Bible Story for Big Question 11, Bible Truth 1

use with all THREE lessons

Place story in DDD Bible Folder *take out* Big Question Briefcase *of BQB*

The Case of the Changed Climber

Luke 19:1-9

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 Changed Climber. 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 climber and why did he climb?

2. How did he change?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 1 John 1:8-9, ESV

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I need to find out:

1.Who wanted to confess their sins and be forgiven by God?

2. Who didn't think he should be forgiven? Who did think he should be forgiven?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

Our six clues were: a tree, a cow, a bag of money, a king, an umbrella, and yummy food.

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. Who confessed their sins to God and was forgiven? Who gave back the money he had stolen?

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.

Bible Story for Big Question 11, Bible Truth 1

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The Case of the Changed Climber *Luke 19:1-9*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, *optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Alway 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. OR, if using the Story Scenes to tell the story, disregard the storyboard picture references listed below.*

Zacchaeus was a (SB1) rich, rich, rich man! He could have lots of fine clothes. He could have a big, big house. He could eat all the yummiest foods. He could buy all the nice things he liked. Yes. Zacchaeus could have almost anything he wanted because he was so rich.

But even though Zacchaeus could have almost anything he wanted, most anything money could buy, there was something that Zacchaeus did not have. Because… it was something money could not buy.

What do you think Zacchaeus wanted that money could not buy?

Zacchaeus wanted (SB2) God to forgive his sins.

Now we know that no one deserves for God to forgive their sins. We have all disobeyed God and all deserve His punishment. But to many, Zacchaeus ESPECIALLY didn't deserve to have his sins forgiven.

You see, (SB3) Zacchaeus chose to work for Caesar, the big king in Rome whose soldiers had taken over Israel, the country where Zacchaeus and the other people lived. And one of the big things Caesar wanted from the people in Israel was MONEY. TAX MONEY.

The people of Israel hated to give the king tax money, and (SB4) most of them refused to help him collect it. But not Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus loved money and when the king offered to give him lots of money to collect taxes, Zacchaeus agreed.

"Zacchaeus, collect all my tax money for me, and any extra you can squeeze and bully out of everyone that will be your pay," the big, Roman king promised.

So that's what Zacchaeus did! (SB5) He set up a booth along the road outside of Jericho (the important city where he lived) (SB6) to collect lots of money from the buyers and sellers who carried their goods along the road. And inside of Jericho, he went knocking on every door, "Bang, bang, bang," and ordered everyone to pay tax money, too.

Rich people (SB7), poor people (SB8). Healthy people (SB9), sick people (SB10). Everyone was ordered to pay, no matter how hard it was for them. The people didn't want to pay, but that didn't stop Zacchaeus. He took soldiers with him and they did whatever was needed to make them pay. And pay they did… the amount Caesar wanted for his taxes… and a lot more. Zacchaeus didn't mind if the people were scared. He didn't mind if he took too much money and made their lives sad. He didn't care what happened to those people. He only wanted more money for himself.

That's how Zacchaeus got to be so rich, rich, rich (SB11). And that's why some people, especially the people in his town of Jericho, felt Zacchaeus especially did not deserve to be to receive God's forgiveness.

(SB12) "How could God forgive someone like Zacchaeus", they exclaimed. "He such a mean old greedy bully. Surely there is no forgiveness for someone like that!"

What do you think? Were the people right? Did Zacchaeus ever deserve God's forgiveness?

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

You might think that all that money made Zacchaeus happy, and perhaps it did for a while. You see, fine clothes, a big, big house, yummy food, nice things are wonderful to have; but in the end, all those good things are never enough.

Why do you think all those good things would never be enough to make Zacchaeus happy?

Why? Because God made us to know, love and obey Him. He, alone, can make us truly happy.

And that's why deep down in his heart, Zacchaeus was very UN-happy, even with all of that money and all of those nice things. They would never be enough to satisfy him.

(SB13) What was worse, Zacchaeus knew God's laws, and he knew that he had broken them. He had done many terrible things to the people in his town and the people that passed along the road. He had hurt those people and now they hated him.

