



Teacher—These special Dee-Cy-Paul application stories reinforce the Bible lesson. Choose the “Bookends” or the Story based on your time and preference.

Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Cy’s teacher, Mr. Lemon, had assigned him an essay topic about magic in a book series. Cy didn’t think that he could obey God’s Word and still write a good paper. So he went to Mr. Lemon and asked if he could be assigned a new topic. Would his teacher allow Cy to change his assignment? How would Cy explain his reasons? What if Mr. Lemon thought he was trying to cheat or be lazy?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Cy did his best to explain to Mr. Lemon why it was important for him to obey God. Cy also promised to do his “best work ever” on whichever topic Mr. Lemon would give him. Mr. Lemon agreed! God blessed Cy with the ability to work hard and write a good paper, and he received the best grade he had ever earned on an essay. Cy was glad that he had followed Daniel’s example and had taken a stand for God.

“I have your papers graded,” said Mr. Lemon, holding up the essay assignments while everyone in class groaned. “Now, now—don’t be like that. Overall, you did very well.” Mr. Lemon walked from desk to desk, placing the papers face down. Kids who were eager to know their grades turned over their essays right away. Those who dreaded their grades were not so quick.

Cy definitely fell in the “dreaded” category. Essays were not his strong suit, and he had a special reason to worry about his paper this time around. Mr. Lemon had chosen four different essay topics—then he had assigned one randomly to each student. Cy’s topic had been about the popularity of the “Mystic Mindy” book series. Mystic Mindy was a series of stories about a girl who trained as a witch at a “magic academy.” It was very popular with kids Cy’s age. Cy knew he had a dilemma.

After talking with his friends, Dee and Paul, Cy had gone to see his teacher:

“Mr. Lemon, may I talk to you about my assignment?” Cy could feel his heart beating.

“Sure, Cy. Can I answer any questions about the books for you?”

“Actually, I was wondering if you would assign me a different topic.”

Mr. Lemon’s eyes widened. “Why would you want me to do that? That was the assignment everybody wanted.”

“Well,” Cy began. “I’m a Christian, and I want to honor God in everything that I do. I’m not sure that writing about magic and how popular it is would please God. The Bible says to avoid things like idolatry and witchcraft. I don’t think I could write a good essay and still obey God’s Word.”

Mr. Lemon thought for a moment. “I know that you’re a Christian, Cy, and I respect your beliefs. Technically, I could make you write on your assigned topic.

Plus, the other topics might be even more challenging.” Cy’s face fell, but then his teacher added, “Are you sure you’re up to it?”

Cy became excited. “If you would let me, yes! I promise I will work as hard as I can on this essay. And I hope—I pray—God will help me because I am trying to please Him.”

“Okay, I’ll change your assigned topic. Your new topic is the history of the Liberty Bell.” Mr. Lemon leaned forward. “But this is a special case—and I expect to see the best essay you can write, young man.”

Now Cy felt very nervous about seeing his grade. He had worked very hard to write the best paper he could, but he was afraid he had displeased Mr. Lemon by asking for special consideration. Truth be told, he didn’t know what to expect! As slowly as he could, he turned over his paper. He peeked at it with one eye shut.

“A-”!

He couldn’t believe it! He’d never received anything higher than a “B” on an essay before—and that was one about baseball, his favorite subject! After saying a silent prayer of thanks to God, Cy noticed Mr. Lemon had written a note in red pencil beside his grade. It read, *Great job, Cy. You did the work you promised to do. Thank you for honoring our agreement.*

Cy smiled. He had taken a stand, trying to please God and obey His Word. God had blessed him with the ability to work hard and produce a paper he could be proud of. He couldn’t wait to tell Dee and Paul.

And he couldn’t wait for his next assignment!



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Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Paul and his sister, Susan, were at a planetarium show. The show was great, but Susan could see that Paul was upset. Paul had learned about Nostradamus, a man whom his history textbooks had predicted future events, including the end of the world. What could Susan say that would make her younger brother feel better?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Paul was disturbed that a man had predicted the future, including the end of the world. Susan explained that Nostradamus had not predicted anything—more modern scholarship had shown that none of his prophecies could be connected to any real world events. She reminded Paul that only God knew the future, and we can trust God for his goodness and love to us. Paul realized he had been spending his time focusing on the wrong thing—the future—and not the Lord—the author of that future!

The “stars” over everyone’s heads began whirling at an ever-quicker pace as the narrator concluded his presentation. Everyone in the planetarium applauded enthusiastically, including Paul’s older sister, Susan. She noticed that Paul’s claps were half-hearted.

As the room quieted and people began to file out, Susan and Paul stayed in their seats.

“What’s wrong, bro? Didn’t you enjoy the presentation?” Susan asked.

Paul blinked several times. “Yeah, the planetarium’s great! I couldn’t believe how real everything looked.” Then Paul looked down at his feet. “But when the guy mentioned constellations and astrology, it reminded me about this man we learned about in history—Nostradamus.”

“Oh yeah?”

Everyone but Susan and Paul had now exited the room. Stars were still projected on the planetarium’s ceiling, twinkling peacefully.

“Yeah. Our textbooks said that Nostradamus used a form of astrology to predict future events, including some bad disasters and even Hitler. He even predicted the world would end soon!” Paul hung his head.

“Wow,” said Susan, shaking her head and crossing her arms. “It sounds like your school needs to get some new history books.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, for starters, almost no serious scholars now believe that Nostradamus predicted anything. None of his so-called prophecies have any dates or enough detail to link them to *any* real-world events.”

“Really?” Paul perked up. But then he narrowed his eyes. “Hey, how do you know all this?”

