

The Case of the Great Price*Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19***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 Great Price. 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 did Jesus do that cost a great price?
2. Who did He do it for? Why?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Hosea 13:14, HCSB:***"I will ransom them from the power of Sheol. I will redeem them from death."*

I need to find out:

1. Sheol is another word for death. To ransom means to pay whatever it costs to rescue someone. Who ransomed God's people from death?
2. What had to be done to ransom God's people from death?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: an alligator; Jesus; a robber; a jail; sin; and a harp. *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. What do God's people thank Jesus for doing for them on the cross?

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 Great Price *Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19*

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.

(SB1) The Roman king did NOT put up with (SB2) lawbreakers! Some lawbreakers he punished by (SB3) locking them away in a jail room for a long time. And some bad men he punished by (SB4) having them hit with strong ropes called whips. And (SB5) some bad men he even sent away to sea to row big boats for the soldiers. But the worst kind of bad men (SB6) the king sent to a hill outside of Jerusalem called Golgotha. And there, these worst kinds of men were given the worst kind of punishment. (SB7, SB8) They were put up on a big wooden cross with nails(!)...and they were left there to suffer and die!

How terrible it was to suffer and die on a cross! It was so terrible that people long ago would not even say the word "cross"! (SB9) "Cross" was a bad word that good people did not say, let alone think about!

What kind of bad men died on crosses? (SB10) Traitors died on crosses—men who tried to get rid of the king. (SB11) Murderers died on crosses—men who killed other people. (SB12) Robbers died on crosses—men who took other people's things. Men who did these things were thought to be the worst of the bad men; and so, they were punished on crosses.

The cross. It was for bad men being punished for the bad things they had done. That's the way it was back in those days. At least that was the way it was supposed to be.

But what a strange thing people saw on Golgotha one Friday long ago! For there on that hill stood three crosses for three men. Two of the men were robbers, but (SB13) the third one was a man no one expected to see there. Can you guess who it was?

Can you guess?

It was Jesus!

Now the two robbers on crosses we can understand...and so could those people who lived long ago. (SB14) These men had snatched other people's things and now they were being punished for the bad things they had done. That was the way it was back in those days.

(SB15) But Jesus? Why was He there? What bad thing had He done? Can you tell me?

Can you think of anything bad that Jesus had done?

Had Jesus snatched other people's things like the robbers? No! Had He killed someone like the murderers? No! Had He tried to get rid of the king like the traitors? No! Jesus had never done any of these bad things. As a matter of fact, (SB16) Jesus had never sinned. He had never done EVEN ONE bad thing in His whole life!

(SB17) Jesus always kept God's laws. He always loved God most. He always loved others as the Bible tells us to. In EVERYTHING Jesus thought in His heart; and in everything Jesus said and did, He never, ever disobeyed God or did anything wrong. Jesus was the only person who ever lived a PERFECT LIFE. That's why He, of all people, did not deserve to be up there on that cross for anything He had done!

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

So why WAS Jesus on that cross? Whose bad things was He being punished for, if not His own?

Do you know?

Jesus was up on that cross NOT for bad things He had done. Jesus was up on that cross because He CHOSE to be there. (SB18) He was choosing to take the punishment for all the bad things God's people had done!

And even though the king's soldiers put Jesus on that cross, Jesus wasn't really being punished by the king for the bad things God's people had done. He was choosing to be punished by someone else.

Can you guess who?

Jesus was being punished by (SB19) God because of God's people!

God?! Why would HE need to punish His people? Didn't He love them? Yes, He loves them very much. But you see, the LORD is the one, true, perfectly good God and (SB20) He is the big king over everyone. (SB21) He has given us His perfectly good laws to live by, but we have obeyed them all?

Have we?

No we have not! None of us! We have ALL disobeyed God and we ALL deserve His punishment for disobeying Him and His good laws. That makes us all sinners. And oh, what a terrible punishment we all deserve! We deserve to be separated from God and all His goodness forever. Forever punishment! Isn't that awful?

