

**The Case of the Whispering World**

Acts 14

**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 the Visual Aids books)
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.

**INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS**

**“Our story is called: The Case of the Whispering World. 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 is the great Creator that the world whispers to us about?**
2. **Who did Paul tell about this great Creator? What did he hope they would do?**

**Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:****Our Bible Verse is Psalm 19:1-4:**

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

I need to know:

1. **Who did Paul want to learn about God by looking at the sky and everything else that God had made?**
2. **What did he want those people to know and do?**

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

They are: some enemies; a lame man; a hat; food; birds; and an umbrella.

*Hold up each of them 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 confessed their sins to God? What happened?**

**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.*

*Listening Assignments answers; the gospel; and, an ACTS prayer are included with the story text at the end.*

**The Case of the Whispering World** Acts 14

**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.*

**(SB1) Paul and Barnabas were two men who loved Jesus. They lived their lives to please Him. They trusted Him as their Savior.**

*Hold up two fingers for Paul and Barnabas.*

**Paul and Barnabas knew (SB2) that all people were sinners who needed a Savior, so they set out (SB3) walk, walk, walking to tell new people in new places how Jesus could be their Savior, too.**

*Walk in place.*

**One day, (SB4) Paul and Barnabas came to the town of Lystra. Nobody in Lystra had ever heard of Jesus. (SB5) They only believed in fake gods. So Paul and Barnabas began telling everyone the good news of Jesus. Many people were curious. Soon a crowd had (SB6) gathered around Paul and Barnabas, eager to hear what they had to say.**

**(SB7) One man in the crowd lay on a mat. He wasn't lying down because he was tired. He was lying down because he was lame. He was born with legs that didn't work. He had never walked in his whole life! Can you imagine that?**

*Sit down on the ground and hold your legs very still as if your legs didn't work.*

**Now maybe that man's legs didn't work as he lay on his mat, but his ears certainly did! As he listened to Paul, the Holy Spirit began to work in his heart... and he began to believe in Jesus!**

**Paul looked at the man on the mat, and he could see what was happening. Paul was so excited!**

**Then God used Paul to give that lame man yet another gift: the gift of walking! Paul looked at the man and in a loud voice said, "In the name of Jesus, stand up and walk!"**

**The man believed in Jesus and obeyed Paul. (SB8) He sprang up and began walking all around for the first time in his life! God had healed his legs! Yay!**

*Spring up to your feet and walk in place.*

**The crowd of people was amazed!**

*Can you make a surprised face?*

**Yes, the crowd was amazed, but they didn't understand that it was Jesus who healed the man's legs. They thought Paul and Barnabas had healed the man! They even thought Paul and Barnabas were (SB9) two of their fake gods, Zeus and Hermes, come to visit them!**

**"Let's have a worship party for these two gods," the people of Lystra decided. "(SB10) Make leafy, green crowns to put on their heads! Bring big, fat bulls to give them as worship gifts!" they shouted.**

*Can you make a crown shape on the top of your head with your hands? Can you make bull's horns on your head?*

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

**Oh, no! What would Paul and Barnabas do now? This wasn't at all what they wanted the people of Lystra to do! They wanted them to worship Jesus, not them!**

**"No! No!" Don't worship us!" Paul told them. "We aren't gods. We are only men."**

**"There is (SB11) only one living God," Paul said. "Look at everything all around you! He's the one who made the earth and the sky, and the sea, and everything in them. Yes, He made it all! He's the good God who gives you the rain that makes your crops grow so you have food. He's the One who gives you (SB12) joy in your heart, too. All these good gifts are from Him!**

**He shows you who He is and what He's like in all the things He has made and all that He has give you. Now He has done something even more marvelous than all of this! He has (point back to SB2) sent His Son, Jesus to live a perfect life and die on the cross to save you from your sins. He wants you to turn away from your fake gods and worship Him. He wants you to know Him and become His people!" Paul told them.**

**"So please, don't worship us!" Paul begged. "We only men, come to tell you about the Savior Jesus. Worship Him! Trust in Him! He is God, not us!"**

**Just then, (SB13) some people from another town joined the crowd. These people hated Paul and what he said about Jesus. They said bad things about Paul and made the other people mad at Paul, too. Now the crowd didn't want to worship Paul. Now they wanted to kill him!**

*Make a mad face.*

**People picked up (SB14) stones and threw them at Paul until he fell over! Oh, how the stones hurt his body!**

**Then they dragged (SB15) Paul out of the city and left him for dead! They wanted nothing to do with Paul or his God!**

*Shake head "no."*

**This was terrible! Had no one heard and believed Paul's message about Jesus? Had everyone turned against Paul and Barnabas?**