“I know everything!” Susan boasted. Then she laughed. “Actually, we did

a group report on Nostradamus last year. I learned that nobody can agree on anything about him—or if he even wrote the books and prophecies attributed to him!”

Paul looked hopeful. “So, the world won’t be ending soon?” he asked.

“Well, I can’t say. No one can.” Susan playfully leaned into her brother. “It is impossible for people to predict the future. All we can know is what God tells us about the future in the Bible.”

“Like He told Daniel!” Paul exclaimed.

“Sure! And Daniel’s prophecies do have dates and details that continue to amaze historians.”

Paul hunched over. “The end of the world scares me.”

Susan put a hand on her brother’s shoulder. “That’s understandable. But we don’t need to be too worried. God controls everything that will take place in the future.” She gave Paul a squeeze. “Whether we know about it or not!”

The lights came up in the planetarium and the stars overhead disappeared. Paul looked up.

“You’re right. I should be trusting God, not obsessing over some guy who wrote a bunch of stuff that didn’t even come true.”

“Now you’re talking,” Susan said with a smile.

“I do know one thing that will happen in the future,” declared Paul.

“You do?”

“Yep. We’re going to get some ice cream!”

Susan laughed. “I’m tempted to say no, just to humble you, but the problem is—I want ice cream, too!”

“Then what are we waiting for?”



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Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Dee, Cy, and Paul had taken a fourth grade field trip to a Buddhist temple. A monk, Mr. Sajaki, had given them a tour and explained the things they had seen. After the temple monks had bowed and honored a large Buddha statue, their field trip leader, Mrs. Browning, had wanted the class to bow to the Buddha to—for fun. Dee, Cy, and Paul refused. How much trouble would they be in for disobeying their leader?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

The three kids explained how bowing to the Buddha stature—even if they didn’t really mean it—would disobey God’s Word. Mrs. Browning became very upset, but Mr. Sajaki calmed her down and got the kids “off the hook.” Afterwards, other kids refused to bow and one boy even wanted to learn more about Jesus! God had protected and rewarded Dee, Cy, and Paul for choosing to worship only Him.

The Buddhist monks, dressed in red robes, stood up together and exited the hall. A large, golden statue of the Buddha sat at the front of the hall. Dee, Cy, and Paul watched quietly with the rest of their grade. Mr. Sajaki, the monk who had shown everyone around the temple, had some final words to say:

“What you just saw was call the Devotion, where monks bow and honor the first Buddha. Now the monks are off to their meditations. Then they will do chores before dinner.”

Mrs. Browning, the teacher who had organized this field trip, put her hands together and said, “Okay! Thank you, Sajaki-san, for such a wonderful tour. Children, would you please thank Mr. Sajaki?”

The chorus of fourth graders all thanked the monk. Dee, Cy, and Paul had enjoyed Mr. Sajaki and the information he’d given. They hadn’t known much about Buddhism before this trip.

Mrs. Browning looked very excited. “Now, before we return to school, I think we should all do our own ‘Devotion.’ Let’s go bow before the Buddha!” She stood and turned. “Assuming that’s okay with you, Sajaki-san.”

Mr. Sajaki smiled. “It is fine.”

The class started to move toward the front of the hall. Dee, Cy, and Paul hung back with a couple of other kids. Mrs. Browning saw them and smiled, waving them forward. Paul spoke up.

“Mrs. Browning—ma’am—we want to stay here.”

Mrs. Browning looked confused for a minute. “Oh, yes. Mr. Lemon told me that some of his students were Christians and might have...special concerns. Why have none of you had any problems with the tour until now?”

“We enjoy learning about what other people think and believe,” said Paul. “There’s nothing wrong with observing.”

“But it’s different when you as us to participate,” finished Dee.

“Bowling?” Mrs. Browning asked. “But it doesn’t have to mean anything. You can

bow while still believing in Jesus.” She was becoming annoyed. The kids knew they might get in trouble, but they had worked this all out before the field trip.

“Our actions *do* matter,” declared Cy.

“The Bible is very specific about not acknowledging other gods,” offered Dee.

“Plus, if we bow before that statue,” said Paul. “Other people might misunderstand what we believe. You can punish us if you want to, but we will not bow.”

The two other kids, a boy and girl from another homeroom, moved closer to Dee, Cy, and Paul. Mrs. Browning turned red, and the five kids thought they were really going to get it. Then Mr. Sajaki spoke up.

“It’s okay, Mrs. Browning. Any children who do not wish to bow should not. We must all respect each other’s beliefs, even when we don’t agree with them.”

Mrs. Browning sighed. “Of course, you are right. Okay kids, those who want, let’s bow like the monks!”

The rest of the children continued to the front of the hall, but four more kids walked back to Dee, Cy, and Paul. Two were Christians the kids knew, but the other two didn’t go to church.

“Thanks,” said one of the girls as the kids up front bowed. “I thought it would be no big deal, but I see now that you guys were right. I need to put God first.”

One of the boys—a big kid named Jim—said, “Hey, that was pretty gutsy. You must really believe in God to stand up to Browning like that.”

“We don’t mess around when it comes to Jesus,” replied Paul.

“I see that. That monk guy seemed pretty wishy-washy to me. He was all like, ‘Bow. Don’t bow. Whatever.’” Jim lowered his voice. “You’ll have to tell me more about what you believe sometime.”

“Wanna sit with me on the bus back?” asked Paul. Jim nodded. Paul smiled at Dee and Cy. Later they would celebrate God’s goodness, protection, and their decision to worship only Him.