(SB22) But God loved the world so much that He sent His Son, Jesus to suffer and die on that cross to take all of the punishment for their sins upon Himself...so God's people wouldn't have to. (SB23) Jesus' perfect life paid for their sins so they could be FORGIVEN; and, so they could be loved forever by God instead of punished!

Who are God's people? They are all who would ever turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as their Savior. All who come to Him like this are God's people! So that's why Jesus suffered and died on that terrible cross that day. Not for anything He had done, but (SB24) because He loved God, His Father and God's people that much! Isn't Jesus amazing??

And how do we KNOW that Jesus really took all of the punishment for God's people that day? It because of what happened on the third day after Jesus died. Do you know what happened?

Can you tell me?

(SB25, SB26) On Day One, Jesus' body stayed dead in the cave-grave. On Day Two, Jesus' body stayed dead in the cave-grave. (Move (BG4 to the side, then remove SB25 and add SB27) But on Day Three, Jesus rose up from the dead, showing that He had really had done it!

Now God's people were forgiven forever! Now they never would have to have God's punishment. (SB28) Now they would get to know and love Him in their hearts their whole lives! And one day, when they die, (SB29) they would get to go live with God forever! What a wonderful thing it is to be God's dearly-loved people!

Thank You, Jesus, for taking all of God's punishment for all of God's people on the cross! Thank You, that You offer for us to become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in You as our Savior! Help us to do this, even today!

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 did Jesus do that cost a great price? He suffered and died on the cross.

2. Who did He do it for? Why? He did it for God's people, so they could be saved from their sins.

For You and Me:

How amazing is God's love for His people! That He would send His Son, Jesus to suffer and die in their place! We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Hosea 13:14, HCSB:**

"I will ransom them from the power of Sheol. I will redeem them from death."

1. Sheol is another word for death. To ransom means to pay whatever it costs to rescue someone. Who ransomed God's people from death? Jesus did.

2. What had to be done to ransom God's people from death? Jesus had to pay for their sins, Himself, as He suffered and died on the cross.

For You and Me

How amazing is God's love for His people! That He would send His Son, Jesus to suffer and die in their place! We can become God's people, too, 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: an alligator; Jesus; a robber; a jail; sin; and a harp. Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

1. Which four belong in our story?

Jesus, the robber, the jail and sin belong. The butterfly and the harp do not.

2. What do God's people thank Jesus for doing for them on the cross? For suffering and dying on the cross for their sins so they could be forgiven.

For You and Me

How amazing is God's love for His people! That He would send His Son, Jesus to suffer and die in their place! We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****What Did Jesus Come to Do?****Jesus Came to Bring Us to God...****He Died on the Cross for the Sins of God's People!**

What did Jesus come to do? Jesus came to bring us to God... He died on the cross for the sins of God's people.

That was the only way God's people could be forgiven their sins. You see, all people have chosen to disobey God and His good ways. No one lives the perfect life that pleases God. That is why we all deserve His punishment!

God would have been perfectly fair to punish us for our sins. But, He is so full of mercy and love that He chose to make a way for us to be saved. He sent Jesus to live the perfectly obedient life that none of us have lived. Then, Jesus offered up His perfect life to be the full payment for the sins of all who would ever turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as their Savior. On the third day, He rose from the dead, proving He had really done it! We, too, can be God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. *Close in prayer.*

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** Jesus, we praise You for being our Savior. You came to bring us to God. We praise You for being willing to suffer and die on the cross for the sins of God's people sins.
- C** Jesus, how we need You to be our Savior! We are all sinners who disobey God. We all deserve God's punishment. Please forgive us!
- T** Thank You, Jesus, for suffering and dying on the cross to save all who turn away from their sins and trust in You as their Savior. Thank You for taking all of God's punishment that we might be forgiven. Thank You that no one is too sinful for You to save. You are a big enough Savior for any of us.
- S** Jesus, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins. Help us to trust in You as our Savior. Help us to love You more and live for You more. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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