DEEP DOWN DETECTIVES

Curriculum Resources for Unit 13, Bible Truth 6:

Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?

It Is God's Sustaining Grace...

God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!

Session Prep (especially good for newbies!)

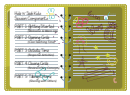
Pray!

Pray for the Holy Spirit to be at work in your and the children's hearts.

Review

If new to the curriculum, look at the **Getting Started with Deep Down Detectives section of the Core Curriculum book.** (p.5) It will be especially helpful to read through the Deep Down Detectives section of **The Praise Factory Tour: Extended Version Book.** This is a visual way to understand what goes on in the classroom. (A pdf of the book is found in the samples section on the website.)

Look through and Learn the Lesson



Read over **lesson plan**. Practice any **songs or action rhymes** you are using. Choose/make up motions to go with these. Choose less with younger children and more with older preschoolers. **Practice the lesson with the visual aids** and using the Big Question Box/Briefcase.

Read and Rehearse the Bible Story with Pictures

Read the Bible story from the Bible. Read the curriculum version. Practice telling it with the storyboard pictures. (If you have not previously laminated the story pictures, do that now.)

Let There Be Music

Download the music and listen to the songs. Choose which of the songs you will use with the children. If using live musicians, make sure they have the sheet music (Appendix A, Core Curriculum book).

Put the Props in Place

1. Prepare your Visual Aids. Put the Big Question, Unit Bible Truths, Bible Truth, Bible Verse, and Listening Assignment signs, as well as the Bible Story script in one side of the Bible folder.
2. Get out your storyboard. Put all background pictures in place (they have a BG by the number). Put the rest of the storyboard pictures (these have a SB by the number) in order of use in the other side of the Bible folder.
3. Put the DDD Bible Folder as well as the Big Question sign in the Big Question Box/Briefcase and shut it. If your box/briefcase has locks and you want to use the unlocking the box as part of your session, lock it now....but make sure you have the key or know the code first.
4. Prepare the music CD or sheet music or mp3 device for use in your session.

Set Out Free Play Activities

Choose and set up free time activities you will use with the children. Choose a variety of different activities that will be enjoyed by different types of children. Rotate the activities you provide to keep them interesting and fresh to your children. (Suggestions in Appendix D, Core Curriculum books.)

Prepare Any Activities

Choose which (if any) of the Bible Truth games and crafts activities you want to use in the session. Bear in mind your time frame as well as the developmental abilities and attention span of your children as you decide which/how many to prepare. **Look over the Discussion Sheet** and choose a few questions you might use to spark discussion with the children as they do their activities (especially good for ages 3's+). Pray for God to give you opportunities to talk about these things with the children.

Let Them Take It with Them

Make copies of the craft/take home sheets, if you are not already using them as one of your activities. You may also want to make copies of the story (see take-home version of each story included in Appendix C with the other take home resources) to have for parents to use with their children at home. There's a link on each craft/take home sheet to the story, if you don't make hard copies.

Store It

After your session is over, collect the resources and store them for future use. This curriculum can be used over and over for years to come.

Unit 13: The God Who Sustains

UNIT OVERVIEW

All people enjoy many good things and suffer many bad or sad things in this world. Enjoying good things or going through bad things make some people turn away from God. They love the good things too much or get mad at God for the bad things that happen.

But that's not what happens with God's people. They have put their trust in Jesus. They want to love God most of all--even more than the good things they enjoy. They trust God and His good plans--even as they go through bad or sad things.

What makes the difference? It's God and His sustaining grace! That is, His gifts of strength to help us keep on believing in Him and living for Him. God will always give His people what they need! He wants them to depend on Him and He loves for them to ask for His help. He will never fail them. God will help you like this, too, if you turn away from your sins and put your trust in Jesus.

In this unit we will learn six ways God sustains His people.

UNIT BIBLE VERSE: Psalm 55:22, ESV

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

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION: Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?

ANSWER: It Is God's Sustaining Grace!

OPTIONAL Big Question 13 INTRODUCTION LESSON (Use Hide 'n' Seek Kids Unit 13 Material)
Story: The Case of the People Who Wouldn't Stop *Acts 17, 1 & 2 Thessalonians*
Bible Verse: Psalm 55:22, ESV

BIBLE TRUTH 1: God Alone Sustains His People (3 Lessons Available)
Story: The Case of the Impossible, Big, Bad, Scary News *Genesis 37:12-36; 39-50; Exodus 1-15*
Bible Verse: Jude 1:24-25, ESV

BIBLE TRUTH 2: God, the Father, Promises to Help His People (3 Lessons Available)
Story: The Case of the Really Bad Remember-ers
Exodus 5-15,19-20,24; Numbers 13-14; Joshua 1-522
Bible Verse: Psalm 54:4,7, ESV

BIBLE TRUTH 3: Jesus Provides God's People with Everything They Need to Live for God
(3 Lessons Available)
The Case of the Man in the Middle *Leviticus 6,16; Matthew 27; Hebrews 1-5,9,10,18*
Bible Verse: Hebrews 4:15-16, ESV

BIBLE TRUTH 4: The Holy Spirit Works Inside of God's People (3 Lessons Available)
Story: The Case of the Foolish Forgetters *Galatians*
Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, ESV

BIBLE TRUTH 5: The Word of God Feeds God's People (3 Lessons Available)
Story: The Case of the Confused Christians *Colossians*
Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 8:3, ESV

→ **BIBLE TRUTH 6: God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other** (3 Lessons Available)
Story: The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner *Philippians*
Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-1, ESV1

Deep Down Detectives ESV Songs 13 Track Numbers

This is a listing of all songs mentioned in the unit curriculum. You may or may not choose to use all of the songs. They are listed in easy-reference order--NOT in the order used in the curriculum. You may choose to simply burn a CD/load them onto an mp3 device in this order. Or, you may want to do what we do: choose the songs we want to use and create a play list of them in that order. Then, we burn a CD/upload the play list onto an mp3 device. A teacher only has to click forward to the next song, instead of hunting for the right track. The track number have been included as part of the title of each song, teachers will still have a reference to the track number listed in the curriculum (same as those listed below), even if you change the order on your customized play list.

SONGS USED EVERY UNIT OF THE CURRICULUM

1 The Classroom Song v.1
2 The Classroom Song v.2
3 The Classroom Song v.3
4 The Classroom Song v.4
5 Deep Down Detectives Theme Song
6 The Classroom Rules Song
7 Let's Pray Song
8 The Big Question Box Song
9 The Bible Chant Song
10 ACTS Prayer Song (Short Version)
11 ACTS Prayer Song (Full Version)

Why the Extra Songs?
Deep Down Detectives is a curriculum used by a wide age-span of kids. Sometimes one of the other songs is a better fit for your kids. Or, you may simply want to teach them more songs on the same Bible Truth. Use as many or as few as you want.

