

# t<sub>he</sub> Chalkboard

A Quarterly Publication of Children's Ministries  
Zion Assembly Church of God



## Tell the Story

The chorus from a familiar hymn says: "I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme in glory to tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love." As the song implies, the story of Jesus is old. It is also true that the Bible is an ancient book. However, the age of the book in no way implies that it is stale and outdated. On the contrary, the stories are just as fresh and powerful today as the day and time in which they occurred. The Bible is filled with rich imagery of faithful men and women who accomplished great feats under the power of the true and living God. Since God has not changed, the ancient collection of stories remains relevant to every generation. Psalm 145:4 says: "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts." It is our responsibility, as children's ministers, teachers, and parents, to teach God's Word to our children. We must personally treasure and endear the Scriptures to be capable of bringing it alive for our listeners.

This old, old story can be retold for today's children by using fresh, creative teaching techniques. Let's take a closer look at one particular method called "Story Bag." This approach provides a tangible way for children to see, touch, hear, smell, and taste the key elements from a Bible story. A story bag can be made by using a pillowcase, large purse, old suitcase, or a large paper bag. Before the class session, fill the bag or container with items related to the story you have chosen to tell. Begin the lesson by reading or paraphrasing the Bible story aloud to the students. Have one child to remove an item from the bag and exhibit it to the class. Allow the students to pass the object around from one student to the next. As each child touches and handles the item, his five senses will be stimulated. Discuss with the students how each piece relates to the story. Continue until all the pieces are displayed, involving a different student each time. Here is an example. To present the story of Abraham, the "story bag" might be filled with items used on

vacation, such as: airplane tickets, clothing, toothbrush, teddy bear, blanket, pillow, cell phone, and snacks. As each item is pulled from the bag, children will naturally want to know how Abraham could have possibly traveled without an airplane or cell phone. Abraham's story of uprooting his family to follow God will connect with any child who has ever had to move to a new home or school.

Children will never tire of hearing a familiar story when it is presented in a new and exciting way. Story bags are a fresh and fun approach to help the Bible relate to today's children. Older children would enjoy bringing in items from home to add to the bag. Or better yet, send a paper bag home with each student which he can fill with objects for the next week's lesson. The story bag method makes something that is old, new again. So go ahead, tell the story.

### *Sample "Story Bag" Ideas:*

**Daniel:** doll; toy lion; crown; angel halo; shiny fabric  
**David:** sling; five smooth stones; harp; stuffed sheep; armor  
**Esther:** crown; cape; robe; official document; party food  
**Gideon:** trumpet or horn; jar; flashlight or glow sticks  
**Jonah:** doll; whale; boat; compass; sand; fish-shaped crackers  
**Joseph:** colorful robe; coins; bags of oatmeal; crown; cape  
**Joshua:** horns; building blocks; armor  
**Noah:** toy boat/wooden sticks/rainbow/seven paper dolls  
**Peter:** toy boat; fishing pole; net; water; baked fish sticks  
**Zaccheus:** little doll; tree; coins; measuring tape

## *Chalk Talk:*

Let's talk. I would enjoy hearing from you. If you use this story bag teaching method in your children's ministry, please let me know how it works. E-mail me at [childrensministries@zionassemblychurchofgod.com](mailto:childrensministries@zionassemblychurchofgod.com)  
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