

DAY 1: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Now we're on our third and most important test. Just like we talked about fake money, there are also fake, or counterfeit, gods. These fake gods aren't anything new. They're talked about in the Bible. These gods aren't real because there's only one true God. Let's shout together, "One true God!" *Do so.* But people worship or treasure fake gods that can come in all kinds of forms, like trees or cows or statues or even other people, like sports stars or movie stars. Remember, the Bible tells us there's only one God to worship, or treasure—and that's the one true God. Let's have our puppet pal, Charlie, help us learn about a fake god named Baal here in the Bible (*point to 1 Kings 18*). As he does, you'll draw along with me. We'll pass out supplies and begin.

The teacher will be doing some talking and some simple drawing during this time. Use a large dry-erase board or piece of poster board/big paper. If you aren't able to use a puppet, adapt to Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 doing this. Give each child a 1 KINGS 18 DRAWING SHEET on a clipboard and a marker. Have them draw what you draw as the account is told.

Share this with excitement and animation.

Teacher: Our puppet's name is Charlie. Let's all call for him (her). *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up with a disguise on, looking around furtively.*

Teacher: Hey, what's going on? Who are you?

Puppet: *Say in a whisper:* I'm your friend Charlie, but . . . (*look around*) my code name is Agent Lookout.

Teacher: Oh, hi there, Agent Lookout. Are you always on the lookout for bad guys?

Puppet: I am! I like to be on the lookout for anything bad, and that includes fake gods. Want to hear about one from the Bible?

Teacher: I sure do!

Puppet: Okay, listen up. About 3,000 years ago, there was a man of God (a prophet) named Elijah who lived in the land of Israel.

Teacher: I know about Elijah! The Lord told him to go and visit the king of Israel, named Ahab. *The teacher draws a crown and the cadets draw one in box 1, while the puppet continues.*

Puppet: Ahab was a wicked king. He believed in a fake god named Baal instead of believing in the one true God of the Bible. So God gave Elijah an important message for the king. Elijah told Ahab he had been doing wrong because he was worshipping the fake god, Baal.

Teacher: Then Elijah challenged Ahab to a contest. He told Ahab to get all the people in Israel and have them meet at Mount Carmel, a mountain nearby. *Draw a mountain (box 2 for the cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: Elijah told Ahab to bring all the men who were prophets of Baal with him, which numbered 450 men! It was going to be Elijah, all by himself, against the prophets of Baal—all 450 of them! So Ahab sent word throughout his kingdom and all 450 prophets of Baal came to Mount Carmel.

Teacher: Elijah got up and told them about the contest. He told them to get two bulls—one for Elijah and one for them. He told them to put their bull on a pile of wood, and he would put his bull on a pile of wood. *Draw a pile of wood (box 3 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: Usually when people back then put an animal on a pile of wood, they would light the wood and start a fire to burn it up. But this time, Elijah told them not to set the wood on fire. Instead, he said, “Call on your god Baal.”

Teacher: *Draw a guy calling (box 4 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: “If he is really a god, he can send fire down to burn up your bull. Then I will call on my God—the Lord. If he really is the one true God, he will send fire down to burn up my bull. We’ll see who is the one true God!” All the people agreed to this contest.

Teacher: The prophets of Baal went first. They built an altar with stones, got their bull, and put it on the wood. Then they called on Baal for hours! But no one answered and nothing happened. *Draw a circle with a line through it (box 5 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: So they shouted even louder and danced around their altar. They kept this up all day until it was evening, but no one answered and nothing happened.

Teacher: Now it was Elijah’s turn. He built an altar and put the wood on top with his bull. Then he did something different. Elijah dug a ditch all around the altar, and he filled it with water. Then he poured water all over the bull and the wood! *Draw water (box 6 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: When you want something to catch on fire, do you normally soak it with water first? No! But that’s what Elijah did. He got that bull wet and the ground all around it wet.

Teacher: Then he soaked it again. And then he soaked it a third time! *Draw 1–2–3 (box 7 for cadets).*

Puppet: By this time, the water had completely filled the ditch and was running all over the place.

Teacher: Why do you think he did that? *Take responses.* Yes, he was trying to show how powerful the one true God really was. He wanted them to see that not only could his God burn up the bull but the one true God could even burn up the bull if it was soaking wet! Do you think God did it? *Take responses.* Let's keep going to find out! *Draw Elijah calling (box 8 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: Elijah stood in front of everyone and said, "God, I've done what you asked me. Now show these people that you are the one true God." Guess what happened? The Lord God sent fire down!

Teacher: *Draw fire (box 9 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: It burned up that soaking wet bull, and the soaking wet wood, and even the wet stones and the wet ground! It also licked up all the water that was in the ditch! When everyone saw this, they fell down and cried out, "The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!"

Teacher: *Draw the "No Baal" symbol (box 10 for cadets) as the puppet continues.*

Puppet: They realized their god, Baal, was a fake. He wasn't a god at all! He didn't even exist. There is only one true God in the whole wide world—the God of the Bible.

Teacher: *Show the ELIJAH POSTER and answer the question.* But did you know that counterfeit (fake) gods aren't just from Bible times? Even today, people believe in many counterfeit gods. In fact, every person on the planet has a view of God, or what they believe about him. It may be a correct view, or it may be a counterfeit view, but it's still a view of god. Of course, it's critical for all Truth Mission Force cadets to have the correct view of God, because what we think about God decides both how we live our lives now and where we'll spend eternity (forever). It's a big deal to get our view of God right. Let's say goodbye to Charlie, then talk more about this.

DAY 2: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Let's call for Charlie and see if he's pretending to be a secret agent again today. *Call for him together.*

Puppet: *Come up with the little container taped to your hand.*

Teacher: Hi Charlie! Looks like Agent Lookout is on the lookout again!