UNIT 13: THE GOD WHO SUSTAINS

12 Big Q & A 13 Song
13 Big Question 13 Song: Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?
14 Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: Cast Your Burden on the LORD Psalm 55:22, ESV
15 Extra Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: Cast Your Burden Psalm 55:22, ESV
16 Extra Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: The LORD Your God Is with You Zephaniah 3:17, NIV 1984
17 Big Question 13 Hymn: Jesus Paid It All, v.1
18 Big Question 13 Praise Song: I Will Sing of the Mercies

Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It is God's Sustaining Grace...

Bible Truth 1: God Alone Sustains His People

19 Bible Verse: *To Him Who Is Able Jude 1:24-25, ESV*
20 Extra Bible Verse: To Him, to Him Jude 1:24-25, ESV
21 Extra Bible Verse: Jude Doxology Jude 1:24-25, NIv1984

Bible Truth 2: God, the Father, Promises to Help His People

22 Bible Verse: Behold, God is My Helper: Psalm 54:4,7, ESV
23 Extra Bible Verse: Even to Your Old Age Isaiah 46:4,9,11, ESV
24 Extra Bible Verse: Though the Earth Give Way Psalm 46:1,2, ESV

Bible Truth 3: Jesus Provides God's People with Everything They Need

25 Bible Verse: Let Us with Confidence Hebrews 4:16, ESV
26 Extra Bible Verse: Let Us Then Draw Near Hebrews 4:16, ESV

Bible Truth 4: The Holy Spirit Works Inside of God's People

27 Bible Verse: It Is God Who Establishes Us with You 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, ESV
28 Extra Bible Verse: And It Is God 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, ESV
29 Extra Bible Verse: The Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22,25, ESV
30 Extra Bible Verse: The Fruit Galatians 5:22,25, ESV
31 Extra Bible Verse: I Will Ask the Father John 14:16-17, ESV
32 Extra Bible Verse: I Will Give You a New Heart Ezekiel 36:26, ESV
33 Extra Bible Verse: You Shall Be Clean Ezekiel 36:25-27, ESV

Bible Truth 5: The Word of God Feeds God's People

34 Bible Verse: For Whatever Was Written Romans 15:4, ESV
35 Extra Bible Verse: He Humbled You Deuteronomy 8:3, ESV
36 Extra Bible Verse: Take Up the Whole Armor Ephesians 6:13,16-18, ESV

Bible Truth 6: God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other

37 Bible Verse: Blessed Be the God and Father 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, ESV
38 Extra Bible Verse: Praise be to the God and Father 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-13, NIV 1984
39 Extra Bible Verse: Help Us 2 Corinthians 1:13, ESV (other version)
40 Extra Bible Verse: Let Us Hold Fast the Confession Hebrews 10:23-25, ESV
41 Extra Bible Verse: Encourage One Another 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV
42 Extra Bible Verse: Build One Another Up 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV

Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6 Overview: Key Concepts p.1

Unit 13: The God Who Sustains

Unit Big Question (and Answer): Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It Is God's Sustaining Grace!
Unit Bible Verse: "Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved." --Psalm 55:22

Bible Truth 6 Concept: It Is God's Sustaining Grace... God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!

No matter who we are, we all go through times of need. Sometimes we are learning something new and we need help learning how to do it. Sometimes, we are going through something that is very sad or very hard and we need comfort and strength. God loves to help His people all the time, especially in their times of need. He uses His Word, the Bible to guide and comfort them. His Holy Spirit strengthens them inside their heart. But God also helps His people through their prayers and comfort for each other.

God's people comfort each other by reminding each other that God is always with them and how great and good He is. They read the Bible to each other and hold on to His wonderful promises to take care of them. They pray for each other, asking God to give them wisdom, strength and joy; and, to rescue them from their troubles. They ask God to use their hard and sad times to make them more like Jesus and to bring glory to His name.

God loves to sustain His people through their comfort and prayers for each other. It is a wonderful display of His love to both to His people and to others who watch how God's people love and care for each other. We, too, can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. He can use us to comfort others, too.

Bible Truth 6 Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11, ESV

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

Learn a Little: "We comfort those in any affliction, with the comfort we are comforted by God."

Meaning

God loves His people so much! He is full of mercy and compassion. He cares about their sadnesses and troubles and comforts them. Many times, God uses His people to comfort each other. They listen to each other. They encourage each other and pray. They remind each other of God's promises. They help each other turn away from disobeying God. No wonder God's people praise Him for giving them each other! He uses them to show His love to each other and to keep on believing in Him their whole lives. We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Bible Truth 6 ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for being the Comforter and Strength of Your People. You help them comfort and strengthen each other.

C We confess that many times we forget to pray for others who are struggling with hard or sad times. Many times, we don't take time to comfort and strengthen others who are struggling. We need a Savior!

T Thank You, God, for the comfort God's people receive from You through how they help and pray for each other.

S Work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to comfort others with Your Word and by praying for them. Use us to help others through their times of need. Help others to see Your love and kindness as we comfort and pray for each other. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6 Overview: Key Concepts

Bible Truth 6 Story

The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner
Philippians

Songs Used in Bible Truth 6

Big Q & A 13 Song
Big Question 13 Song: Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?
Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: Christ Once Suffered for Sins 1 Peter 3:18, ESV
Extra Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: For Christ Suffered Once for Sin
Extra Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: For God So Loved the World John 3:16, ESV
Big Question 13 Hymn: To God Be the Glory, v.1
Big Question 13 Praise Song: Blessed Be the Name
Bible Truth 6 Bible Verse: Blessed Be the God and Father 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, ESV
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse: Praise be to the God and Father 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-13, NIV 1984
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse: Help Us 2 Corinthians 1:13, ESV
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse: Let Us Hold Fast the Confession Hebrews 10:23-25
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse: Encourage One Another 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse: Build One Another Up 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV

Lesson Plan: Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6 — use with all THREE lessons — p.1

1. GETTING STARTED

Intake Activity Ideas

Choose one of these open-ended activities to include children as they join the class:

Free Play Time

suggestions in Appendix D

Offer your own or some of the easy-to-make, free play activities suggested in Appendix D.

OR Sing-along Music Time

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Music *from* Deep Down Detectives (DDD) ESV Songs 13:

Big Q & A 13 Song	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 12*
Big Question 13 Song	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 13*
Big Question 13 (Unit) Bible Verse Song:	
Cast Your Burden on the LORD Psalm 55:22, ESV	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 14*
Extra Big Question 13 (Unit) Bible Verse Song:	
Cast Your Burden Psalm 55:22, ESV	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 15*
Extra Big Question 13 (Unit) Bible Verse Song:	
The LORD Your God Is with You Zephaniah 3:17, NIV 1984	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 16*
Big Question 13 Hymn:	
Jesus Paid It All, v.1	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 17*
Big Question 13 Praise Song:	
I Will Sing of the Mercies	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 18*
Bible Truth 6 Bible Verse Song:	
Blessed Be the God and Father 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, ESV	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 37*
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse Song:	
Praise be to the God and Father 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-13	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 38*
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse Song:	
Help Us 2 Corinthians 1:13, ESV	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 39*
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse Song:	
Let Us Hold Fast the Confession Hebrews 10:23-25	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 40*
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse Song:	
Encourage One Another 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 41*
Bible Truth 6 Extra Bible Verse Song:	
Build One Another Up 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV	*DDD ESV Songs 13, track 42*

***OR* Bible Verse Memory Game**

instructions found in Appendix B

Add more fun to Sing-along Music Time by adding a Music, Movement & Memory Activity. These activities are listed on p.10 of this lesson plan with the Response Activities. Instructions found in Appendix B.

