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The Biggest Story: How The Snake Crusher Brings Us Back To The Garden



Synopsis

Once upon a time there lived a man and a woman. They were the happiest people on the planet. True, they were the only people on the planet, but they were still terrifically happy. Unfortunately, things didn't stay happy and wonderful for long . . . The Bible is full of exciting stories that fill children with awe and wonder. But kids need to know how all those classic stories connect to Scripture's overarching message about God's glorious plan to redeem his rebellious people. In *The Biggest Story*, Kevin DeYoung—a best-selling author and father of six—leads kids and parents alike on an exciting journey through the Bible, connecting the dots from the garden of Eden to Christ's death on the cross to the new heaven and new earth. With powerful illustrations by award-winning artist Don Clark, this imaginative retelling of the Bible's core message—how the Snake Crusher brings us back to the garden—will draw children into the biblical story, teaching them that God's promises are even bigger and better than we think.
 Â Â Ages 5-8 (read to me) Ages 8-11 (read to myself)

Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

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Premium Quality

Features a durable hardcover format, dust jacket, premium sewn binding, and ribbon marker.

Vibrant Illustrations Over 100 full-color illustrations created by award-winning artist Don Clark on high quality paper. Note to Parents Includes a parents' guide to help families

discuss what they're reading together. 10 Accessible Chapters Walk with your family through the story of the Bible in ten accessible chapters, helping them see God's plan from Genesis to Revelation.

Author Kevin DeYoung (M.Div., Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) is senior pastor at University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan. He blogs at the Gospel Coalition and has authored or coauthored numerous well-known books such as *Just Do Something*, *The Hole in Our Holiness*, *Taking God At His Word*, and *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?*, as well as the award-winning books *Why We're Not Emergent*, *Why We Love the Church* (with Ted Kluck), and *Crazy Busy*.

Illustrator Don Clark is an artist and the cofounder of Invisible Creature, a widely respected and award-winning design studio based in Seattle, Washington. Invisible Creature was formed in early 2006 with his brother Ryan. He has worked with clients such as Target, LEGO, WIRED magazine, Nike, Adobe, Xbox, The New York Times, and more. Invisible Creature also designs and curates their own line of products for both children and adults. Their products can be found in stores such as Barneys New York, Walker Art Center, Nordstrom, San Francisco Museum of Art, Super7, Whole Foods, and more. Additionally, Invisible Creature's client list reads like a veritable who's-who of the music world, including Foo Fighters, Kendrick Lamar, Chris Cornell, Wolfmother, Alice in Chains, and countless others. In 2008, Invisible Creature received their fourth consecutive Grammy nomination for packaging design. Don's love for mid-century design and illustration lays the groundwork for Invisible Creature's aesthetic, although his range reaches far beyond any one, specific style. He lives with his wife and their 3 children on a ranch 30 minutes southeast of Seattle.

Endorsements

Rick Warren "I love what Kevin has done here! I'm buying a copy for each of my grandkids."

Rick Warren, New York Times best-selling author, *The Purpose Driven Life*;
Pastor, Saddleback Church

Matt & Lauren Chandler "The Biggest Story is a delight to the eyes, ears, and hearts of its readers. With rich illustrations and even richer text, the biggest and best story is presented in all of its vivid colors—every dark shade and every bright tone. From our family to yours, we wholeheartedly commend this book!"

Matt and Lauren Chandler, Lead Pastor, The Village Church, Dallas, Texas; and

his wife Lauren, writer; speaker; singer Ann Voskamp “Rarely has one heard The Greatest Story ever told like this with such winsome grace and compelling truth. Once we began, we couldn’t stop reading the The Biggest Story aloud to our family, all in one sitting. Laughed, stilled, and wept by the last line the moving glory of His amazing grace. Ann Voskamp, New York Times, best-selling author, One Thousand Gifts Randy Alcorn “Kevin DeYoung has written a delightful book that both young and old will enjoy. The result is magnificent and memorable. Randy Alcorn, Founder and Director, Eternal Perspectives Ministries