Worst of all, Zacchaeus knew that he had chosen to turn away from God and His good ways. He had rebelled against God and deserved His punishment. It seemed like there was no way for Zacchaeus come back to God now. Why, a man who had done the bad things he had done was not even allowed to worship in the worship house! How could a man this bad ever find forgiveness from God? Surely there was no way!

Do you think there was no way for a bad man like Zacchaeus to come to God? Yes, there was!

Yes, there WAS a way to be forgiven. God had made a way through Jesus, as Zacchaeus found out one day.

(SB14) Jesus and a big crowd of people were passing through Zacchaeus' town on the way to the big city of Jerusalem.

"Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming!" the people spread the exciting news throughout the town. (SB15) They gathered along the sides of the road to see Him, squeezing together until there was no more room! It seemed that everyone in that town wanted to listen to Jesus teach about God and watch Him do amazing things by God's great power.

(SB16) Zacchaeus tried to join the crowd to see Jesus, too, but no one would make room for him along the road. He stood behind the crowd and tried look over their heads, but he was such a short, little man that he couldn't see anything. Oh, if someone would just let him through to the front so he could see Jesus, too! But why would people help HIM after all the terrible things he had done?

"I must see Jesus! I must see Jesus!" Zacchaeus thought. He would not give up! Up! Why that was it! Zacchaeus had an idea!

What do you think Zacchaeus was going to do?

(SB17) Zacchaeus would climb up a tree, then he could see Jesus…and no one could bother him there!

So that is just what Zacchaeus did! He ran down the road, beyond the crowd and climbed up, up, up a big sycamore tree. Zacchaeus sat on his tree branch and watched as Jesus and the people with him walk along the road, coming closer and closer and closer. What would happen? Would Jesus see Zacchaeus?

Do you think? Would Jesus see Zacchaeus hiding up in that tree?

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

Now, nothing would have been easier than for Jesus to miss the short, little man hiding up among the leaves, but Jesus didn't miss Zacchaeus. Jesus knew all about him. He knew all the terrible things Zacchaeus had done. He knew the sin in Zacchaeus' heart that made him so unhappy and separated him from God. And Jesus knew that He could bring Zacchaeus the forgiveness from God he longed for.

So, instead of passing by Zacchaeus, (SB18) Jesus led the crowd of people right up to that tree and stopped. He looked up through the leaves and straight at Zacchaeus.

What would Jesus say to Zacchaeus? What would Jesus DO to Zacchaeus? Zacchaeus was such a bad man and Jesus was so good! Would Jesus say angry things to Zacchaeus for all the bad things he had done? Would Jesus tell him there was no hope for a bad man like him?

What do you think Jesus would say to Zacchaeus?

Jesus had good news for Zacchaeus! He had come to seek out people who knew they had broken God's laws and bring them to God…even bad, bad men like Zacchaeus. Jesus came to bring them God's forgiveness and to save them from God's punishment.

So, Jesus looked up at Zacchaeus and said, "(SB19) Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today!"

Zacchaeus was shocked and so happy! Good teachers like Jesus never asked to stay at the house of bad men like him, no matter how rich they were! Zacchaeus knew what this meant! Jesus wasn't just asking to stay at his big house to enjoy his nice things and yummy food. Jesus was asking to stay at his house to welcome him back to God!

Oh, what wonderful news! More than all the fine clothes, the big house, the yummy food and the nice things in the world, Zacchaeus wanted to be welcomed back to God! Oh, how he wanted God's forgiveness for his sins!

(SB20) Right then and there, God's Holy Spirit did a wonderful thing in Zacchaeus' heart. He helped Zacchaeus to turn away from disobeying God and to trust in Jesus as his Savior. Zacchaeus was forgiven by God for all the terrible things he had done! God had saved Zacchaeus through Jesus!

All the town's people were shocked at Jesus' words, too. But they were NOT happy!

Why do you think they weren't happy?

"(SB21) How can Jesus stay with such a bad, bad man who has done such terrible things to us and has broken God's laws! He has lied and cheated us. He has shouted at us and hurt us. He has used soldiers to scare us! He is such a bad man that he is not even allowed to go into the worship place! A good teacher like Jesus shouldn't have anything to do with this man, and he certainly shouldn't stay at his house!" they grumbled."