Lesson 1 Game: Duck, Duck, Goose
Lesson 2 Game: Slap, Clap and Stack
Lesson 3 Game: Simon Says How

These activities are also included on p.10 of this lesson plan with the Response Activities.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME *(introduce the Bible Truth and tell the related Bible story)*

Gathering the Children

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Sing verse 1 of The Classroom Song to gather the children for Circle Time.

The Classroom Song, verse 1 *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 1*

Let's gather together to worship God,
Let's gather together to worship God,
Let's gather together to worship God,
Come gather here with me!

Welcome to Deep Down Detectives

"Welcome to Deep Down Detectives. We're so glad you've joined us! Detectives are people who look for answers to questions. In Deep Down Detectives, we look for answers to big questions about God. We dig deep down in the truths of God's Word to find them."

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Deep Down Detectives Theme Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

"Let's sing our Deep Down Detectives Theme Song."

Deep Down Detectives Theme Song DDD ESV S*ongs 13, track 5*

We're Deep Down Detectives,
diggin' deep in God's Word,
For truths about God and His plans for this world,
We're seeking to love Him, with all of our heart,
We're Deep Down Detectives!
Come on! Let's start!

Classroom Rules Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

There are two very important things that Deep Down Detectives do together: we worship God and we love one another. Our Classroom Rules Song reminds us how we should act. Let's sing it."

Classroom Rules Song *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 6*

Shh, be quiet while someone is talking,
Raise your hand, if you have something to say,
Don't touch your friend, sitting beside you,
Obey your teachers, Be kind as you play.
These are our classroom rules,
These are our classroom rules,
They help us worship God and love one another,
These are our classroom rules.

Opening Prayer Time

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

"Children, we need God's help to keep these rules. Let's ask Him to help us right now. Let's get ready and pray."

Let's Pray *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 7*

1-2-3!
Fold your hands,
Bow your head,
Close your eyes.
Let's pray! *(repeat)*

"Let's pray:"

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord,
We're so glad to get to gather together to worship You!
Please help us keep the classroom rules.
Please help us to love You and learn about You today.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Reveal the Big Question

Introduce the Big Question Box/Briefcase

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

"Detectives INVESTIGATE things. That means they ask questions and look for answers. Deep Down Detectives investigate big questions about God. The Big Question we are investigating today is right inside our Big Question Box/Briefcase.

The Big Question Box Song *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 8*

We've got a big box,
All closed up and locked,
Filled with the truths of God's Word.

We've got a brief case,
There's no time to waste,
Come on, kids, let's open it up!

The Big Question under Investigation

VISUAL AID #1 *take out* *of BQB*

Big Question & Answer Sign, front side

**found in the DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, NIV Book*

Ok, who would like to open for me and pull out the Big Question?"

Choose a child to open the box/briefcase, take out the Big Question and hand it to you, then hold up the Big Question sign for all the children to see, and say:

The Big Question we are investigating today is Big Question Number 13:
Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?
and the Answer is:
It Is God's Sustaining Grace!

Big Question Meaning

All people enjoy many good things and suffer many bad or sad things in this world. Enjoying good things or going through bad things make some people turn away from God. They love the good things too much or get mad at God for the bad things that happen.

But that's not what happens with God's people. They have put their trust in Jesus. They want to love God most of all--even more than the good things they enjoy. They trust God and His good plans--even as they go through bad or sad things.

What makes the difference? It's God and His sustaining grace! That is, His gifts of strength to help us keep on believing in Him and living for Him. God will always give His people what they need! He wants them to depend on Him and He loves for them to ask for His help. He will never fail them. God will help you like this, too, if you turn away from your sins and put your trust in Jesus.

Big Question Songs

Big Q & A 13 Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

"Let's sing our Big Question Song:

Big Q & A 13 Song *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 12*

(adapted version of "On Top of Old Smoky")
Why do God's people keep believing in God?
And why do God's people keep living for Him?
Because God sustains them, yes, God alone,
That's why God's people keep believing in God.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Learning about the Big Question

Repeat the Big Question and Answer again:
"Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It is God's Sustaining Grace!"

Say: "Hmmmm, I wonder what that means… Let's do our action rhyme (or sing our song) that explains it."

Then sing the song using any of the optional motions suggested, if desired.

Big Question (Action Rhyme) Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Big Question 13 (Action Rhyme) Song *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 13*

	(POSSIBLE ACTIONS)
Why do God's people keep believing in Him?	
What keeps them going?	
Why do they persevere?	
There's just one reason for their lasting faith,	*Hold up one finger*
It is grace, God's sustaining grace,	*Point up to God in heaven*
That's why God's people say:	
"I'm gonna keep on believing in God,	*Point up to God in heaven*
I'm gonna keep on living for Him,	
Yes, I'm gonna keep on believing in God,	
And It's all thanks to Him, thanks to Him.	*Raise hands up in praise*
God sustains His people in many ways,	*Touch heart*
His Spirit works inside them	
As they read His Word and pray,	*Make open Bible with open palms,*
He gives them faith to keep in trusting in Him,	*Make prayer hands*
To keep on living for Him to the very end.	
That's why God's people say:	
"I'm gonna keep on believing in God,	*Point up to God in heaven*
I'm gonna keep on living for Him,	
Yes, I'm gonna keep on believing in God,	
And It's all thanks to Him, thanks to Him.	*Raise hands up in praise*

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Learning the Bible Truth

VISUAL AID #2 *take out* *of BQB*

VISUAL AID
All the Bible Truths Sign

"It Is God's Sustaining Grace" is a good beginning, but there's so more to learn. So it's time for us to dig down even deeper for more answers to our Big Question about God. We're going to be learning **SIX** Bible truths that all tell us more about God's sustaining grace.

Who would like to hand me the picture with our six Bible truths on it? It's in the Big Question Box/Briefcase." *Choose a child to get it and hand it to you, then hold it up and show them the pictures of the six truths they will be learning.*

Bible Truth Clue

VISUAL AID #3 *take out* *of BQB*

Bible Truth Clue Sign, front side
VISUAL AID

After everyone has had a good look, say...

"Ok, we've learned five truths about how God sustains His people. They are: "God Alone Sustains His People," "God, the Father, Promises to Help His People," "Jesus Provides God's People with Everything They Need to Live for God," "The Holy Spirit Works Inside of God's People," and, "God's Word Feeds God's People." (point to pictures as you identify each Bible Truth). Now let's look at our Bible Truth Clue sign and see if we can figure out which of these six truths we will be learning about today. Who would like to get it out of the Big Question Briefcase for me?"