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Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Dee was helping her dad clear some of the “trash” that had accumulated at his company’s work site. It was hard, sweaty work. Dee wondered aloud why her dad couldn’t just order his work crew to do the cleaning. Mr. Morgan explained that he wanted his crew to know that he valued what they did. Then he told Dee a story about how he learned to be humble on the job.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

When Dee’s dad was younger and had just become a crew manager, he made a set of rules for his workers. He said it was to make them organized, but inside he was proud of his new position and wanted to show them he was the “boss.” One of the rules was about wearing suspenders. His crew wore outrageously colored suspenders to show them that he was taking his rules too seriously. Dee’s dad got rid of the rules and tried to be more humble with his workers. Dee thought that he “got off easy” compared to King Nebuchadnezzar, who was humbled by losing his mind and eating grass!

Dee’s dog, Chip, was having a ball at the construction site. He zipped from object to object, sniffing up a storm. Dee was helping her dad clear some of the “trash” that had accumulated as his company continued to build a home. It was hard, sweaty work. Dee removed one of her work gloves and wiped perspiration from her forehead before it could run into her protective goggles.

“Dad, you’re a company leader, right?” she asked.

Dee’s dad placed scrap into his truck bed. “It’s true that I have a work crew under me, yes. Why do you ask, sweetheart?”

“Well, why didn’t you just order some of them to come clean this stuff up?”

Chip came to Dee and sat on his hind legs. Dee bent over, and Chip licked a bead of sweat off her nose. Then he ran off. Dee giggled.

“I could ask my workers to come clean, but I also want to be a good example to them.” Mr. Morgan removed his helmet to let the wind cool his head. “Actually, we take turns cleaning during the entire project. If I refused to do my share, it might seem like I was saying that I was better than them.”

“So you are trying to be humble,” Dee concluded.

“Being humble is very important. When I was younger, I learned a pretty amusing lesson about humility.”

“Oh, tell me!” demanded Dee. Chip came over and plopped himself down beside Dee.

“Well,” Dee’s dad began. “Before you were born, when I first became a crew manager, I thought I was pretty smart. I wanted my workers to be organized, so I typed up ten rules I wanted them all to follow.”

“Like our house rules?”

“In a way. The difference is that whereas your mother and I established those rules carefully for the family’s benefit, with my work rules I was just trying to show my crew that I was boss.” Mr.

Morgan chuckled. “I even called my rules, ‘Morgan’s Mandates.’”

“You didn’t!” Dee exclaimed with glee. “So what happened?”

“Well, one of my rules was that all my workers had to wear suspenders instead of belts. I thought it was more professional and I wanted my crew to look like a team. But I made the mistake of not specifying what kind of suspenders.” Dee’s dad laughed, remembering. “So the next day, every person on my crew showed up wearing these colorful, outrageous suspenders. Some were rainbow colored, some were pink polka-dotted, and one guy had bright green fish swimming up and down his. My crew looked like a clown troupe that had escaped from the local circus!”

“Oh, wow! Weren’t you mad?” Dee asked.

“For a few minutes, I felt angry, but then I realized my rules were just as silly as those suspenders. I went right up to the place I’d tacked up the rules and ripped them down. My workers all clapped.”

“Just be glad you didn’t have to eat grass,” Dee said.

“Excuse me?”

“Well, King Nebuchadnezzar was proud of his kingdom, so God took away his sanity and he ate grass like the cattle.” Dee explained. “You were proud of your new position, but all you had to deal with were some silly suspenders.”

“You’re right, Dee. Ever since that day, I’ve tried to serve my crew just as much as they help me.”

Sensing that the story was over, Chip popped up and ran to a pile of wood chips.

Dee stretched. “We’d better get back to work, then! We don’t want your workers to think you are too good to pick up after yourself. Oh, and Dad?”

“Yes, sweetheart?”

“May I tell that story to Paul and Cy? I know they’d love it!”

“I bet they would,” said Mr. Morgan, smiling. “I bet they would.”



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Introduction (5 minutes)

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Paul was so upset! A terrible bully named Roy had pushed Paul down at school—and all Paul had wanted was to talk to him! Paul knew that Jesus wanted him to love his enemies, but he had also just learned that God punished people who only cared about themselves. That certainly sounded like Roy! When Paul’s dad checked in on him, Paul told him the whole story. Pastor Shepherd’s response shocked Paul—he said that Paul was “playing God”!

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Paul’s dad explained that Paul was judging Roy and imagining punishments in his mind, but only God had the authority to judge and to punish. Although it may not happen in an obvious way, one day Roy would have to accept the consequences of his actions. Pastor Shepherd explained that knowing this actually frees us to love people—because God takes care of the rest. Paul realized he could obey Jesus’ command and love Roy if he let go of his hurt feelings.

Paul was so upset that he slammed the front door closed and stormed past his mother, heading straight for his bedroom. He shed his backpack and threw himself face down onto his bed. He didn’t quite cry, but he felt like he could. He rolled onto his back, stared at the ceiling, and thought about Roy.

Roy was a bully at school. Not just any bully—he was *the* bully. He had a reputation for being mean, and he could turn his attentions to *anyone*—even other bullies! He had no friends, and didn’t seem to want any. All he seemed to care about was getting what *he* wanted.

Paul knew that Jesus had commanded him to love his enemies, and he had tried. He didn’t let other people say bad things about Roy and he tried his best to understand why Roy acted the way he did.

Today he had decided to talk with Roy—not about anything in particular, just to reach out a little. Paul had gone up to Roy in the hall, but was only able to say, “Hey, Roy. I--” when Roy placed his large hand on Paul’s forehead and shoved! Paul fell to the floor. He wasn’t hurt, but he was so shocked! Before he could think, he blurted out, “What did you do that for?”

“You were in my way,” said Roy, not even turning around. Other kids in the hall didn’t exactly laugh, but their astonished looks and open mouths still made Paul feel ashamed. School seemed to take forever to end.

