

Unit 15: God's People Gather Together**Unit Big Question (and Answer):** Why Do God's People Go to Church?

To Worship God and Love One Another!

Unit Bible Verse: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together." Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV**Bible Truth 1 Concept: To Worship God and Love One Another...
By Praising God for Jesus' Win over Death!**

On one sad Friday, Jesus suffered and died on the cross for God's people. He was buried in a grave, but He didn't stay there. He rose up from the grave on Day Three—Sunday! He was alive and would be forevermore!

Ever since that first and best Sunday when Jesus beat sin and death, God's people have been gathering together each week to celebrate. (The big, Bible word for God's people gathered together is "congregation.") They sing and pray and listen to God's Word. They rejoice that Jesus had beaten sin and death for them. They are happy the Holy Spirit lives in their hearts. They look forward to the day when Jesus will come back and all of God's people will at last gather together forever as one, big family. That will be the biggest and best celebration of all!

Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior receive God's forgiveness for their sins. He sends His Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and helps them love God and live for Him the rest of their lives. Forever they will be God's dearly-loved people! What an amazing gift God has given us through Jesus!

God's people love to celebrate together, but they are always hoping for more to join them. That's why they tell their neighbors nearby the good news of Jesus. (The big, Bible word for telling others about Jesus is "evangelism.") And that's why they even travel to faraway lands to tell people there about Jesus, too. (The big, Bible word for going to another land to tell people about Jesus is "missions.") They want everyone to hear the good news of Jesus, repent of their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. (The big, Bible word for the good news of Jesus is "the gospel.") They want them all to become God's people and join the Sunday celebration of what God has done through Jesus! We can be God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Sundays will be our celebration day, too!

Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: 1 Peter 1:3, HCSB

"He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Learn a Little: He has given us a new birth through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."**Meaning**

When we are born as babies, we have our first birth. But did you know that all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior are given a new birth? Not a new birth as a baby again. This isn't a new birth for our bodies. God gives our heart a new birth. He forgives all our sins and gives us a new heart filled with the Holy Spirit --a heart that knows God, and wants to love Him and live for Him.

Jesus is why God's people get to have this wonderful new birth. He died on the cross for their sins. He made the way for them to be God's people. But Jesus didn't stay dead. He was resurrected. (That's a big Bible word meaning that He rose from the dead.) Yes, on that third day--that glorious Easter Sunday morning-- He rose from the dead, showing that He had really beaten sin and death for them. Jesus is alive for evermore. And He is the living hope of God's people that one day, they, too, will live face to face with God forever! We can be God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Bible Truth 1 ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for saving Your people, the Church. We praise You for being so powerful that You beat sin and death for them.
- C** God, we know that Sunday should be a special celebration day. It's the day Jesus rose from the dead. But sometimes, we would rather not go to church and celebrate. We would rather do something else that seems more fun. We don't treasure what Jesus did on the cross. We need a Savior!
- T** God, thank You for beating sin and death for God's people through Jesus. Thank You that they don't have to face Your punishment for sin. They get to know You in their hearts now, and get to live with You in heaven when they die. Thank You that we can be Your people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to celebrate Jesus' win over sin and death as we gather together with God's people at church.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Bible Truth 1 Story**The Case of the Third Day Yay**

Exodus 16,20; Luke 22-24; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2

Songs Used in Bible Truth 1

Big Q & A 15 Song

Big Question 15 Song: Why Do God's People Go to Church?

Big Question 15 Bible Verse Song: Stir Up Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV

Big Question 15 Hymn: Brethren, We Have Met to Worship, v.1

Big Question 15 Praise Song: Praise the Lord Together

Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: He Has Given Us a New Birth 1 Peter 1:3, HCSB

Extra Bible Verse: Shout with Joy to God Psalm 66:1-3,5,9,16, ESV

Extra Bible Verse: Make a Joyful Noise Psalm 100:1-6 ESV

Extra Bible Verse: Noise, Noise, Noise Psalm 100:1-4. ESV (other version)

Extra Bible Verse: The Time Is Fulfilled Mark 1:15, ESV

Extra Bible Verse: The Time Mark 1:15, ESV (other version)

Extra Bible Verse: How Beautiful Romans 10:13-15, ESV

Extra Bible Verse: Be My Witnesses Acts 1:8, ESV

Extra Bible Verse: All the Nations You Have Made Psalm 86:9, ESV

Extra Bible Verse: Behold a Great Multitude Revelation 7:9-10, ESV

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

The Case of the Third Day Yay*Exodus 16,20; Luke 22-24; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2***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 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 Third Day Yay. 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. **What happened on the third day after Jesus died that made the disciples so happy?**
2. **What day of the week was that third day? What did Jesus' followers keep doing each week to remember that first, wonderful day?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 1 Peter 1:3, HCSB: "He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

I need to find out:

1. **Who celebrated Jesus' resurrection from the dead on that first, wonderful Sunday?**
2. **How did they receive a new birth into a living hope? What did that mean?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

Our six clues are: Jesus, bird, praying together, God's Word, a cross and a hat.