Choose a child to open the briefcase, take out the Bible Truth Clue sign and hand it to you. Hold up the front side for the children to see. Cover up the answer, written along the bottom, and say:

"Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?
It Is God's Sustaining Grace!
God Uses His ???? to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!"

Hint

We're missing one word. Here's the hint to what the missing word is. It says: "This word is another word for lots of men, women, boys and girls. It starts with a "P" and it rhymes with "Steeple." Can you guess? It's "PEOPLE."

So, the Bible Truth we are learning today is:
(uncover answer from bottom of sign, show it to them and say:)

"Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?
It Is God's Sustaining Grace!
God Uses His PEOPLE to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!"

And here is what this Bible Truth means: *(read the meaning off of the back of the sign, say:)*

Bible Truth Meaning

No matter who we are, we all go through times of need. Sometimes we are learning something new and we need help learning how to do it. Sometimes, we are going through something that is very sad or very hard and we need comfort and strength. God loves to help His people all the time, especially in their times of need. He uses His Word, the Bible to guide and comfort them. His Holy Spirit strengthens them inside their heart. But God also helps His people through their prayers and comfort for each other.

God's people comfort each other by reminding each other that God is always with them and how great and good He is. They read the Bible to each other and hold on to His wonderful promises to take care of them. They pray for each other, asking God to give them wisdom, strength and joy; and, to rescue them from their troubles. They ask God to use their hard and sad times to make them more like Jesus and to bring glory to His name.

God loves to sustain His people through their comfort and prayers for each other. It is a wonderful display of His love to both to His people and to others who watch how God's people love and care for each other. We, too, can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. He can use us to comfort others, too.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Learning the Bible Verse

The Bible Chant Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

"And how do I know this is true? God tells me so in His special book, the Bible."

Say or sing the Bible Chant Song.

The Bible Chant Song *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 9*

The Bible, the Bible,
Let's get out the Bible.
Let's hear what God has to say.
The Bible, the Bible,
God's given us the Bible.
It's His Word for us to learn and obey! Yay!

Bible Verse

DDD 13.5 Bible Verse-front side (in the DDD Bible folder)

VISUAL AID #4 *Place verse in*

DDD Bible Folder *take out*

of BQB

**found in the DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV Book*

"Who would like to get our Bible folder out of the Big Question Briefcase for me?"

Choose a child to open the briefcase, take out the "Bible" folder and hand it to you. Remove the Bible Verse Picture from the "Bible" folder and hold it up for all the children to see, then say:

2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11 tells us:

2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11, ESV

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

Learn a Little: "We comfort those in any affliction, with the comfort we are comforted by God."

Bible Verse Meaning

What does that mean?

God loves His people so much! He is full of mercy and compassion. He cares about their sadnesses and troubles and comforts them. Many times, God uses His people to comfort each other. They listen to each other. They encourage each other and pray. They remind each other of God's promises. They help each other turn away from disobeying God. No wonder God's people praise Him for giving them each other! He uses them to show His love to each other and to keep on believing in Him their whole lives. We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Bible Verse Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

You might also enjoy:

Praise be to the God and Father
2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-13, NIV 1984
DDD ESV Songs 13, track 38

Help Us
2 Corinthians 1:13, ESV
DDD ESV Songs 13, track 39

Let Us Hold Fast the Confession
Hebrews 10:23-25, ESV
DDD ESV Songs 13, track 40

Encourage One Another
1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV
DDD ESV Songs 13, track 41

Build One Another Up
1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, ESV
DDD ESV Songs 13, track 42

We've said our Bible verse, now let's sing it!

Blessed Be the God and Father: 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, ESV *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 37*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
The Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
Blessed be the God, blessed be the God,
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Comforts us in all our affliction,
That we may comfort those,
In any affliction, In any affliction,
With the comfort with which we're comforted by God.
The Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
Blessed be the God, blessed be the God,
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Second Corinthians Chapter One, verses three and four.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Getting into the Case

"Now it's time to do a bit more deep down investigating. Let's see what Detective Dan wants us to help him figure out. Would someone like to get it out for me?"

Listening Assignments

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

NOTE: Listening assignments are most suitable for ages 3+. Skip straight to the Bible story (see bottom of this page), if working with 2 year olds.

"Let's open up our listening assignment and see what we are supposed to figure out today.

Choose a child to take out the Listening Assignment (from the DDD Bible Folder) and hand it to you. Read Detective Dan's letter to the children that includes the listening assignment. The listening assignments are summarized below:

VISUAL AID **#5** *DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV*

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:
I need to find out:
1. Who was the prisoner? Why was he in jail?
2. Who prayed for him?

VISUAL AID **#6** *DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV*

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:
Our Bible Verse is 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11, ESV
"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

I need to find out:
1. Who did God use to comfort Paul?
2. What did they do that was comforting?

VISUAL AID **#7A,B,C** **Listening Assignment #3 includes the Assignment Sheet, plus 6 clue pictures* DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV*

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:
I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.
They are: a letter, a mouse, some money, Epaphroditus, a soldier, and some medicine.
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 did Paul thank God for using to comfort him?

Tell the Bible Story

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

DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV

Story text included in this book right after this lesson plan and in Visual Aids book

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."

Bible Story: The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner
Philippians

Read the Bible Truth story, putting up the storyboard pictures as you tell it. Then, have the children answer the listening assignment. Present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

2. OPENING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Story Response Song(s)

Hymn

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

As attention span and time allow, you might want to end with one of the following songs which also tie in with the unit. If desired, use the Music and Movement activity ideas while singing (listed with the Response Activities).

Jesus Paid It All *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 17*

Verse 1
I hear the Savior say,
"Thy strength indeed is small,
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in Me thine all in all."

Refrain
Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

Tie-in: "What a mighty, loving, Savior is Jesus to those who trust in Him! He paid for all their sins on the cross. He cleans their hearts of sin. He saves them from all their sins so they can be God's people. But that's not all! He gives them strength to do everything God wants them to do. Yes, they may be weak, but Jesus is so strong! They pray to Him for help and He will always give them the help they need. God's people praise their wonderful Savior! They owe everything to Him!"

Praise Song

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Praise Song: I Will Sing of the Mercies *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 18*

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,
I will sing, I will sing,
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,
I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

With my mouth will I make known
Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness,
With my mouth will I make known
Thy faithfulness to all generations.

Tie-in: Mercy is treating someone with love and kindness that they do not deserve. God's people love to sing of the Lord's mercy to them! He has taken away all their sins through His Son Jesus! He has been faithful to them every day of their lives. He always gives them what they need. God's people know that God will go on being faithful to them forever and ever. No wonder they want to praise Him! No wonder they want to use their mouths to tell others about Him!

3. TAKING ACTION: Response Activities *(choose from among these activities)*

Transition to Activities

Well, Deep Down Detectives, you've done a great job diggin' deep down for answers in the truths of God's Word. Now it's time to enjoy some activities."

Tell children what activity/s you are providing for them: either free play or some of the response activities listed below. When you are ready to dismiss them, use this song to help the children transition in an orderly fashion to their next activity.