Now Paul couldn’t stop thinking about what had happened. Soon Paul’s dad popped his head into Paul’s room—he was a pastor and was working at home that day.

“Your mom said you looked very upset, son. What’s wrong?”

Because of his shame, Paul was tempted to say nothing, but he also really wanted to know what his dad thought about everything. He told him the whole story.

“I was thinking about God and King Belshazzar,” Paul said at the end of his tale. “Belshazzar was punished for his arrogance, but Roy never gets in trouble! It’s like he’s invisible to the teachers or something!”

“I see,” said Pastor Shepherd, sitting on Paul’s bed. “You are playing God.”

This surprised Paul completely!

“What do you mean?”

“Well, in Daniel’s story, who judged King Belshazzar? Was it Daniel?”

Paul thought for a moment. “No, it was God.”

“And who punished the king?”

Paul thought he knew where this was going. “God.”

“Very good.” Paul’s dad smiled. “You’ve already decided Roy deserves to be punished—you’ve judged him. And I imagine you’ve already come up with some choice punishments in your mind.”

Paul turned red. “You’re right. But it’s hard when he’s so mean.”

“God will punish people who only care about themselves,” said Paul’s dad. “It may not be until this life is over, but the fact that God is the only one who judges actually gives us freedom—we don’t have to carry the burden of deciding right and wrong.”

Paul perked up. “You’re right! If I leave it up to God, I can let go of my hurt feelings.”

“And you are free to love—even someone like Roy,” Pastor Shepherd suggested.

“Just like Jesus told us to!” Paul hugged his father. “Thanks, Dad. I feel a lot better. I think I’d better do some praying before dinner.”

“That’s so wonderful to hear, son. I’ll pray for you, too.” Paul’s dad got up to leave. “And don’t forget to pray for Roy! It’s never too late for God to change his heart.”



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Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Dee, Cy, and Paul were having trouble understanding how to apply the story of Daniel and the lions to their lives. They didn’t see what lions had to do with being a Christian in the modern world. Their Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Trujillo, told a story about some missionaries, Heather and Dayna, who had broken the law to spread Jesus’ message. Angry soldiers captured them. What would happen to the two young women?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Heather and Dayna trusted God and continued to worship him, even while imprisoned. God rescued them in the form of a team of soldiers from their country. The kids realized that Christians in all parts of the world really do face dangers, and still must trust in and rely on God to protect them. They saw that Daniel’s story was about that trust, and how they could have the same trust to go and serve the Lord anywhere!

Cy raised his hand for Mrs. Trujillo, his Sunday school teacher.

“Yes, Cy?” she said.

“I love the story about Daniel and the lions,” Cy began. “But there’s something I don’t understand.” Cy’s friends, Dee and Paul, looked at each other. They wondered what he was going to say.

“Go ahead,” urged their teacher. Cy barreled ahead.

“Well, I don’t get why the story is in the Bible. It’s not like Christians face hungry lions these days.”

“What he means is that our lives seem kind of safe,” added Dee.

“It’s true that we aren’t in much physical danger where we live,” began Mrs. Trujillo. “But for many Christians this is not true. Let me tell you a story about two women named Heather and Dayna.”

The kids perked up. They loved their teacher’s stories.

“Heather and Dayna were young missionaries in a foreign country where Christianity was outlawed. They knew they were breaking that country’s law by telling people about Jesus, but just like Daniel, they were obeying God first. Which command were they obeying?”

Paul raised his hand and Mrs. Trujillo pointed to him. “Jesus’ command to make disciples of all nations.”

“Very good! One day, Heather and Dayna were visiting at a woman’s home. Suddenly soldiers from the government stormed in and captured them!”

The class gasped. Dee asked, “What happened to them?”

“They were held in a dirty prison cell. They didn’t know about what was going on or what might be done to them. But they trusted God and continued to pray and sing praises to Him. One day, a group of terrorists from that country attacked our country. The place where Heather and Dayna were being held was in an uproar! They overheard some guards talking. The men were discussing killing them so no one would know that they had been imprisoned!”

“No way!” said Cy.

“It’s true,” replied Mrs. Trujillo. “Some parts of the world are still very dangerous for Christians. Heather and Dayna prayed and prayed. The guards never carried out their plan. Soon, a team of our country’s soldiers came and rescued them, bringing them safely back to their homes.”

“God had protected them,” observed Paul.

Their teacher smiled. “That’s right! It may not always be obvious danger like in Heather and Dayna’s case, but God rescues people who trust Him and do what is right.”

“That means that if I am trusting and following God, I can go anywhere and not be afraid,” declared Cy. “We can do anything God wants us to do!”

“And that,” said Mrs. Trujillo. “Is what Daniel’s lion adventure is all about.”

“Now I get it,” said Cy.

“I didn’t realize life could be so dangerous for Christians,” said Dee.

“Danger comes in many forms,” replied their teacher. “As you get older, you’ll appreciate more and more all the Lord does to protect you.”

“Like from the dangers of sin or from Satan,” offered Paul.

“Who prowls around like a hungry lion!” added Dee, remembering the apostle Peter’s words.

“Another lion,” said Cy, shaking his head. “Now I feel silly for wondering about Daniel’s story.”

Mrs. Trujillo laughed. “Don’t feel silly, Cy. It’s good to have questions. Discovering the answers together always brings us closer to God.”

“Mrs. Trujillo? What happened to Heather and Dayna?” Dee asked.

“They’re still out in the world, spreading Jesus’ message,” their teacher replied.

“Then we’d better pray for them,” suggested Cy. “To keep the ‘lions’ away.”

“Amen,” said Mrs. Trujillo.