**No, not everyone had gone along with Paul's enemies. (SB16) There were some people in the crowd who had believed Paul's message about God--like the man with the healed legs.**

**Yes, these people could see this one, true God in all the things He had made and given them. They believed that Jesus was God's Son, sent to save them. They turned away from wanting to disobey God and trusted Jesus as their Savior...and God forgave them and saved them! Yay!**

*Let's jump up and down and shout "Yay" for these new believers God saved!*

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

**When the angry people had gone away, these new believers went up to Paul. Was he dead? He lay so very, very still.**

**But, no! Paul wasn't dead! He was still alive! The people helped up Paul and (SB17) carried him home. There, they took (SB18) care of Barnabas and him all night long.**

*How would you help someone who is badly hurt?*

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**The next morning, Paul and Barnabas left Lystra to go (SB19) walk, walk, walking to other places to tell more people in more places about Jesus.**

**How Paul must have hurt as he limped along the road! But how (SB20) happy Barnabas and he were! For back in Lystra, they knew there was a new, little group of believers gathering together to worship the one, true God. They would keep on believing in Jesus. They would keep on telling others about Him--the great Creator who had made the whole world and had given them so many good gifts. And who now offered them the best gift of all-- forgiveness for their sins and closeness with Him forever. A gift for all who would turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.**

**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 is the great Creator that the world whispers to us about?** The LORD, the one, true God.
- 2. Who did Paul tell about this great Creator? What did he hope they would do?** Paul told the people of Lystra about Him. He hoped that they would turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

**For You and Me:**

Like the people of Lystra, we can look around us and learn about The LORD, the one, true God who made everything. We can see how good and great He is. And, like the people of Lystra, the best thing we can do is to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then we can be His people who know Him and His wonderful love for us!

**Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:****Our Bible Verse is Psalm 19:1-4:**

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

I need to know:

- 1. Who did Paul want to learn about God by looking at the sky and everything else that God had made?** The people of Lystra.
- 2. What did he want those people to know and do?** Paul wanted them to turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior so they could be saved and be God's dearly loved people forever.

**For You and Me:**

Like the people of Lystra, we can look around us and see what God is like. How good He has been to us! How many ways He has cared for us and given us good things to enjoy. Best of all, He's told us the good news of Jesus. Like the people of Lystra, He wants us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then we can be His people who know Him and His wonderful love for us!

**Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:**

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. They are: some enemies; a lame man; a hat; food; birds; and an umbrella.

*Hold up each of them 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 enemies, lame man, food and birds belong in the story. The hat and umbrella do not.
- 2. Who confessed their sins to God? What happened?** The lame man and others in Lystra confessed their sins to God and trusted in Jesus as their Savior. God forgave their sins and made them His special people forever. How happy they were to get to know and love God!

**For You and Me:**

We, too, have sinned against God. There are many things we can confess to Him and ask for His forgiveness. We, too, can turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. He loves to hear and answer prayers like these! He wants us to forgive us and make us His special people!

**The Gospel** (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****How Can I Know What God Is Like?****He Shows Me What He's Like...****in everything I see all around me!**

Yes, all around us, the things God made tell us about Him and that we should worship Him and obey His good ways. But we have each chosen to live life our own way, instead of obeying Him! We deserve His punishment because of this. How terrible!

But God is so kind to us! He has made a way for us to have the wonderful delight of knowing Him and being saved from our sins! How? By saying "no" to disobeying Him and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. When we do, God will forgive our sins and we can enjoy wonderful, special closeness with Him now. And one day, we will get to live with Him forever. How wonderful that will be!

That's why Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra. They wanted the people of Lystra to hear the good news of Jesus and come to know God. And did you know, that's why I'm here teaching you today. I want YOU to know this good news and come to know God, too.

*Close in prayer.*

**Closing ACTS Prayer**

- A** We praise you, God, that You show us what You are like! We look all around us at the wonderful things You have made and we see how wonderful You are!
- C** God, when we look at all the things You have made, we know that You are the great, One, True God. We know that we should obey You, but many times we don't. Please forgive us through Jesus.
- T** Thank you for wanting us to know You. Thank You for all the beautiful things that You have made and all that they tell us about You!
- S** Work deep inside our hearts so we can know more and more of You! Help us to think about You and know what You are like as we look at everything You've made. Help us to turn away from disobeying You and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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