Godly Play Examples

Below are examples of how to use the Godly Play method to tell a story.

Each example includes the script prepared by the teacher, followed by a video showing her teaching it. The teacher practised several times before teaching. The script is not read word for word but is used as a guide. Ideally, through practice, the story can be told from the heart instead of just read.

For more information and an explanation of *Godly Play*, click here.

Example 1: The 12 Spies

The Teacher's Script of the 12 Spies Story

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Today, we are telling a story. With this story, you have to hear the story first. Later, you can play with the story if you would like to. But we won't touch it right now. During the story, we will keep our thoughts in our heads. All right.

This is the story of the Israelites in the desert. The desert is not a nice place to live. There's not a lot of water. There's not a lot of food. When the wind blows, it changes shape. It's easy to get lost. It's not a place that you want to live in forever.

The Israelites were God's people, and they had just left Egypt. There were many Israelites. There were millions of Israelites. God didn't want them to stay in the desert forever. He wanted them to go to the promised land. That was the land He had promised that they would get to live in one day, and it would be a beautiful land. Now, they had been wandering in the desert for two whole years. During those years, God had the Israelites make the tabernacle so He could live among them, and they followed the pillar of cloud, and then the pillar of fire, whenever God wanted them to move in the desert. But then, one day, God said, 'Okay, it's time. It's time for my people to go look at the promised land.'

So He said, 'Send 12 spies to take a look at the promised land. Moses and Aaron chose 12 spies, one from each tribe, to go and look at the promised land. This was a good idea. They wanted to see what the promised land was like. So they sent 12 spies, and we're just going to use a few shells, because we don't have 12, but that's okay.'

The 12 spies obeyed God. They went to look at the promised land. They weren't afraid yet; they were just obeying. When they got to the promised land, they saw a land flowing with milk and honey. It wasn't a desert anymore. There was light. There was lots of fruit and honey, and it was a beautiful place. God had led them to a beautiful place. They had big grapes there. They found lots of beautiful things. Beautiful things to eat. God was going to take care of them. He was going to feed them.

But something happened. They weren't afraid when they saw the grapes and honey, but then they saw giants. They saw some warriors who were much bigger than them, and they were afraid. They were afraid. When they went up, they saw them, and they said, 'Oh, we are like grasshoppers compared to them.' I wonder if it was normal to feel afraid. I wonder if God wanted them to feel afraid.

They decided they would take some of the grapes and some of the fruit of the land with them and then go back to where the Israelites were. So they went back to the Israelites, where there were millions of people, God's people. And you know, God wanted to take care of His people. He had a good plan for them. He had sent them to the promised land and brought them back. He wanted them to go and live in that land. I wonder what God's plan was.

When the spies came back, they brought a report, and they told the Israelites what they had seen. They said, 'Yes, we found these grapes. We found milk and honey. The land is very good. We won't be hungry. We won't be starving. But'… the 10 spies said… 'But they are too big for us. There are giants in that land. We're too afraid, they're much too strong. We won't survive. We can't go there.'

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But there were two spies. Their names were Caleb and Joshua, and they said, ‘We don’t need to be afraid. They may be big, but God is bigger.’ But the Israelites were afraid. In fact, they were so afraid that all the Israelites met and cried all night. And they said, “It is better for us to have been slaves in Egypt than to try to go to the promised land. We wish that somebody would lead us back to slavery.’

Caleb and Joshua were so sad. And Moses, their leader, and Aaron were also very sad. God was so upset that they didn’t think they could go to the promised land that He decided He was going to send a big disease on all the Israelites.

Moses said, ‘God, please don’t do that. Please, if you do that, Egypt will know that you did this to them and you won’t have a good name anymore.’ So God said, ‘Okay, I won’t do that, but I will have to punish them for not believing. They didn’t trust me.’ So… God said, ‘All the Israelites will have to wander in the desert for 40 years. And everyone who didn’t believe and is 20 years or older will not get to see the promised land. They’re going to die, and they’ll never see the promised land, because they didn’t trust me. Caleb and Joshua will get to see the promised land because they believed in me and trusted me.’