“I love what Kevin has done here! I’m buying a copy for each of my grandkids. Rick Warren, #1 New York Times best-selling author, The Purpose Driven Life; Pastor, Saddleback Church “The Biggest Story is a delight to the eyes, ears, and hearts of its readers. With rich illustrations and even richer text, the biggest and best story is presented in all of its vivid colors every dark shade and every bright tone. Parent and child alike will feel the ache of the fallenness of human nature and the comfort of an always-faithful God. From our family to yours, we wholeheartedly commend this book! Matt and Lauren Chandler, Lead Pastor, The Village Church, Dallas, Texas; President, Acts 29 Church Planting Network; and his wife Lauren, writer; speaker; singer “Kevin DeYoung has written a delightful book that both young and old will enjoy. The Biggest Story is a small treatment of a huge theme God’s drama of redemption, centered on Jesus Christ. Kevin’s words are fresh, engaging, playful, and biblical. Many Bible storybooks offer pearls without a string. This one puts the pearls on a string the right one. The result is magnificent and memorable. Randy Alcorn, Founder and Director, Eternal Perspective Ministries; author, Heaven, The Treasure Principle, and The Ishbane Conspiracy “Rarely has one heard The Greatest Story ever told like this with such winsome grace and compelling truth. Once we began, we couldn’t stop reading the The Biggest Story aloud to our family, all in one sitting. Laughed, stilled, and wept by the last line the moving glory of His amazing grace. Ann Voskamp, New York Times best-selling author, One Thousand Gifts “So often, our kids hear individual stories from the Bible without fully understanding how these accounts are tied to the biggest story of Christ’s ultimate victory over sin. Kevin DeYoung has linked together the Bible stories that are familiar to children into one, enthralling volume. From the first page to the last, kids will come to

understand why Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension are truly at the center of all of history.

• Jim Daly, President, Focus on the Family "Have you ever wanted to hug a book? This is how I felt after reading *The Biggest Story*. It awakened childlike wonder in this grandmother's heart. The charming words and illustrations creatively tell the biggest and best story—the drama of redemption in Christ.

• Susan Hunt, former Director of Women's Ministries, PCA; coauthor, *Women's Ministry in the Local Church* "In *The Biggest Story*, Kevin DeYoung masterfully tells the story of man's inability to be good enough and God's enduring faithfulness to his promise to bring us back to paradise. This is the big picture, not the typical moralistic way of telling the Bible's story. This book is engaging and wonderfully illustrated; your kids will want sit on your lap and have you read it again and again.

• Tedd Tripp, Pastor; international conference speaker; author, *Shepherding a Child's Heart* "Besides the Bible, this is exactly the kind of book that I love to give as a gift. All day long, from infancy to adulthood, we are all invited to participate in different stories—we wear this product, use this technology, vote this way, go to this school, follow this leader. What could be more important than teaching our children the Big Story? Kevin's retelling of the Serpent-Crusher's conquest will be beloved by parents and children alike.

• Gloria Furman, author, *The Pastor's Wife*; *Missional Motherhood*; and *Alive in Him* "The *Biggest Story* is a family worship favorite around our household. The kids love hearing the story of Scripture read as one continuous adventure. From toddlers to adults, this book teaches important truths about God, his Word, and the history of his work in the world.

• David and Heather Platt, president, International Mission Board; author, *Radical*; and his wife, Heather Platt "This book is really wonderfully done. *The Biggest Story* is a Bible survey, a biblical/theological/historical/redemptive review of the great theme of Scripture, and all done for little kids. The illustrations by Don Clark are quite festive, and invite examination. There is something about this book—it has drawing power. Set it out on the coffee table, and watch people go right to it."

• Douglas Wilson, Senior Fellow of Theology, New St. Andrews College; Pastor, Christ Church, Moscow, Idaho

Kevin DeYoung (MDiv, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) is the senior pastor at Christ Covenant Church in Matthews, North Carolina. He serves as a council member at the Gospel Coalition and blogs at DeYoung, Restless, and Reformed. He is assistant professor of systematic theology at Reformed Theological Seminary (Charlotte) and a PhD candidate at the University of Leicester. He is the author of several books, including *Just Do Something*; *Crazy Busy*; and *The*

Biggest Story. Kevin and his wife, Trisha, have seven children. Don Clark is an artist and the cofounder of Invisible Creature, a widely respected and award-winning design studio based in Seattle, Washington. He has worked with clients such as Target, LEGO, WIRED magazine, Nike, Adobe, Xbox, The New York Times, and more. Don lives with his wife and their three children on a ranch thirty minutes southeast of Seattle.