Both Jesus and Zacchaeus knew that the towns' people were right. Yes, Zacchaeus had been a bad, bad man and had done terrible things to them and had broken God's laws. And no, he did NOT deserve for Jesus to stay with him.

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

But both Jesus and Zacchaeus know that those town's people were wrong about something, too! God had worked in Zacchaeus' heart. God had helped Zacchaeus turn away from disobeying Him. God had helped Zacchaeus turn away from his old, bad ways, and trust in Jesus as his Savior. God had forgiven Zacchaeus! Zacchaeus was not the man he used to be. He was a changed man now!

Zacchaeus came down from that tree and showed all those people just how changed he was. In front of them all he said to Jesus, "(SB22) Jesus, I'm going to give half of all my money and nice things to poor people. And to all the people I cheated, I will give them back everything I took from them and a whole lot more!" he promised.

"(SB23) How amazing!" thought the town's people. "This doesn't sound like the same bad, bad Zacchaeus who had lied and cheated them, and had shouted at them and hurt them," the town's' people thought. "This sounds like a new man. A man who loves God and wants to obey Him."

And of course, that is exactly what Zacchaeus had become. God had changed him that very day. He helped him turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as his Savior.

Jesus said to Zacchaeus and all the people, "God sent Me to seek and save people from their sins. And this is just what has happened today. God has forgiven Zacchaeus this day! God has made him one of His people!"

Bible Story for Big Question 11, Bible Truth 1

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 climber and why did he climb? Zacchaeus was the climber. He climbed up a tree, so he could see Jesus.
2. How did he change? Zacchaeus turned away from his sins. He stopped being a mean, greedy cheat. He put his trust in Jesus as his Savior and God for gave his sins and made him one of his people.

What about You and Me?
Like Zacchaeus, we All have disobeyed God and deserve his punishment. How sad! But like Zacchaeus, we too can confess our sins to God and turn away from them. We can trust in Jesus is our savior. And if we do, God will forgive our sins and make us one of his people just like he did for Zacchaeus.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:
Our Bible Verse is 1 John 1:8-9, ESV
"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1. Who wanted to confess their sins and be forgiven by God? Zacchaeus did.
2. Who didn't think he should be forgiven? Who did think he should be forgiven? The people in Zacchaeus' town of Jericho didn't think Zacchaeus should be forgiven by God. He was too bad of a man. But Jesus welcomed Zacchaeus to be forgiven by God.
What about you and me?
No one is too bad to be forgiven their sins by God. All who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will be saved will be forgiven their sins and saved! God can do this for you and me, too. Ask Him! He loves to answer this prayer.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:
Our six clues were: a tree, a cow, a bag of money, a king, an umbrella, and yummy food.
1. Which four belong in our story?
The tree, the bag of money, the king and the yummy food belong. The cow and the umbrella do not.
2. Who confessed their sins to God and was forgiven? Who gave back the money he had stolen?
Zacchaeus did.

For You and Me:
Like Zacchaeus we are sinners who need to confess our sins to God. Like Zacchaeus, if we do and turn to trust in Jesus as our Savior, God will forgive our sins we can become one of His dearly loved people forever.

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

Our Bible Truth is:
How Can We Be Saved?
It Is God's Free Gift...
"When We Tell God Our Sins and Turn Away from Them!

Not just people like Zacchaeus who do lots of bad things need to be saved. We all do! For we all have chosen to disobey God and we all deserve God's punishment for our sins.

What good news we have, though! God promises to save all who turn away from disobeying Him and trust in Jesus as their Savior…even you and me!

Let's ask God to work in our hearts, just like He worked in Zacchaeus' heart. Let's ask Him to help us to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in Jesus as our Savior, that we, too, might be saved.

Close in prayer.