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Introduction (5 minutes)

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Cy was looking and feeling terrible. It was Saturday at the playground, but he looked like a condemned prisoner! Dee and Paul asked him what was wrong, and Cy explained that he had had a terrible nightmare. In his dream, the four beasts from Daniel’s vision had been chasing after him! He woke up trembling, but even knowing it was a dream hadn’t helped. Now all he could think about were the wars and bad things going on in the world. Paul and Dee said something that made Cy feel much better.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Paul explained that Cy had been focusing on the wrong part of Daniel’s vision. Instead of dwelling on the four beasts, Dee reminded Cy that Jesus had appeared, and God had given Him power and authority over everything! Cy realized that God was in control of everything that happened, even the scary stuff. In the end, God’s wonderful kingdom would be established and that kingdom would last forever. Cy’s dream didn’t seem very troubling when he focused on God’s power and love for him.

Dee and Paul watched Cy trudge across the playground field toward the swings where they sat. Their friend did not look like his usual upbeat self. He had bags under his eyes and he was frowning. Cy never seemed to frown for more than a few seconds.

“Hey guys,” Cy said, sounding like a condemned prisoner.

“Cy, what’s wrong?” asked Dee. “You look terrible!”

“Thanks,” Cy sarcastically replied. “I feel terrible.”

“It’s Saturday,” said Paul. “Didn’t you get to sleep in?”

“I would have, but I had terrible dreams,” explained Cy. “Remember the four beasts we learned about last Sunday from the book of Daniel?”

“You mean the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the ‘terrible beast’?”

Cy nodded. “I dreamed they were all chasing me!”

“Oh no!” exclaimed Dee. She and Paul got off the swings and stood beside their friend.

“Yeah. In my nightmare, as soon as I got away from one, another was waiting to run me down! It was horrible. I ran and ran and ran but I couldn’t get away. I woke up trembling in the middle of the night. Then I couldn’t go back to sleep.”

Paul put his hand on Cy’s shoulder. “Good thing it was just a dream.”

“I guess,” Cy replied, his shoulders sagging. “The problem is, ever since I woke up I can’t stop thinking about what those beasts represent—conquering kingdoms. Seems like everything I see and hear on the news is about wars or bad things that people are doing to each other. It’s depressing.”

“The world can be a scary place,” observed Dee.

“But now that you’re awake,” offered Paul. “You can turn your mind to other things!”

“Like what?” wondered Cy.

“Like the rest of Daniel’s vision!” replied Paul. “Who came after the four beasts?”

Cy struggled to remember. “Jesus! He came in the clouds.”

“And God gave Him power over everything!” Dee added.

“Including,” said Paul. “The ‘kingdoms’ of our world.”

Cy’s shoulders lifted. “So I’ve been focusing on the wrong thing.”

Paul nodded. “The beasts in Daniel’s vision were strange, terrifying creatures, but the main point of God’s message to Daniel was that He is in control. Nothing can change the wonderful future God has planned for Christians.”

“In the end, only God’s kingdom will be left standing,” said Dee. She sat back down on a swing. “And His kingdom will last forever!”

“I feel much better, guys,” said Cy with a smile. “The troubles on TV don’t seem as bad knowing that God is in control of everything. Thanks for reminding me about what really matters.”

“No problem,” said Paul. “By the way, what did the ‘terrible beast’ look like in your dream? The Bible doesn’t say what it looked like.”

Cy chuckled. “It’s funny now, but in my dream it was really scary. You know ‘Robo-Dino,’ the toy dinosaur on those TV commercials? The last beast looked just like that!”

“It’s hard to imagine Robo-Dino being scary,” said Dee.

“He is when he’s nine feet tall and chasing you!” said Cy. “Enough talk. Let’s play! Race you two to the slide!”

Dee and Paul grinned and got ready to run.



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Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Dee was bummed. She had been looking forward to playing some miniature golf during her vacation, but the weather forecast in the newspaper had predicted rain for the day they were supposed to play. Dee’s mom told her that she was getting upset for nothing. What did she have to say that would change Dee’s perspective?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Mrs. Morgan pointed out that the weather forecast only predicted a *chance* of rain. Dee wondered why the weather people couldn’t be more accurate. Dee’s mom said that weather was *very* complicated, and only God could predict the future in such detail. Dee remembered her Sunday school lesson and how Daniel’s visions were also complicated, but God fulfilled His prophecies down to the smallest detail. Dee decided that no matter what happened tomorrow, she would trust God and enjoy the day. That’s when her mom told her about an *indoor* miniature golf place with glow-in-the-dark holes and courses!

Dee threw her hands in the air. “Well, putt-putt golf’s off tomorrow!” she said, exasperated. As she settled back down on the hotel bed, the newspaper crinkled. Chip’s head popped up from where he was laying on the floor.

“What do you mean, honey?” asked Dee’s mom. The Morgans were on vacation, staying at a nice hotel near some friends of theirs, the Stanleys. Tomorrow they planned to meet the Stanleys and play miniature golf.

Dee held up the newspaper and pointed to the brightly colored boxes of a weather forecast. “See this picture for tomorrow? A thundercloud and raindrops! The putt-putt place doesn’t let people play in the rain—I saw that on their ad.” Dee dropped her head. “I was really looking forward to it.”

Chip stood up and wagged his tail. He pushed Dee’s leg with his nose, trying to cheer her up.

Dee’s mom smiled. “Dee, did you read the words under the weather picture?”

“No.” Dee was about to ask why, but then realized she’d better just obey her mom and read it. “It says ‘40% chance of rain.’ What does *that* mean?”

“You’ve learned about percentages. That means that it might rain, but it might not.”

“You mean they don’t know?” Dee asked, amazed. Chip licked her hand, and she began petting him absentmindedly.

“Weather forecasters? No, they can never know for certain,” said Mrs. Morgan. “Even if they predict rain, they don’t know whether that rain will fall right here at our hotel or three miles away at the Stanleys’ house.”

