

The Case of the Terrible Trouble

Acts 17; 1 & 2 Thessalonians



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and/or prepare storyboard pictures, if using. (Included in Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary to fit your allotted time.

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 Terrible Trouble. 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:

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who had to go through terrible trouble?
2. Who helped them through it?

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible verse is Psalm 55:22: “Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.”

Casting your burden on the LORD means asking Him to take care of you and help you to keep on living for Him, even when it is very hard.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who cast their burden on the LORD?
2. How did the LORD sustain them through their troubles?

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found four clues, but one of them is NOT in the story.

They are: a hat; some angry people; a man named Jason; and, a bag of money.

Hold up each of the four pictures for the children to see as you identify them. Better yet, put them up on your flannelgraph board, off to one side.

I need to know:

1. Which picture was not in the story?
2. How were the other three pictures important?

Detective Dan’s Lesson #4 Listening Assignment:

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who asked God to help the believers in Thessalonica?
2. How did God answer his prayers?

Detective Dan’s Lesson #5 Listening Assignment:

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. What good news did Paul go to Thessalonica to tell?
2. What happened when Paul told his good news?

Read the questions, THEN SAY,

“Ok, Hide ‘n’ Seekers! 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.”

“The Case of the Big Trouble” Acts 17, 1 & 2 Thessalonians

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 order 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.

Trouble! Big, big trouble! That's what life was like if you lived in the big city of Thessalonica and you were a follower of Jesus.

Can you say, Thessalonica? It's a big word for a big city, isn't it?

The trouble started when (SB1) a man named Paul came to Thessalonica. He started sharing (SB2) the good news of Jesus with the people at the worship house there. “Jesus is God's Son,” Paul told them. “He died on the cross to save God's people from their sins. On the third day, He rose from the dead in victory. Turn away from your sins and trust in Jesus as your Savior! Enjoy life with God forever!” Paul urged them.

The (SB3) Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many as Paul spoke. They turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. How happy they were! How they loved the good news of Jesus!

But not everyone at the worship house was happy. Not everyone liked what Paul had to say. (SB4) Some were very angry. “Shhh! Be quiet, Paul!” they said. “The Bible doesn't say these things about Jesus. You've got it all wrong! Stop talking Him or you're going to be in big trouble!” they warned.

Uh, oh! Here's comes the big trouble! Those enemies are really angry. They might do mean things to Paul if he didn't stop talking about Jesus. Would Paul be quiet? Would he (SB5) run away? Or, would he (SB6) stay and keep on telling people about Jesus?

What would you want to do if angry enemies were thinking about doing mean things to you?

Well, maybe Paul WOULD have run away, if he had had to face his enemies on his own. But, Paul did not have to face them alone! Paul knew that God was with him. God's (SB7) Holy Spirit was at work in his heart, making him brave and helping him trust God. God would always help Paul to keep on loving Him and living for Him. God would help Paul do all the good things that He wanted Paul to do. Yes, there was big trouble for Paul in Thessalonica, but there was no trouble too big for God. Paul would not stop. Paul would not run away. With God's help, Paul would keep on telling others about Jesus.

Maybe Paul didn't stop, but neither did Paul's enemies. Grrr.... they were so very, very mad! What would they do now?!

Can you make an angry face?

Now Paul's enemies decided to make big, BIG TROUBLE for Paul in Thessalonica. (SB8) They went to the marketplace and found some bad men. “We'll pay you lots of money if you will tell lies about Paul,” they offered. “Stir up trouble in Thessalonica for him. Get lots of people angry. Get them to say, ‘Get rid of Paul! He says we should disobey the king,’” they told the bad men.

The bad men agreed. They liked money a lot. So, all around Thessalonica they began to tell lies about Paul. Many people believed the bad men's terrible lies. Soon, there was a (SB9) HUGE CROWD of people and they were all yelling, “Find Paul and get rid of him! He says we should disobey the king.”

Before long, the whole city of Thessalonica was in an uproar...and they were all after PAUL! Oh, what big trouble those enemies had stirred up for Paul!

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

Up and down the streets the crowd went, looking for Paul.

Can you stomp your feet and make the sound of a big crowd walking down the street?

“Maybe Paul is hiding at (SB10) Jason’s house,” the angry people thought. Jason was a new believer in Jesus and a friend of Paul’s.

“Bang, bang, bang,” the crowd beat on Jason’s door. “Give us Paul! He’s bad. He needs to be punished,” they demanded.

“Paul’s not here,” Jason replied. (The believers had already (SB11) hidden Paul and his friends, Timothy and Silas, from the angry crowd. They were nice and safe in another part of the city.)

But grrr... that wasn’t good enough for these angry people. They couldn’t have Paul, so they dragged (SB12) Jason and some of the other believers before the city leaders and tried to get them in trouble.

Can you make an angry face?

Jason and the others had to (SB13) pay a lot of money to the city leaders before they were free to go home. Oh, what big trouble there was for Paul and the new believers in Thessalonica that day!

Late that night, when all was quiet and dark, (SB14) some of the believers sneaked Paul, Timothy and Silas out of the city. “Leave Thessalonica! Go on to other cities and tell people there about Jesus,” they urged Paul and his friends. “We will stay here and keep on telling others here about Jesus. God will help us.”

So Paul and his friends left Thessalonica that night. The trouble in Thessalonica was over for Paul. And hadn’t God been faithful to help him every single day? Yes, He had! God’s (SB15) Holy Spirit had been at work in Paul’s heart, making him brave and helping him trust God. Yes, there had been big trouble for Paul in Thessalonica. There would probably be big trouble in (SB16) city after (SB17) city where Paul would travel to next to tell the good news of Jesus. But Paul knew that there would never be trouble too big for God. God would always be with him and would help him do all of the good things He had planned for Paul to do.