Classroom Song, verse 2

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

"Children, let's sing our Time to Play Song. When we are finished you may get up and walk over to our next activity."

Classroom Song, verse 2 *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 2*
We've gathered together to worship God,
We've gathered together to worship God,
And now it's time to play.

Dismiss the children to whatever activities you have prepared for them to do.

Lesson Plan: Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6 — use with all THREE lessons — p.10

3. TAKING ACTION: Response Activities *(choose from among these activities)*

Response Activities	*Choose one or more activities appropriate for your children, based on classroom time and developmental needs.* ***Add the Discussion Sheet to any activity for deeper learning.***
Bible Verse Memory Game *game directions, Appendix B*	Though listed with the opening activities, you may choose to use this Bible verse game here instead (or as a repeat). • Lesson 1 Game: Duck, Duck, Goose • Lesson 2 Game: Slap, Clap and Stack • Lesson 3 Game: Simon Says How *Use the Discussion Sheet with this activity for even deeper learning* → Discussion Questions
Music, Movement & Memory Activity *game directions, Appendix B*	A music activity that uses the songs from the Bible Truth and Big Question unit. • DDD Songs for this Bible Truth, plus: • Lesson 1 Activity: Sing, Dance and Fall Down • Lesson 2 Activity: Bottle Shakers • Lesson 3 Activity: March 'n' Say *Use the Discussion Sheet with this activity for even deeper learning* → Discussion Questions
Bible Story Review Game *game directions, Appendix B*	A game that uses the storyboard pictures from the story to review the story. • Lesson 1 Game: Going Fishing • Lesson 2 Game: Pony Express • Lesson 3 Game: Who's Inside? *Use the Discussion Sheet with this activity for even deeper learning* → Discussion Questions
Coloring Pages/ Take Home Sheets *in Appendix C*	A coloring page related to the lesson assignment question is provided for each lesson. On the back of each are the key concepts, a few questions and a song for parents to use with their children. NOTE: Upgrade your coloring sheet to a more interesting craft by offering simple embellishments, such as jiggly eyes, craft sand, glitter, glitter glue, colored paper dots (made with a hole punch), fabric scraps, etc. Make cut-to-size glued-on clothes, hair, etc for characters by using a copy of the coloring sheet, cutting out the selected portions and making them the patterns for whatever you want to cut out of fabric, paper, foil, etc. • Lesson 1 Coloring Sheet Emphasis: Bible Truth • Lesson 2 Coloring Sheet Emphasis: Bible Verse • Lesson 3 Coloring Sheet Emphasis: ACTS Prayer *Use the Discussion Sheet with this activity for even deeper learning* → Discussion Questions
Extra Crafts: **Big Question Craft** *in Appendix C* **Bible Verse Craft** *in Appendix C* **Bible Story Puzzle** *in Appendix C*	**These crafts are slightly more complex than the coloring/take home sheets:** **The Bible Concept Go-and-Tell Craft** is a craft that summarizes the Bible concept and includes the Bible verse is included for those desiring more than a coloring sheet. This more complex craft will involve gluing, sticking, etc. Can be used at any time. *Use the Discussion Sheet with these activities for even deeper learning* → Discussion Questions The **Bible Story Coloring Sheet** provides a tie in between the Bible story and the Bible truth they are learning. The **Storyboard Picture Placement Page** has been made into a puzzle that can be cut out and re-assembled by the children. This provides a nice summary of the story.
Free Play Activities *ideas in Appendix D*	Offer your own or some of the easy-to-make, free play activities suggested in Appendix D.

4. CLOSING CIRCLE TIME *(End-of-session activities for the last 5-10 minutes of class time)*

Transition to Closing Circle

Classroom Song, verse 3

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Use this song to help the children transition in an orderly fashion. Start singing this song and ask the children to gather with you for Closing Circle Time.

Classroom Song, verse 3 *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 3*

It's time to get ready to go and tell,
It's time to get ready to go and tell,
Come gather here with me.

Closing Circle Time

Classroom Song, verse 4

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

When children are settled in the circle, say:
"It's almost time for your parents to come pick you up. And do you know what that means? It means…. (draw this out to build anticipation and excitement)…that it's almost time to go home and….it's almost time to…Go and Tell! We have learned some big news about God today. God wants us to take and tell it to the whole world!"

Classroom Song, verse 4 *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 4*

So what's our big news to go and tell,
So what's our big news to go and tell,
Can you tell me now?

Big News to Tell

Big Question 13

VISUAL AID

#1

**found in DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV Book*

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Big Question 13, Bible Truth 5

VISUAL AID

#3

"Let's see....there's so much big news to tell! There's so much we've learned!

First of all, can you tell me the answer to our **Big Question: "Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?"** *Hold up the Bible Truth Clue Picture.*

Say the answer with me: **"It Is God's Sustaining Grace!"**

(If desired, you can sing one/both of the Big Question songs.) *DDD ESV Songs 13, tracks 12,13*

And what's one way He does this? What did we learn? *Point to the picture.*

God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!

"And how do I know this is true? Can you tell me?

Say it with me: **"The Bible tells me so!"** That's right!

Big Question 13 Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse

VISUAL AID

#4

**found in the DDD Unit 13 Visual Aids, ESV Book*

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

We learned: **2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11**
"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

God loves His people so much! He is full of mercy and compassion. He cares about their sadnesses and troubles and comforts them. Many times, God uses His people to comfort each other. They listen to each other. They encourage each other and pray. They remind each other of God's promises. They help each other turn away from disobeying God. No wonder God's people praise Him for giving them each other! He uses them to show His love to each other and to keep on believing in Him their whole lives. We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.
(If desired, you can sing the Bible verse song.) *DDD ESV Songs 13, track 37*

4. CLOSING CIRCLE TIME, continued

Closing ACTS Prayer Time

ACTS Prayer Chant

lyrics and sheet music, Appendix A

Let's ask God to help us to remember this and even tell others this good news. Let's get ready and pray our ACTS prayer.

And what does ACTS mean? Let's sing/say our ACTS Prayer Chant!

ACTS Prayer Chant Song *DDD ESV Songs 13, tracks 10,11*

A, Adoration, God, we praise You!
C, Confession, Forgive us our sins.
T, Thanksgiving, Thank You for Jesus,
S, Supplication, Help us to live like Him.

That's the ACTS prayer, my friend,
Bow your head, Close your eyes, Shhh,
Let's begin.

Closing ACTS Prayer

"Let's pray!"

Lead the children in the ACTS prayer for this Bible Truth.

A God, we praise You for being the Comforter and Strength of Your People. You help them comfort and strengthen each other.

C We confess that many times we forget to pray for others who are struggling with hard or sad times. Many times, we don't take time to comfort and strengthen others who are struggling. We need a Savior!

T Thank You, God, for the comfort God's people receive from You through how they help and pray for each other.

