though David never did anything wrong to him.

And, don't think David never did anything bad, because he did. He was a sinner just like the rest of us! When David became king, he saw a beautiful woman named Bathsheba and he took her to be his. But Bathsheba was already the wife of Uriah, one of his bravest, most faithful soldiers. David made a tricky plan to get rid of Uriah, so he could hide what he had done. He had Uriah killed in a fierce battle, so it would look like it was an accident! Then, David took Bathsheba to be his own wife. This was all very bad.

One of David's greatest sadnesses came from his son, Absalom. Absalom turned against David. Absalom made a tricky plan to get rid of David, so he could be king in David's place. Absalom turned many of the people against David, too. David had to run away from his palace in Jerusalem and hide in the wilderness. Many people wept as David left Jerusalem; but others, like Shimei, called David bad names, and even threw rocks at him.

David and his friends camped out in the dry, lonely wilderness, so Absalom's men wouldn't find him. David did go back to be king in Jerusalem again, but only after Absalom had been killed. How sad David was! How David loved Absalom and missed him, even though he had treated David so terribly!

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

So, yes, David WAS a man who did many good, even great things. But David was also a man who suffered some very sad things, and even did some very bad things.

But there is something else you need to know about David. Something that was more important than all these other things. It was the WHY behind all those great, good things that David did. And, it was HOW David made it through all those bad and sad things.

The WHY and HOW behind them all was Someone who loved David. WHO do you think it was?

Can you guess?

It was the LORD! The LORD loved David so much! And it was His great love for David that gave David the courage to fight off lions and bears. It was God's great love for David that gave him the courage to face the fierce giant, Goliath. And, it was God's great love that helped David to care for the people of Israel as their king, and made David want to sing all those beautiful songs about God. Yes, the LORD's great love for David was behind all the great and good things that David did.

But, what happened to God's great love for David when David did those bad things and went through all those sad things? Did it go away? No, it did not. God's love for David never stopped. He kept on loving David and kept on helping him, even then.

In His great love for David, the LORD sent the prophet Nathan to help David see his sins, turn away from them, and ask for forgiveness. Do you think the LORD forgave David?

What do you think?

Yes, He did!

And, it was God's great love that comforted David when King Saul tried to kill him. God provided David with everything he needed, all those years when he had to hide from Saul and his soldiers. And, it was God's love for David that later protected him from Absalom and the others who wanted to kill him.

Yes, God's love for David was WHY David did ALL the great, good things he did. And, it was HOW David made it through ALL the bad and sad things.

But God's great love for David did something else, too. His love filled David's heart with great love for... Can you guess who?

Can you guess?

For God! No wonder he sang to the LORD so many songs!

When LORD protected David from Saul and his soldiers, David sang: "I love you, O LORD. You are my strength. You will deliver me and save me from my enemies. I praise Your name!" (from Psalm 18:1-3)

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

And, when the LORD used Nathan to show David his sin, David sang: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love, take away my sins... Deliver me, my God, my Savior, and I will sing aloud of your perfect goodness. I will praise you!" (from Psalm 51:1-2,14)

And even when Absalom tried to kill him, David sang to God, out in the wilderness: "O LORD, how many are my enemies! Many are saying You will not save me. But you, O LORD, are a shield about me. You hear my prayers and You will take care of me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around me. You will rescue me from my enemies. You will save me!" (from Psalm 3)

Yes, the LORD filled David's heart with songs of love for Him.

So, every day of David's life—in the great and good times, and even the bad and sad times—David praised the LORD for His great love for him. It was a love that never stopped.

But most of all, David looked forward to the day when God's greatest promise to him and all of God's people will come true. David sang about it, too. Do you know what that greatest promise is?

Do you know what it is?

God's greatest promise is to bring His people home to live with Him forever. Then, at last, they will enjoy God's love for them in the closest, most wonderful ways. That's why David sang: "Surely the LORD will show me goodness and mercy all the days of my life, and I will go to live with Him forever." (from Psalm 23:6)

For David knew the same thing that we are learning today: God's love for His people is more than they could ever deserve. It goes on and on. God will never stop loving His people. This was the most wonderful thing that David could think of. And, it's what he, along with all of God's people who have already died, is enjoying right now, and will keep on enjoying forever.

We can enjoy God's amazing, unending love, too, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. This is how we become God's people. Ask Him to help you!

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 One who would not stop loving David? The LORD.

2. Why was it surprising that He would not stop loving him? Because David did some very bad things that broke God's law.

For You and Me:

Like David, we, too, are sinners. We do not deserve God's love. We deserve His punishment. How sad! But the great news is that God offers to forgive our sins and make us His people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Like David, we can know God and His great love forever!

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is: Hosea 2:19:**

"I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion."

1. Who did the LORD love with this kind of unstoppable love in our story? David.

2. How did the LORD show His love and compassion to this person? He helped David do the good things that David did. He helped David see that he was a sinner and turn away from his sins when he did bad things. He took care of David through all the sad times, too. He never stopped loving David throughout his whole life.

For You and Me

David knew the LORD's unstoppable love and so can we! How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. This is how we become God's dearly-loved people forever!

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a harp, a very tall man, a butterfly, a son named Absalom, a cake, and a cave.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The harp, the very tall man, Absalom and the cave belong in the story. The butterfly and the cake do not.

2. Who asked God to forgive his sins? Who sang praises to God? David asked God to forgive his sins. David sang praises to God for all of His unfailing love.

For You and Me:

David knew the LORD's unstoppable love and so can we! How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. This is how we become God's dearly-loved people forever!

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 Will Never Stop Loving His People!**

Why does God keep on loving His people this way, even though they are all sinners who have rebelled against Him? It is because of Jesus!

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 why God loves His people, even though they are sinners. And that's why His love for His people will go on forever and ever. Jesus paid it all!

How wonderful it is to be one of God's people, forever loved by Him! You and me, we can know God's forever love, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. God will forgive our sins, too, and we will enjoy wonderful special closeness with God as His special people, now and forever.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for being so full of love for Your people. You love them with a love that will never, ever end.

- C** God, You offer us a love that will never end, but many times, we choose to not love You. We choose to live life our own way, even if it means breaking Your good laws. Please forgive us! We need a Savior!

- T** Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You that all who put their trust in You can rest in Your love forever.

- S** God, work deep inside our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You and help us to know Your love. Make us Your people who enjoy Your love forever.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

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