Maybe Paul and his friends had left the troubles in Thessalonica behind, but Paul couldn’t stop (SB18) thinking about the new believers who still lived there. He loved them so much! How were they doing? Were their enemies making trouble for them still? Were Jason and the others getting hurt? Were they too scared to tell others the good news of Jesus? Were they still believing in Jesus and living for Him? How were they doing with the trouble in Thessalonica? Paul just had to find out!

How do you think Jason and the others believers were doing with the big trouble?

(SB19) “Timothy, would you go back to Thessalonica? Would you go back and check up on the new believers, then come back and tell me?” Paul asked his friend. “I just have to know how they are!” Paul exclaimed.

“Yes, Paul, I’ll go,” Timothy said, and off he went, all the way back to Thessalonica. What did Timothy find when he got there? (SB20) Well, there was still trouble in Thessalonica! Enemies were still trying to stop the believers from telling the good news of Jesus, but God was helping them! They were doing well! They were reading God’s Word. The Holy Spirit was working in their hearts. He was making them brave. They were praying and encouraging each other to not give up. They were telling others about Jesus. God was giving them His sustaining grace! He was helping them to keep on believing in Him and living for Him!

Timothy took this good news back to Paul. How (SB21) Paul rejoiced! No trouble was too much for God! Not even trouble in Thessalonica! He would always help His people to keep on believing in him and living for him!

Let’s clap and praise God for helping His people keep on trusting in Him and living for Him!

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 asked God to help the believers in Thessalonica?** Paul.
- 2. How did God answer his prayers?** God helped the believers keep on believing in Him and living for Him, even though they had enemies that gave them such terrible trouble.

For You and Me:

Whatever troubles we face, we know that God can help us to keep on believing in Him and living for Him, when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 55:22:

"Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved."

Casting your burden on the LORD means asking Him to take care of you and help you to keep on living for Him, even when it is very hard.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

- 1. Who cast their cares on the LORD?** Paul and the new believers in Thessalonica.
- 2. How did the LORD sustain them through their troubles?** The LORD helped them to keep on believing in Him and to keep on living for Him through all their troubles.

For You and Me:

Isn't it wonderful that God offers to carry all the cares of His people so that they don't have to carry them alone? We can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found four clues, but one of them is NOT in the story. They are: a hat; some angry people; a man named Jason; and, a

I need to know:

- 1. Which picture was not in the story?** The hat.
- 2. How were the other three pictures important?** Many people in Thessalonica heard the good news of Jesus and put their trust in Him. This made some people very angry. They went to Jason's house to get Paul in trouble. When they couldn't find Paul, they took Jason and some others to get them in trouble. Jason and his friends had to pay a lot of money to be freed and go home. Even through all these terrible troubles, God helped Jason and the other believers to keep on

believing in Him and living for Him.

For You and Me:

God helped Paul and Jason, even when angry enemies were after them. He helped all the other believers, even when Paul left. God is always able to help His people, no matter what troubles they face. He will help us like He helped those believers long ago, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson #4 Listening Assignment:

- 1. Who asked God to help the believers in Thessalonica?** Paul.
- 2. How did God answer his prayers?** God helped the believers keep on believing in Him and living for Him, even though they had enemies that gave them such terrible trouble.

For You and Me:

Like Paul and those new believers long ago, God wants us to ask Him to help us to keep on believing and living for Him. He will always help us, when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson #5 Listening Assignment:

- 1. What good news did Paul go to Thessalonica to tell?** He told them the good news of Jesus. That if they would turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior, God would forgive their sins and make them His dearly loved people forever.
- 2. What happened when Paul told his good news?** Many people repented of their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. Others were angry and caused trouble for Paul and the new believers.

For You and Me:

Paul was willing to suffer trouble in Thessalonica so he could to tell people how they could be saved through Jesus. There was no message more important than this! Paul chose to suffer so they could hear it and hopefully believe it. This good news is just as important for us to hear and believe today. We need to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, too! Ask God to help you! He loves to!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)

Our Bible Truth is:

Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?

It Is God's Sustaining Grace!

Paul wanted the people of Thessalonica to hear and believe the good news of Jesus. Paul depended upon God to give him everything he needed to face the enemies who wanted to harm him and to keep on telling people about Jesus. There was so much trouble in Thessalonica for him!

Why would Paul go through all of this trouble? Because only by turning from their sins and trusting in Jesus could the people of Thessalonica be saved from their sins and become God's people. Oh, how Paul wanted them to believe this good news! and be saved!

This is the same good news that we can believe today. God loves to help us trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask Him! And for those who do trust in Jesus, that's just the beginning. God promises to help them keep on believing in Him and living for Him their whole lives, just like He did for those believers in Thessalonica, long ago. And one day, they will go to live with Him forever.

Close in prayer.

Closing Unit 13 ACTS Prayer

A=Adoration C=Confession T=Thanksgiving S=Supplication

- A** We praise you, God. You for being the one who sustains Your people through every day of their lives, all the way home to live with You forever.
- C** God, You promise to sustain us, but too many times we complain and whine when we have to go through something hard. We don't trust You to take care of us. Please forgive us!
- T** Thank You for promising to always take care of Your people. Thank You that they never have to worry. You love them so much.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Give us everything we need to live for You and love You every day of our life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

***Return to page 7 of the Lesson Plan
for the script of the rest of this lesson.***