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to figure out:

1. **Which four belong in the story and which two don't?**
2. **What did Jesus is followers celebrate every Sunday? What did they thank God for doing?**

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 Third Day Yay *Exodus 16,20; Luke 22-24; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2*

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

Walk! Walk! Walk! Look at all of God's people walking. Where are they going? What are they doing? They aren't staying at home, so where are they going?

Where do you think they are going?

Are they going to the market to shop? No, not the market. Are they going to the fields to work? No, not this day.

Then, where ARE they going? Aren't those the things they do EVERY day? Aren't those the places they go every day: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday?

Well, not quite every day. There was one day, each week, that God told them to do something very different. On this day, they were to rest. And, instead of going about their regular work, they were to go to the worship place. This was the day they were to gather together and worship the LORD. Do you know what this special day was called?

Can you tell me what it's called?

It was called the Sabbath --from the Hebrew word for "rest." And which day of the week was the Sabbath? It was Saturday, always Saturday --the last day of the week. That's why, in our story, God's people weren't staying at home, or going to shop at the market, or going to work in the fields on this day. This was the Sabbath Day, and God's people were going to worship God, as God told them to in the Ten, Big Laws He gave them through Moses.

For hundreds and hundreds of years, the Sabbath-Saturday was the day God's people were to rest from their work, and to gather together to worship God. But then, something really big and wonderful happened: the Savior came. And something He did changed that worship day from Saturday to Sunday. Do you know the Savior's name?

Can you tell me His name?

It's Jesus!

Yes, Jesus came to earth to be the Savior of God's people. He lived a perfect life. He never, ever disobeyed God. He was the perfect law-keeper of all of God's laws. Then, Jesus gave His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of God's people, when He suffered and died on the cross.

Friends came and took Jesus' body off the cross. They covered it in sweet-smelling spices and wound white, linen cloth around it. They buried Jesus' body in a grave cave, rolled a huge stone in place to shut the cave, and left Him. Oh, how sad they were on that Friday when Jesus died!

In that grave cave, Jesus' dead body lay all that Friday and all that Sabbath-Saturday. Soldiers stood guard over the grave cave, making sure no one came and took Jesus body.

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

But then, early on the next day--Sunday--what a surprise there was for those soldiers and Jesus' disciples ...and really the whole world! Jesus' body didn't stay put AT ALL! Can you tell me what happened?

What happened to Jesus?

God raised Jesus from the dead! Out of that grave cave, Jesus came. He was alive, never to die again!

Jesus appeared to many people that day. He appeared to three women who had come to His grave cave. Yay! Jesus is alive! Then, to two people as they walked along the road to their home. "Yay! Jesus is alive!" And in the evening, Jesus appeared to a whole group of His disciples. "Yay! Jesus is alive!"

Yes! Jesus was alive, and His friends were so happy! Jesus had really beaten sin and death for God's people. Now, instead of facing God's punishment, God's people were forgiven. They would get to know God, and love and enjoy Him forever. What an amazing day this was! This was the day God's people had been waiting for since the beginning, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin came into the world.

Jesus' followers never wanted to forget this wonderful Sunday. So, they began to gather together every Sunday to celebrate what He had done for them. They didn't call this special worship day the Sabbath anymore. They gave it a new name to remind them of what Jesus had done. Do you know what that new name is?

Can you tell me?

They called it "the Lord's Day" because they were celebrating the wonderful Sunday when the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, proving He had beaten sin and death for God's people.

From then on, Jesus' followers kept on gathering together every Lord's Day to worship God and love one another. They worshiped God and praised Jesus, their Savior, who beat sin and death for them. They shared stories of the amazing things that God was doing, and asked God to do more. They learned from God's Word, the Bible, and shared a special meal together to remember that Jesus died for their sins. They prayed and care for each other's needs. In all these ways, they worshipped God and loved one another. How loud were their praises every Lord's Day! Sunday was a big celebration day.

But as happy as those first Christians were to celebrate every Sunday in their little gatherings, that wasn't enough. Not enough for them and not enough for God. They wanted more, more, more! Can you guess what they wanted more of?

Can you guess?