S Work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to comfort others with Your Word and by praying for them. Use us to help others through their times of need. Help others to see Your love and kindness as we comfort and pray for each other. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

5. TAKING IT HOME *(Take Home Sheet)*

Clean up and Dismissal

"Now it's time to work together and clean up."
Have the children join you in cleaning up the room.

Coloring Pages/ Take Home Sheets

in Appendix C

Give out the craft/take home sheet and any other papers from the session, as you dismiss children from class.

(Reminder: The back side of the coloring page is the take home sheet for each lesson.)

Bible Story to Take-Home

in Appendix C

You may also want to include a copy of the story along with the take home sheet. (However, each coloring sheet/take home sheet includes a note to parents telling where they can download the story from the Parent Resources section on the website.

Bible Story for Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6

use with all THREE lessons

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

The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner

Philippians

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 Prayed-for Prisoner. 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 prisoner? Why was he in jail?

2. Who prayed for him?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11, ESV

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

I need to find out:

1. Who did God use to comfort Paul?

2. What did they do that was comforting?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

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

They are: a letter, a mouse, some money, Epaphroditus, a soldier, and some medicine.

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 did Paul thank God for using to comfort him?

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 13, Bible Truth 6 — use with all THREE lessons — P.2

The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner *Philippians*

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.*

"(SB1) Oh no! Paul is in prison again for telling people about Jesus!" the believers in Philippi exclaimed. Prisoners weren't very well taken care of. They depended on friends on the outside. Paul might be cold or hungry. He could be sick or lonely. He could be discouraged and scared. Who was there to help him?

"WE must help Paul!" the believers in Philippi decided. God uses His people to help each other keep on living for Him and believing in Him. He uses them to comfort them and take care of their needs, too. These Philippians wanted to be part of God helping Paul.

But what COULD they do for Paul? How could they help him? They were in Philippi and he was far, far away in Rome, hundreds and hundreds miles away! How could God use THEM, to help PAUL, from so far away?

Can you guess what they could do?

The Philippians knew what they could do. (SB2) They could pray for Paul! Perhaps they were far away from Paul, but God wasn't! He was with Paul all the time and He could do ANYTHING! They could ask God to work in the Roman leader's heart and free Paul. They could ask God to keep Paul from getting sick. They could ask the Holy Spirit to comfort Paul with God's Word and help him stay strong in his faith. Yes, there was so much the Philippians could do for Paul simply by praying for him, right there in Philippi!

But there was something ELSE the Philippians could do for Paul. What could that be?

Can you think of what else they could do to care for Paul?

(SB3) They could send a gift of money to him. The believers in Philippi weren't rich, but they loved Paul! He was the one who first came to their city shared the gospel with them. (SB4) Down by the river, then up in the streets, Paul had told all who would hear the good news of Jesus. Many like Lydia, heard and believed. (SB5) But others were so angry that they had soldiers grab Paul, hurt him and threw him into jail in chains!

Paul had suffered all of that, so THEY might trust in Jesus and be saved! He risked his life that God might save theirs! Now it was their turn to do something for Paul, even if it was very hard!

Everyone gave what they could. Many chose to go without things they needed. "(SB6) No, thank you, just one loaf of bread! No, thank you, only three figs, today," was heard around the marketplace, as some may have chosen to have a little less food on their tables, so they could give more money to take care of Paul. "(SB7) Sheep for sale, goats for sale," others yelled out at the marketplace. These chose to sell some of their own things to get money to give Paul.

(SB8) At last enough money was collected. But now there was another problem. Who would take it to Paul? (SB9) "I'll take it, a godly man named Epaphroditus offered. "I'll take the money, and I'll stay and help Paul," he said. The Philippians prayed for Epaphroditus and sent him on his way with their gift.

(SB10) Walk! Walk! Walk! Epaphroditus made the long trip from Philippi to Rome. There were no cars, trains or planes It would have taken weeks for Epaphroditus to get there, but he was happy to do it. He was glad to do something for the man who had done so much for them. He was eager to get to Paul and help him.

At last, Epaphroditus made it to the big city of Rome. (SB11, SB12) Past the temples of the fake, Roman gods and the fine houses. (SB13) Through the busy market where people came from around the world to buy and sell their goods. (SB14) Down the winding streets went Epaphroditus, until at last he found (SB15, SB16) the house where Paul was being held prisoner. "Knock, knock, knock," Epaphroditus knocked on the door of the little prison house. "Creak," the door opened. Epaphroditus looked in and what did he see?

What do you think he saw?

There was Paul chained to a soldier. He was an old man now. His body was sick and hurting. But even so, Paul was joyful. (SB17) He was still living for God and telling people about Jesus. He had even shared the gospel with the soldiers who guarded him! Some were becoming Christians! What good news this was!

Epaphroditus stayed and cared for Paul a long time. (SB18) He used the Philippian's money gift to buy Paul food and other things he needed. He shared with Paul about the Philippians and how they still cared for him and were praying for God to help him. (SB19) He listened to Paul and prayed for him. Oh, how wonderful to have a friend to comfort and care for him! To hear how the believers in Philippi were doing! To talk about the Lord and to pray! What comfort God brought Paul through this one man! Paul was so happy!

At last it was time for Epaphroditus to go. Paul gave Epaphroditus something to take back to the believers in Philippi to thank them and encourage them. But what could a poor, old man in jail give them that would do that?

Can you guess?

A letter! (SB20) That's what! So Paul got out a piece of paper and started writing. When he finished, he rolled it up and gave it to Epaphroditus. How sad Paul must have been to see him go. Yet, how happy he would be for the Philippians to read his letter!

Off went Epaphroditus, back home. Walk, walk, walk. Week after week after week. At last, he made it home. (SB21, SB22) The believers gathered together to hear Paul's letter to them. This is what Paul wrote:

Dear Philippians,
I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for you, I pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I want you to know that it has been good for the gospel for me to be in prison. I've been able to tell many people about Jesus, including all the soldiers who stand guard over me. It makes me happy that so many people are hearing about Jesus.

Even though life in prison is hard, I am full of joy. I know that God is helping me through your prayers and by His Holy Spirit. He will help me to keep on telling people about Jesus. He will help me keep on living for Him. And one day, He will take me home to be with Him in heaven forever. That will be best of all.

Until then, I will be praying for you. I will pray that God strengthen you by His Holy Spirit, just as He is strengthening me. I will pray that He would give you joy; and, that you will keep on living for Him and telling others the good news of Jesus!

One day I hope to be freed from prison and come visit you again!

May Jesus give you strength,
Paul

What happened to Paul after Epaphroditus left? (SB23)The Lord had promised that one day Paul would stand before Caesar Nero, the great, Roman king, himself. And so he did! Nero heard his case and no doubt Paul would have even tried to share the good news of Jesus with him, too. And while Nero did NOT become a Christian, he did decide to free Paul from prison. The LORD had answered the Philippian's prayers!

(SB24) Paul was free to spread the good news of Jesus once more, though probably, his travels never took him back to see his dear friends in Philippi again. But Paul would never forget them! Their comfort gave him strength when he needed it most. (SB25) And oh, how sweet would be the meeting of these dear friends in heaven one day! They had loved each other so well on earth and now they would get to go on loving each other forever and ever!