And so they did. They wandered for 40 years. They were very lost, and God didn’t let them see the land He had promised them because they didn’t trust Him. I wonder… I wonder which part of the story was your favourite part?

Let’s share one at a time. I want to hear from each person. We’re not done wondering yet. I wonder if there’s something you are afraid of. I wonder which character you feel like you are. I wonder where you feel like you are in the story. I wonder if you feel like you’re lost in the desert, or if you feel like you’re in a land of giants. I wonder what God might want to tell you when you feel afraid. I wonder if God wants us to feel afraid or if He wants us to not be afraid? I wonder what He might say to you when you’re afraid. I wonder which part of the story we could take out and still have all we need.

I wonder which part of the story was the most important. I wonder why you like this story. I wonder how the Israelites felt having to wander for 40 years. I wonder what they felt.

Alright, now we’re going to pray.

Example 2: Nadab and Abihu

The Teacher’s Script of the Nadab and Abihu Story

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Today we're going to hear the story of Nadab and Abihu. Now Nadab and Abihu were Israelites.

The Israelites were God's special people- they were the people that God had made a covenant with. The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt, but God had rescued them. Now they were living in the wilderness and wandering. The Israelites were God's special people, but God himself is very special. God is the one who sent the 10 plagues on Egypt. He split the Red Sea so the Israelites could walk through it. He put the ten commandments on stones and he gave them to the Israelites. There is no other God and there is no one like God.

God is very powerful. He is very kind and very good. He is true and just. There are many things that God is. But one word we can use to describe God is holy.That means there is no one else like God. He is the only God.

And just like how when we light a candle or there is a light in a dark place, we want to look at it and it lights up everything that is dark, that is what God is like too. When we see God, we just want to look at him. He lights up every dark place because he is holy.

Yes, God was the amazing, holy God of Israel. And God told the Israelites some special instructions about something called the tabernacle. The tabernacle was the name for the place where God wanted to live with the Israelites. So the Israelites made this special place for God to live. There were many parts of the tabernacle, but one part was called the tent of meeting. It had many parts inside. But the most special part was a place inside the tent of meeting called the Holy of Holies. That is where God lived when he was with the people.

God made his home there. But there were other things the Israelites did with the tabernacle. Here are the Israelites. There were some Israelites who were called priests. And a priest's job was to work in the tabernacle. Two of the priests were named Nadab and Abihu and they were the sons of Aaron.

The priests helped make sure that God was treated as holy and he was obeyed. God's home, the tabernacle, had been set up just like God had asked. And now it was time to make the first offering. And so they did. The priests made the first ever offerings in the tabernacle. and they placed them on the altar. Nadab and Abihu helped. They made the offerings. And then Aaron and Moses went into the tent of meeting.

When they came out, the glory of God appeared to all the Israelites. And God sent fire down to the altar and consumed the offering. Wow. The Israelites bowed down and they shouted. They saw God's glory. They saw his fire.

But two of the Israelites did something different. Nadab and Abihu decided to do something God had not commanded them to do. They took some of their special items from the tabernacle, called censers, and with the incense they made their own little fires. Here's one for Nadab. It's very small. It was not as special as God's fire at all. Abihu made one too, and they offered it to God. But God did not accept this offering. In fact, God sent his fire down on Nadab and Abihu and they died.

God wanted to be seen as holy in front of others. That's what Moses told Aaron. Moses told Nadab and Abihu's cousins to take their bodies and take them away. Aaron, their father, and their brothers

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were not allowed to mourn or grieve Nadab and Abihu’s death, but the rest of the Israelites were.

That was the day of the first offerings in the tabernacle.

I wonder what the Israelites remembered most about this day. I wonder what it means that God is holy. I wonder how God being holy makes you feel. I wonder where you are in this story. I wonder what your favorite part of the story is. I wonder if there is a part of the story we could leave out and still have all we need.

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