They wanted MORE people to know the good news of Jesus. They wanted MORE people to turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. They wanted MORE people to know God, love God, and sing praises to Him. They wanted the WHOLE WORLD to be filled with God's people.

This was what Jesus had told them to do. "Go into the whole world with the gospel," Jesus had said, right before He went up to heaven. "Teach them to repent of their sins and trust in Me as their Savior. Baptize them as My followers. Teach them how to be My disciples. Teach them how to live as God's people," He said. "I will send the Holy Spirit to help you," Jesus promised.

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

And that's just what Jesus' disciples did. After the Holy Spirit came to live in their hearts, they began to tell everyone the good news of Jesus. First, to the people living in Jerusalem, then out to their nearby neighbors, they went with the gospel. The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many, and they turned from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. These new believers joined the disciples as they gathered together. Sundays had become their celebration day, too. God's people were growing in number. Their praises were getting louder!

Then, further and further away they went to tell the good news of Jesus to others in faraway places. The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many of these people, too. They turned from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. Little churches of believers sprung up everywhere. Sundays had become their celebration day, too.

Since then, God's people keep on spreading the good news of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit keeps on working in hearts. And what do God's people keep doing on Sundays?

Can you tell me?

They keep on gathering together to celebrate that most wonderful Sunday when Jesus rose from the dead. Their numbers keep growing and their praises get louder, as more people put their faith in Jesus.

And this is why we gather together today: to celebrate how Jesus proved He beat sin and death for God's people on that wonderful Sunday, long ago!

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. What happened on the third day after Jesus died that made the disciples so happy? Jesus rose from the dead. He proved that He had really beaten sin and death for God's people.

2. What day of the week was that third day? What did Jesus' followers keep doing each week to remember that first, wonderful day? A Sunday. They started gathering together every Sunday to celebrate what Jesus had done for them.

For You and Me:

God's people around the world still celebrate with a "third day yay"! They still gather together on Sundays to celebrate Jesus rising from the dead in victory over sin and death for God's people. We can join in that celebration, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help you do this. He loves to answer this prayer.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 1 Peter 1:3, HCSB: "He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

1. Who celebrated Jesus' resurrection from the dead on that first, wonderful Sunday? Jesus' disciples.

2. How did they receive a new birth into a living hope? What did that mean? They had turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. God forgave their sins and made their hearts new. He sent His Holy Spirit to live inside of them, so they could know Him, and to help them love Him and live for Him. He filled their hearts with hope in Jesus now, and hope in one day going to live with Him forever in heaven. That would be best of all.

For You and Me:

Like those first followers of Jesus, we, too, can receive a new birth into a living hope. We, too, can have our sins forgiven and begin life as one of God's people. We can know God in our hearts now and one day, go to live with Him forever in heaven. How? When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: Jesus, bird, praying together, God's Word, a cross and a hat

1. Which four belong in our story?

Jesus, people praying, God's Word and the cross belong. The bird and the hat do not.

2. What did Jesus' followers celebrate every Sunday? What did they thank God for doing? They gathered together to celebrate Jesus' beating sin and death for them on that first, wonderful Sunday when He rose from the dead. They thanked God for sending Jesus to be their Savior.

For You and Me:

God's people around the world still celebrate with a "third day yay"! They still gather together on Sundays to celebrate Jesus rising from the dead in victory over sin and death for God's people. We can join in that celebration, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help you do this. He loves to answer this prayer.

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 Praising God for Jesus' Win over Death!**

Why do God's people go to church? To worship God and love one another... by praising God for Jesus' win over death! What a wonderful day it was when Jesus rose from the dead! He had beaten sin and death for God's people. Oh, how we needed Him to do that! You see, all people have chosen to disobey God. We all deserve His punishment.

God would have been perfectly fair to punish us all for our sins; but, He is so full of mercy that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Jesus lived a perfect life, then offered it as the full payment for the sins of God's people when He died on the cross. On Day Three, He rose from the dead, showing He had beaten sin and death for them..

Now, all who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior are forgiven their sins, and become God's people. Ask to God to help you do this. Then, Sunday will be your special celebration day, too!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for saving Your people, the Church. We praise You for being so powerful that You beat sin and death for them.
- C** God, we know that Sunday should be a special celebration day. It's the day Jesus rose from the dead. But sometimes, we would rather not go to church and celebrate. We would rather do something else that seems more fun. We don't treasure what Jesus did on the cross. We need a Savior!
- T** God, thank You for beating sin and death for God's people through Jesus. Thank You that they don't have to face Your punishment for sin. They get to know You in their hearts now, and get to live with You in heaven when they die. Thank You that we can be Your people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to celebrate Jesus' win over sin and death as we gather together with God's people at church. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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