Bible Story for Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6

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 prisoner? Why was he in jail? Paul. He was in jail for telling others about Jesus.
2. Who prayed for him? The believers in the city of Philippi.
For You and Me:
Can you imagine going to jail for something you believe in? Paul did, because he knew the good news of Jesus was true and that people needed to hear it if they were to be saved from their sins. Paul rejoiced to tell about Jesus and watch them become God's people. 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 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11, ESV
"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

1. Who did God use to comfort Paul? The believers in Philippi.
2. What did they do that was comforting? They prayed for him, sent him money and Epaphroditus to help him.

For You and Me:
Paul was comforted by the help and prayers of the believers in Philippi. He was comforted by their love and by knowing that God was loving him, too, through them. We, too, can know the comfort of God and of God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. That's how we become God's people.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:
Our six clues were: a letter, a mouse, some money, Epaphroditus, a soldier, and some medicine.
1. Which four belong in our story? The letter, the money, Epaphroditus and the soldier belong. The mouse and the medicine do not.
2. Who did Paul thank God for using to comfort him? The believers in Philippi.

For You and Me:
Paul was comforted by the help and prayers of the believers in Philippi. He was comforted by their love and by knowing that God was loving him, too, through them. We, too, can know the comfort of God and of God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. That's how we become God's people.

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...
God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!

Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It Is God's Sustaining Grace... God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other. What a wonderful day it was when Jesus rose from the dead! That was the proof that Jesus had really paid for all of God's people's 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 for our sins. God would have been perfectly fair to give us all His punishment for sins. But, He is so full of mercy and love that He chose to save His people through Jesus. Jesus died on the cross to take all the punishment for the sins of God's people. Jesus died and was buried that sad day; but, He didn't stay that way! On Day Three, God raised Jesus up from the dead. Jesus had really done it! He had beaten sin and death for God's people.

And Jesus was just the first! Now all of God's people --all who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior -- get to share in Jesus' gifts of salvation. They get to know God in their hearts all the days of their lives. When they die, their spirits will go to live with God forever. And at the very end of time, God will give them another gift-- perfect, brand-new bodies, like Jesus' to enjoy forever. 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 God, we praise You for being the Comforter and Strength of Your People. You help them comfort and strengthen each other.

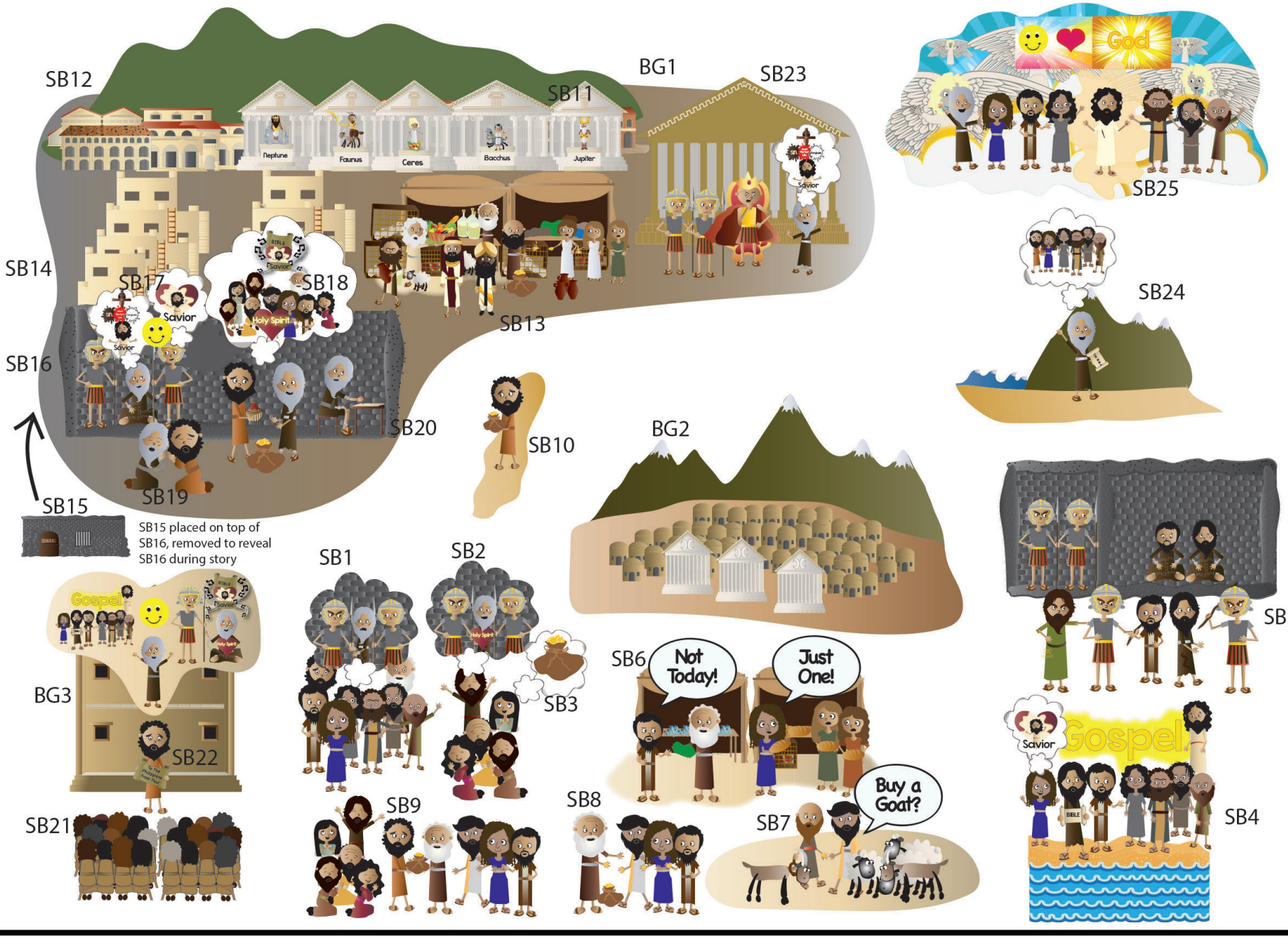
C We confess that many times we forget to pray for others who are struggling with hard or sad times. Many times, we don't take time to comfort and strengthen others who are struggling. We need a Savior!

T Thank You, God, for the comfort God's people receive from You through how they help and pray for each other.

S Work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to comfort others with Your Word and by praying for them. Use us to help others through their times of need. Help others to see Your love and kindness as we comfort and pray for each other.
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.



Deep Down Discussion Sheet

use with all THREE lessons

Use with all response activities for deeper learning

Questions to aid discussion of the key concepts and for use in games

Be familiar with these questions and answers. Look for opportunities to ask questions and discuss their answers, such as while the children work on their coloring pages, as part of their response games, or during play time. Remember: your goal isn't to ask all these questions or only talk to the children about these things. It's to be deliberate in having good conversations with them, however much or little you have.