This is a children's book for grown-ups. It is a synopsis, or Cliffs Notes, of the whole bible. "No child could possibly grasp the true depth here", was my initial thought upon reading it. Then I remembered the words of Ralph Venning, a Puritan from the 1600's, who wrote about scripture, "It is deep enough for an elephant to swim in, yet shallow enough for a lamb to wade in." Yes! Children can and will wade happily in this book! They will be captured by the illustration, and enjoy reading again the stories they already know. Also, they will come away from it understanding that the bible is one Big Story - not just a collection of little ones. And adults? Reminded here of the amazing power and "God-ness" of God, they may well swim in the biblical sea of sheer grace. Here are a few of my favorite quotes: "God kept his promises. He blessed the whole lot of them despite themselves." "God rounded up Moses to deliver his people - but in reality, God did all the work." "People just couldn't get things right. Thankfully, God was still not done saving his people." "It was God's way of saying, 'I'll take care of the rescuing. Just trust me.'" "This time God was going to do everything himself, to make sure Abraham got his blessing." "Our story is the story of God doing what we can't, in order to make up for us doing what we shouldn't." "God kicks his own people out of Paradise and then does whatever it takes to bring them back again." "The Snake Crusher is coming back again to wipe away all the bad guys and wipe away every tear. Truly this is the Best Story ever!

Find any excuse you can to purchase "The Biggest Story" for yourself and everyone you know. "The Biggest Story" is marketed as a children's storybook but it really "leads kids AND parents alike on an exciting journey through the Bible, connecting the dots from the garden of Eden to Christ's death on the cross to the new heaven and new earth." as stated on the fly-leaf. The text focuses on the overarching theme of God's salvation plan as revealed throughout the Bible. This is not the storybook to teach the details of the various Bible stories (how many animals boarded the Ark, where did God give the commandments, etc.) but some of the details can be spotted in the artwork throughout the book (for example the golden calf and the giant Goliath). I love how many of the important stories are summarized in just a few words. An example from part of one page (a page that happens to actually have a fair amount of text): "God sent prophets (but Israel didn't listen). God

provided priests (but the priests didn't know how to be holy). Later, God gave them kings (but the kings were a royal pain). Israel was a mess. "There truly is something for everyone in this storybook and you (and your kids) will want to read it over and over.

This book is gorgeous and provides an excellent summary of the overall message of the Bible, that man is separated from God and must be reconciled to Him and evil defeated. It captured my kids' (4 and 3) attention immediately, and we read through the whole thing in one sitting as soon as we had realized it arrived on our doorstep. Firstly, this definitely isn't a story for kids who don't already know the Bible or the Gospel. It's not to be taken as the full gospel by itself, because I feel like there are too many holes. But for children who are familiar with the Bible stories already, this is riveting. Some pros and cons...PROS:- The illustrations are stunning, vivid, and clever in the way they portray the content.- The book takes complicated stories and distills them down into a summary that makes sense and is not long-winded. It makes the story of the Bible clear and easy to take in.- The 10 chapters are short, so it can be read in one sitting if you wish, or broken up into smaller chunks.- For those who avoid pictures of Jesus, this book does not have any - just representations, like a foot on sand, or an outlined figure with a crown of thorns.CONS:- Almost all of the people in the book are bearded men. I recognize that the bulk of Biblical characters are men, but as a woman I think it would have been nice to see more women represented in the art. (The angel with long vivid pink hair is pretty, though!) There ARE more women when you get to the New Testament section, which seems fitting.- I was a little disappointed with the prose, as I was expecting a very lyrical tone, but the prose comes across as more colloquial ("It didn't take long... for Noah to do some pretty bad stuff himself.") It reads like someone telling the story of the Bible verbally, which isn't a BAD thing, and is clever at times - but it wasn't what I expected.- The story gets a little more complicated at the point of the Gospel, less easy for younger children to understand. In a couple of spots there's more emphasis on being clever and unique than being readily understandable. ("We live in the beginning of the end of the story that we are still in the middle of"....what?) One reviewer commented that the snake is never actually crushed in the story. You DO see it severed in two on the back cover, and the text explains that one day the Snake Crusher is coming back again to destroy the bad guys once and for all (which is true...after all, Satan is still at work right now). I did have to explain this to my kids again afterward, so perhaps it is not too clear in the text. Again, I don't think this stands alone, but should be supplementary to actual Scripture, good teaching, and good Bible storybooks. Taken in that way, this book is beautiful, and a great addition to a family library, for kids 4-5 and up - and adults too!

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