Dee was still doubtful. “But don’t they use powerful computers to help predict what the weather will do?”

“They use *very* powerful computers,” explained Dee’s mom. “But even with those, they can’t predict all the details. The weather is very complicated—and it isn’t something they control. Only God controls the weather.”

“And the future,” said Dee, remembering her Sunday school lesson. “God gave Daniel specific, complicated prophecies to show that He fulfills them—all the way down to the smallest detail!”

“That’s right!” agreed Dee’s mom. “Meteorologists can only wish that they knew a small bit about the future like God does.”

Dee pouted. Chip jumped into her lap. “I still wish I could know the future—like whether it will rain tomorrow over the putt-putt place or not.”

“Well, unfortunately we can’t,” said Mrs. Morgan. “But we *can* trust God to do what’s right with the day. If it rains, then God has a very good reason for the rain.”

“But if it rains, we can’t play!”

Dee’s mom sat on the bed beside her and patted Chip’s head. “If it rains, we’ll find something else to do. Something like the *indoor* miniature golf place that Kim Stanley told me about.”

“*Indoor* putt-putt?” Dee perked up.

“With glow-in-the-dark balls and courses!”

Chip jumped down from Dee’s lap and started moving in circles.

“Wow,” exclaimed Dee. “Now I kinda hope it does rain!”

Dee’s mom laughed, and Chip barked. “You’re funny. I think Chip is ready for his walk. Why don’t we get outside and enjoy some of the sunshine we have now.”

Just then, Dee’s father walked in the room and said, “The news on the TV in the lobby said it might rain tomorrow.” He hung his head. “Looks like putt-putt’s off tomorrow.”

“Not you, too!” cried Dee’s mom.

Dee just laughed.



Teacher—These special Dee-Cy-Paul application stories reinforce the Bible lesson. Choose the “Bookends” or the Story based on your time and preference.

Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Paul’s twin brothers, Mike and Mark, were playing catch. Mike asked Paul how his fast was going, which confused Mark because he’d just seen Paul eat a huge plate of macaroni and cheese for lunch. Paul explained that he was fasting from electronic devices, not food. That meant no phones, no radio, no TV, and no computer. Mark couldn’t believe it! How could Paul stay away from his computer? And why was he fasting, anyway?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Paul agreed that the fasting had been difficult, but he explained that that was the whole point. He had to give up something he cared about in order to show God he was serious. Paul’s fourth grade class was putting on a free car wash to share the Gospel with people in their community. They had agreed to fast and ask God to bless their event with success. God did indeed bless their car wash with lots of people and some who stayed to hear their presentation. Paul was grateful that God had heard and answered their prayers.

Paul sat in his treehouse reading his favorite book, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis. Suddenly, he heard his older brother, Mark, call up to him.

“Hey, Paul! How’s your fast going?”

Paul stuck his head out a “window.” Mark was in the yard, tossing a baseball with his twin brother, Mike.

“You aren’t fasting!” said Mike. “I just saw you eat a huge plate of mac n’ cheese at lunch!”

“It’s not that kind of a fast,” answered Mark.

“I’m fasting from electronic devices,” Paul called down.

“You are?” said Mike.

“Yep,” answered Paul. “I’m not using anything electronic. No phones, no radio, no TV, no CD player...”

“And no computer,” Mark said.

“No computer?” wondered Mike. “But you love the computer! You play games on it all the time. And aren’t you part of that online network, KLiCK—Kids Living in Christ’s Kingdom?”

“Yeah, it’s been difficult,” admitted Paul. “I miss my KLiCKing friends and I had to write my last school essay by hand. But that’s what makes it a fast. I had to give up something I really care about.”

“So why are you doing it?” asked Mike.

“All the fourth grade kids from Sunday school are doing it—we agreed to go to the Lord in fasting and prayer about our car wash coming up in a couple of weeks.”

Mark threw the ball to Mike. “That’s going to be free, right?”

“Yep. We want people to know that just as we are offering a free car wash, Jesus offers a free ‘wash’ to people by forgiving their sins.”

“Cool,” said Mike.

“We really want our car wash to make a difference for God’s kingdom,” Paul explained. “We read about Daniel fasting and praying, and Mrs. Trujillo suggested we do the same—to show God how much we care about what we will be doing for Him.”

“That’s great,” said Mike. “Still, no computer...”

Two weeks later, Paul was back in his treehouse, starting on *Prince Caspian*, the next “Narnia” book. He heard Mike calling his name.

“Hey, Paul! How was the car wash?”

Paul looked out and beamed. “It was amazing! We washed thirty cars in five hours!”

“Wow!” said Mark.

“The best part was, after their cars were washed, nine people stayed around to hear the Gospel presentation our class came up with. I really think we made a difference!”

“Praise the Lord,” said Mike.

“God really does answer prayer,” said Mark.

“Especially when we are serious about seeking Him,” added Paul.

“So, are you happy to be back on the computer?” asked Mike.

“Actually,” answered Paul. “It’s kind of nice to take a break from stuff like that.” Paul held up his book. “I think I’ll wait until I finish this.”

As his brothers walked away, Paul heard Mike say to Mark: “Man, are you sure he’s our younger brother?”

Paul smiled and settled himself down to read.



Teacher—These special Dee-Cy-Paul application stories reinforce the Bible lesson. Choose the “Bookends” or the Story based on your time and preference.

Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Dee couldn’t understand why Paul and Cy had asked her to meet them at a graveyard. When she got there, the boys explained that they wanted to become demon hunters. They’d gotten the idea from a TV show about ghost hunters. They were excited to join God in spiritual battle and show Him that they had chosen His side. Dee didn’t think it was a good idea, and it took some searching in her Bible to explain why.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Dee agreed that God does engage in a spiritual battle against Satan, and that everyone has to choose a side. But she also pointed out that the Bible tells believers to “stand their ground,” not “go look for trouble” (Ephesians 6:13). She also thought that Paul and Cy were trying to test God by putting themselves in harm’s way, something Jesus clearly said was wrong (Luke 4:12). The boys realized they’d let their excitement get the best of them. They decided to leave the demon fighting to the angels, and would instead choose God’s side by following Him and obeying His commands.

“What are we doing here?” Dee asked, shivering. The town graveyard—even though it was daytime, and they were outside its walls—was giving her the creeps. She knew she shouldn’t feel this way, but she did. She couldn’t figure out why Paul and Cy wanted to meet here. Her two friends grinned—they were clearly excited.

“We’re going to become demon hunters!” blurted Cy.

“Kind of,” said Paul. “Zack from school was telling us about this TV show. A team of people go to haunted houses and look for ghosts—then they cast them out!”

“There’s no such thing as ghosts,” replied Dee, glancing at the graveyard.

“We know,” said Cy. “But there are such things as demons!”

Paul nodded. “Remember Ephesians 6:12? Our battle is with spiritual forces of darkness. Cy and I have decided to try to find some of Satan’s demons and send them packing.”

“Oh boy,” Dee sighed. “You want to be like ‘Spiritual Special Agents’? Have you guys really thought this through?”

“Sure!” replied Cy. “Those demons don’t stand a chance! We have God on our side.”

“And we’re on God’s side,” said Paul. “We want to show Him that we’re not scared to fight!”

Dee had to think for a while about why this all felt wrong to her. She had her Bible with her, and did some searching with her concordance. She showed Cy and Paul the whole text of Ephesians, chapter 6.

“It’s true that God is fighting a spiritual battle against Satan—and everybody has to choose sides,” Dee began. “You talked about verse 12, Paul, but look at verse 13. It says to ‘stand your ground,’ not to ‘go looking for trouble.’”

“Yeah, but...” Cy started, but Dee had already had another thought.

“And look at Luke 4:12. Satan tried to get Jesus to leap off a building to prove He was God’s Son, but Jesus quoted Scripture, saying not to test God.”

“We’re not testing God,” said Paul.

“Are you sure?” replied Dee. “If you did find a demon, do you think that you could beat it on your own?”

“Of course not!” said Cy. “That power comes from God.”

“Well, aren’t you testing God by asking Him to come to your rescue after you go looking for trouble?” emphasized Dee. “Remember Daniel and the angel? Daniel’s job wasn’t to fight the ‘princes’ of the world—Michael and the other angels were sent to do that.”

“I think I get what you’re saying,” said Paul. “Daniel’s job was to follow God and obey His commands.”

“That’s how you show Him you’ve chosen His side,” said Dee.

Cy sagged a little. “You guys are right. I was excited about ‘hunting’ demons, but it was for the wrong reasons.”

“We’ve had plenty of excitement following God,” said Paul. “I wouldn’t trade our adventures for anything.”

“And we still have to be ready to stand against the devil’s attacks,” Dee added. “God will give us His power when we truly need it.”

“I’m glad God is on our side,” repeated Cy.

“Me, too,” said Dee. “By the way, whose bright idea was it to meet at a graveyard?”

“What do you mean?” Cy asked innocently. “It’s on the way to the library. I have some books to return.” He held up his backpack.

“Oh, brother,” said Dee.

“What?” asked Paul and Cy at the same time.

“Nothing.”



Teacher—These special Dee-Cy-Paul application stories reinforce the Bible lesson. Choose the “Bookends” or the Story based on your time and preference.

Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Dee was enjoying herself at a special trip to the nation’s capital. She loved all the amazing buildings and monuments. While posing for a group photograph, Dee overheard two men talking. They were saying very unkind things about the President. Dee couldn’t believe it! Later, she was able to ask her Sunday school teacher: Was it okay to pray that the President would fail? Was he an evil person?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Dee’s teacher explained that, while the men were allowed to voice their opinion, what they said went against the Bible. Christians should pray for their leaders, because God has put them there! God will use everything they do to accomplish His kingdom purposes. The President was human, just like everyone else. Dee realized the best thing to do was to pray that he would know and follow Jesus. Her teacher agreed, reminding her to obey those in authority and the laws of the country, as long as they did not make her disobey God’s Word.

Everywhere Dee looked, she saw grand, white buildings. She couldn’t believe she was in the nation’s capital! She and five other girls in her class had been selected to meet their state’s senator. Mrs. Browning, a fourth grade teacher, and Mrs. Trujillo, Dee’s Sunday school teacher, had come with them. After meeting the senator this morning, the two adults had taken the girls on a tour of Monument Park. Now Dee and her friends were posing for photographs on the steps of the Capitol Building.

As Dee smiled for what seemed like the millionth picture, she overheard two men in dark business suits talking.

“Can you believe our new President?” said the first man. “He wants to legislate religious programming.”

“Sure he does. He’s evil, I tell you,” said the second man. Dee didn’t know what they meant by “legislate” or “religious programming,” but she couldn’t believe these men were talking about her country’s leader this way!

“We need to pray that he fails,” said the first man. “And not just this bill—we need to pray his whole term is a failure!”

“I’d like nothing more than to see him taken down,” said the second man. Then the two men moved away, and Dee couldn’t hear anything more that they said.

Dee tried to smile for the rest of the pictures, but it was difficult. She knew people disagreed with the President, but she’d never heard anyone say things like that before. Was he really evil?