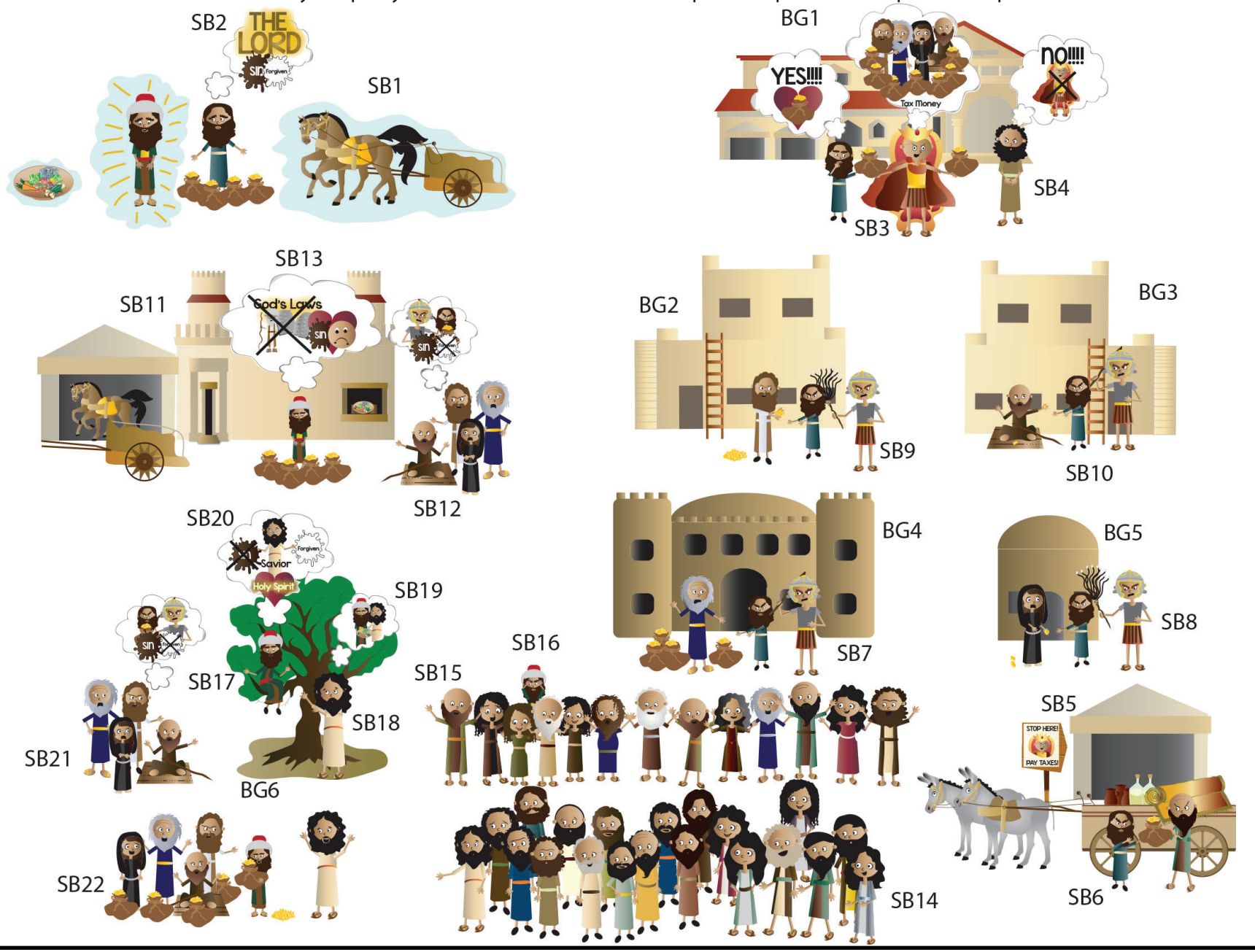
Closing ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for being faithful and just and able to forgive our sins.

C God, we confess that we are all sinners who need You to save us. We can never be acceptable to You on our own. We need Jesus to save us!

T Thank You, God for being willing to forgive all our sins, when we confess them and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

S God, work in our hearts. Make us aware of our sins and our need for Jesus to save us. Help us to confess our sins to You and turn away from them. Help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Be our Heavenly Father! Make us Your adopted children who love You and who You will love forever. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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

Note: Use sticky tac putty rather than velcro on back of pictures placed on top of other pictures.