BIG QUESTION

Meaning

Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It Is God's Sustaining Grace!

All people enjoy many good things and suffer many bad or sad things in this world. Enjoying good things or going through bad things make some people turn away from God. They love the good things too much or get mad at God for the bad things that happen.

But that's not what happens with God's people. They have put their trust in Jesus. They want to love God most of all--even more than the good things they enjoy. They trust God and His good plans--even as they go through bad or sad things.

Discussion Questions

choose a few

What makes the difference? It's God and His sustaining grace! That is, His gifts of strength to help us keep on believing in Him and living for Him. God will always give His people what they need! He wants them to depend on Him and He loves for them to ask for His help. He will never fail them. God will help you like this, too, if you turn away from your sins and put your trust in Jesus.

1. Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? *It Is God's Sustaining Grace!*
2. Who did people have a wonderful closeness with in the beginning? *With God.*
3. What did people do that caused the wonderful closeness with God to end? *They disobeyed Him.*
4. What did all people deserve for disobeying God? *God's punishment that keeps them separated from Him and all His goodness forever. How sad!*
5. Who did God send to bring His people to Him? *Jesus.*
6. What did Jesus take for God's people on the cross? *The punishment for their sins.*
7. What happens to us when we turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior? *God forgives our sins. He makes us His people. We have special closeness with God now. Then, when our bodies die, we will go on living happily with God forever.*

BIBLE TRUTH

Meaning

It Is God's Sustaining Grace... God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other!

No matter who we are, we all go through times of need. Sometimes we are learning something new and we need help learning how to do it. Sometimes, we are going through something that is very sad or very hard and we need comfort and strength. God loves to help His people all the time, especially in their times of need. He uses His Word, the Bible to guide and comfort them. His Holy Spirit strengthens them inside their heart. But God also helps His people through their prayers and comfort for each other.

God's people comfort each other by reminding each other that God is always with them and how great and good He is. They read the Bible to each other and hold on to His wonderful promises to take care of them. They pray for each other, asking God to give them wisdom, strength and joy; and, to rescue them from their troubles. They ask God to use their hard and sad times to make them more like Jesus and to bring glory to His name.

God loves to sustain His people through their comfort and prayers for each other. It is a wonderful display of His love to both to His people and to others who watch how God's people love and care for each other. We, too, can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. He can use us to comfort others, too.

Discussion Questions

choose a few

1. Who goes through sad and hard times? *We all do!*
2. Who needs comfort and strength in those times? *We all do.*
3. How does God help His people in these sad and hard times? *He uses His Word, the Bible, to guide and comfort them. His Holy Spirit strengthens them inside their hearts.*
4. How does God use His people to help each other in sad and hard times? *He uses them to comfort and pray for each other.*
5. How do God's people use the Bible to strengthen and comfort each other? *They read the Bible to each other and remind each other of God's wonderful promises to take care of them.*
6. How do God's people pray for each other when they are going through sad and hard times? *They ask God to give them strength and joy. They ask God to rescue them from their troubles. They ask God to use the hard and sad times to make them more like Jesus and to show everybody what a great God He is.*
7. What do others say about God when God's people comfort each other? *They tell what God's love for His people is like. It helps them want to know God, too.*
8. How can we become God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior.*

Deep Down Discussion Sheet

use with all THREE lessons

Questions to aid discussion of the key concepts and for use in games

THE GOSPEL

What is God's good news for you and me? *The gospel! Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It Is God's Sustaining Grace... God Uses His People to Strengthen and Comfort Each Other! God helped Paul and the believers in Philippi comfort and strengthen each other by the good news of Jesus. They remembered that though they were sinners deserving God's punishment, that God had chosen to save them. He sent His Son, Jesus, give up His life on the cross as the full payment for the sins of all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. He had beaten sin and death for God's people. He lives and reigns in heaven, caring and praying for God's people, and carrying out God's good plans. One day, He will come back and put an end to sin and death once and for all; and, God's people will live happy with Him forever. As God's people, Paul and the other believers knew that God would always help them love Him and live for Him… And it was all thanks to what Jesus did! This good news can save us, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then, as God's people, we can know that God will always help us love Him and live for Him all of our lives… And it will all be thanks to what Jesus did for us.*

BIBLE TRUTH
BIBLE VERSE

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God…On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many." --2 Corinthians 1:3-4,10-11, ESV

Learn a Little "We comfort those in any affliction, with the comfort we are comforted by God."

Meaning

God loves His people so much! He is full of mercy and compassion. He cares about their sadnesses and troubles and comforts them. Many times, God uses His people to comfort each other. They listen to each other. They encourage each other and pray. They remind each other of God's promises. They help each other turn away from disobeying God. No wonder God's people praise Him for giving them each other! He uses them to show His love to each other and to keep on believing in Him their whole lives. We can become God's people when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Discussion Questions

choose a few

1. Who comforts God's people in all of their afflictions (sad and hard times)? Why? *God does. God comforts His people in sad and hard times because he cares for them; but also, because He wants them to use the comfort He gives them to comfort others when they need it.*
2. Who does God want His people to comfort? *He wants them to comfort other people, especially God's people.*
3. Who do God's people hope in when they need help? *They hope in God to help them and deliver them.*
4. Who do God's people comfort by praying for them? *They pray for other people, especially God's people.*
5. How can we become God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior.*

BIBLE STORY

The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner

Discussion Questions

choose a few

1. Who was in prison for telling people about Jesus? *Paul was.*
2. Who wanted to do something to help Paul while he was in prison? *The believers in Philippi.*
3. How did the believers in Philippi help Paul, even though he was so very far away? *They prayed for him, they gave money to him, and they sent someone to go to help him.*
4. Who did the people the believers in Philippi send to Paul in Rome? *A man named Epaphroditus.*
5. How was Paul when Epaphroditus visited him? *Paul was chained to a soldier. He was an old man and his body was sick and hurting. Life was hard, but Paul was still joyfully living for God and telling everyone the good news of Jesus.*
6. How did Epaphroditus comfort Paul? *He took care of his needs. He talked and prayed with him. He told Paul about how the believers in Philippi were doing.*
7. What did Paul write to the believers in Philippi after Epaphroditus visited him? *He thanked God for them and the comfort they gave him through Epaphroditus and their gift of money. He told them he would pray for them. He told them that though life was hard in prison, God was giving him joy. God was helping him to keep on loving God and living for Him, thanks to their prayers and to the Holy Spirit, working in his heart.*
8. What good news did Paul and the believers of Philippi believe in? How did that good news help them? How can it help us? *God helped Paul and the believers in Philippi comfort and strengthen each other by the good news of Jesus. They remembered how God sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for the sins of all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. As God's people, Paul and the other believers knew that God would always help them love Him and live for Him… And it was all thanks to what Jesus did! This good news can save us, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then, as God's people, we can know that God will always help us love Him and live for Him all of our lives… And it will all be thanks to what Jesus did for us.*