Dee was distracted the rest of the day. Mrs. Trujillo must have noticed, because back at the hotel she pulled Dee into the hall to talk. Dee repeated the conversation she overheard. Mrs. Trujillo explained that “legislate” meant to “control by law” and “religious programming” was probably talking about Christian radio and television shows.

“Were those men right? Are we supposed to pray for the President to fail?” she asked.

Mrs. Trujillo shook her head. “No, Dee. The things those men said were wrong. We *should* pray that the government will do what’s right, especially to protect the Church, but the Bible is clear that we must pray *for* our leaders, not *against* them.”

“Why did those men talk that way?” Dee wondered.

“I don’t know,” admitted Mrs. Trujillo. “But there are always people who become angry with the decisions our leaders make. Even Christians get upset when they feel their freedoms are being taken away.”

“Why does God allow there to be leaders who don’t follow Him?” Dee asked.

“That’s a question many people have asked! We don’t always know what God’s plan is, but we do know that He directs earthly leaders to carry out His purposes—whether they know it or not!”

“So, is the President a good guy or a bad guy?” Dee wanted to know.

Mrs. Trujillo smiled. “My, you are full of questions! The President is human, which means he sins and falls short of God’s standard. He isn’t more ‘good’ or more ‘bad’ than anyone else.”

“He needs Jesus!” said Dee.

“He sure does. We can pray that all our leaders will come to know and follow Jesus.”

“What do we do if they don’t?”

“We still obey those in authority and the laws of our country,” said Mrs. Trujillo. “As long as they don’t cause us to directly disobey God’s Word.”

“Just like Daniel, who lived in Babylon and Persia,” Dee realized. “Those kings didn’t follow God, but Daniel served them and still obeyed the Lord.”

“Hey,” said Mrs. Trujillo. “Someone’s been paying attention in my class.”

“Don’t I always?” worried Dee.

“Of course you do,” said her teacher, laughing. “Of course you do.”



Teacher—These special Dee-Cy-Paul application stories reinforce the Bible lesson. Choose the “Bookends” or the Story based on your time and preference.

Dee-Cy-Paul “Bookends”

Introduction (5 minutes)

Use this “hook” to introduce the lesson.

Paul had never been more frustrated. He had been excited about doing a “mock United Nations” with his class, but the way his teacher had set it up, all they had done was fought over who had more power and money. What made it worse was Paul knew that much of what they had done was probably very similar to the way real countries fought. Paul thought he had wanted to be an ambassador, but why be an ambassador for something he couldn’t believe in?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

If you used the introduction to begin your lesson, use this to conclude.

Paul realized that he could be God’s ambassador for His kingdom—something he really did believe in! He also realized that all the nations fighting over power would one day be swept away by the only power that mattered—God and His kingdom. Paul wanted to represent God well, so that everyone would see who He really was. Paul felt much better with this worldview, and he was ready for part two of the mock U.N.

Class had devolved into angry, shouted demands. Mr. Lemon finally had to take over and settle everyone down. He gave “the floor” back to Paul. Paul looked at his notecards and cleared his throat.

“As I was saying, ladies and gentlemen, the trade agreement between my country, Switzerland, and the Netherlands needs to change. They now want two pounds of our cheese for every pair of clogs they send us.”

“One for each clog!” cried Jimmy, the Dutch representative.

“We only get one pound of cheese for our croissants,” said Dee, the French ambassador.

“Pizza is worth much more than bread,” interjected the ambassador from Italy. Soon, the entire class was shouting again. Some kids were trying to stay in character. Others just seemed to be enjoying the chaos. Mr. Lemon restored order again. Then he clapped.

“Good job, everyone! You played your roles just as you were supposed to. Let’s take a break.”

“But we didn’t get anything done,” complained Paul. He was originally excited when he’d found out the class would be doing a “mock United Nations.” But what had occurred so far had just been an exercise in frustration.

“Actually, Paul, that was the point,” explained Mr. Lemon. “In the world outside this classroom, every country is looking out for its own interests, trying to see how it can become more prosperous and powerful.”

“But how does the real U.N. get anything done?” asked another student.

“Well, we’ll talk about that later,” Mr. Lemon promised. “I’ve got some refreshments for us to enjoy. Afterward, you’ll receive new notecards to look over and we’ll see what we can do about our ‘trade problems.’”

The kids formed a quick line for the refreshments. Paul grabbed a “Lemon lemon square” and some “Lemon

lemonade.” He was still upset about the mock U.N. He thought he’d be able to accomplish the goals on his card pretty easily, but everyone else’s goals conflicted with his! He plopped down at his desk and stared straight ahead.

Dee came and stood beside her friend. She munched on a “U.N. onion cracker” and looked carefully at Paul. She could see he was upset.

“Being an ambassador is frustrating!” he complained. “Each representative only cares about him- or herself!”

Dee sipped her “Pacific Rim punch” and remained silent.

“All these countries just want more and more power,” Paul said. “I’m sure it’s the same for my country, too. I want to represent something I truly believe in. I want to make a difference.”

Dee shuffled her feet and looked at the floor.

“I guess I do represent something, now that I think about it,” Paul realized. “I represent God and His kingdom. God cares about everyone! And one day His kingdom will rule forever!”

Dee drank some more punch and finished her cracker.

“All the nations might be after power now, but in the future they will be swept away, vanquished by God’s kingdom,” said Paul through a mouthful of lemon square. “Until that day comes, I want to be a good ambassador for the Lord. I need to represent God truthfully, so people will see Him the way I do.”

Dee smiled and opened her mouth. Before she could say anything, Paul jumped up.

“Thanks, Dee! I feel much better! I’m going to get my new notecards from Mr. Lemon so I can prepare. I want to do well on the next phase of our mock U.N.”

As Paul walked away, Dee shook her head and called out softly, “Nice taking to ya.”