Puppet: I sure am. Today, I'm on the lookout for some fingerprints to see if I can catch a bad guy.

Teacher: Where do you think the fingerprints might be?

Puppet: Maybe in this room. *Show little case.* I have my "Dusting for Fingerprints Kit" right here, and I'm going to see if I can find any fingerprints on the book or the lamp or the table.

Teacher: Well, I hope you do, Agent Lookout. You know, we've talked about Jesus' baptism and been on the lookout today for the one God who is in three persons.

Puppet: How can someone be one and three at the same time?

Teacher: It's a bit of a mystery, but we know it's true.

Puppet: How do you know?

Teacher: Because the Bible tells us so. And if the Bible says it, that settles it! God wrote the Bible, and he can't lie. He always tells the truth. He is one God in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Puppet: That seems like a mystery to me! And spies always like to solve mysteries!

Teacher: Sorry, Agent Lookout, but this is one mystery that's too big for even the best spies to solve. You see, God is so big and so amazing and so incredible, we can never completely know and understand how everything about him works. But that's where our trust in him comes in. He gave us his Word—the Bible—so we trust his Word and know whatever it says is true.

Puppet: One God, three persons. A mystery.

Teacher: Yes, a really cool mystery! I'm so thankful for each—God our Father, Jesus our rescuer, and the Holy Spirit our helper and comforter. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit—the Trinity—are the one true God.

Puppet: I've heard a lot about each member of the Trinity. For instance, I know Jesus is the one who came to earth.

Teacher: Jesus is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity. This important part of Christianity makes it unique. What we believe about Jesus is super important. No other view of God believes Jesus is God the Son *and* a member of the Trinity. But Jesus identifies himself as God in verses like John 10:30, John 14:9, John 1:1,

and John 1:14 (*read one or more of these*) and in his many “I am” statements, like “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:14).

Puppet: What do the fake views of God say about Jesus?

Teacher: This is a key piece of evidence! Some say he is *a* god but not *the* God.

Some say he is just a man—a good, moral person who always tried to do right, or a teller of the future—a prophet—but not God.

Puppet: But what does Jesus say about himself?

Teacher: He says he *is* God. A good, moral person who isn’t God wouldn’t say that he is God because that would not be right; it would be lying. So Jesus can’t be just a good, moral person. Still others believe that Jesus is God, but they don’t believe that he is the only way to eternal life. They think they have to work hard to get to heaven. But that’s not true. Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead so all those who repent of their sins (turn away from sin) and believe in him can have eternal life.

Puppet: How do people come up with all these wrong ideas of God?

Teacher: Because they aren’t believing or following the Bible. It’s the best place—the source—to go to!

Puppet: Well, thanks for letting me know all that. Now I’m off to find some fingerprints. See you later! *Exit.*

Teacher: See you later, Charlie—I mean, Agent Lookout! Okay, cadets, let’s review a bit as we decode today’s cipher then talk about our animal pal. *Use the DAY 2 CIPHER POSTER with the answer folded up and see if they can figure out the cipher. Then reveal the answer.*

DAY 3: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: I've got a rhyme I want to teach Charlie and all of you. Let's see if he's around. Charlie! *Call him with the cadets.*

Puppet: *Pop up.* Hello! You called?

Teacher: Hey, Charlie, it's rhyme time. Is that a 10-4, good buddy?

Puppet: Yup, 10-4!

Teacher: Okay, repeat after me, everyone. One God, three persons. *Point up to God, then put up three fingers.*

Puppet: *Puppet and cadets say and do the motions as the teacher repeats them.* One God, three persons.

Teacher: Good! Okay, here's the next part. Big and strong, never does wrong. *Flex muscles, then shake head and hands "no."*

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* Big and strong, never does wrong.

Teacher: Let's put all that together.

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* One God, three persons, big and strong, never does wrong.

Teacher: Okay, next we say: Loves you and cares too. *Cross hands over heart, then hug yourself.*

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* Loves you and cares too.

Teacher: Let's try all that together.

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* One God, three persons, big and strong, never does wrong, loves you, and cares too.

Teacher: Now this: Came to earth with a special birth. *Move arms down from heaven to earth and rock a baby.*

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* Came to earth with a special birth.

Teacher: Let's try all that together.

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* One God, three persons, big and strong, never does wrong, loves you, and cares too. Came to earth with a special birth.

Teacher: Okay, we're getting close to the end. The next part is: Died in our place because of grace. *Lower head and put arms straight out to the sides.*

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* Died in our place because of grace.

Teacher: Let's try all that together.

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* One God, three persons, big and strong, never does wrong, loves you, and cares too. Came to earth with a special birth. Died in our place because of grace.

Teacher: Then this: Rose again, new life begins. *Move arms up to heaven.*

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* Rose again, new life begins.

Teacher: Let's try all that together.

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* One God, three persons, big and strong, never does wrong, loves you, and cares too. Came to earth with a special birth. Died in our place because of grace. Rose again, new life begins.

Teacher: Okay, here's our very last line: So admit, believe, and forever receive. *Point to mouth, point to heart, then make praying hands.*

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* So admit, believe, and forever receive.

Teacher: Now let's try the whole thing all together!

Puppet: *Say and do the motions with the teacher.* One God, three persons, big and strong, never does wrong, loves you, and cares too. Came to earth with a special birth. Died in our place because of grace. Rose again, new life begins. So admit, believe, and forever receive.

Teacher: That was awesome! Thanks, Charlie and cadets. I hope each of you has admitted to God that you sin, believed in him, and asked to forever receive Jesus as your rescuer. Now let's say bye to Charlie, then we'll take a look at our poster (*show DAY 3 CIPHER POSTER*) and see if we can figure out the code. It has to do with what we just said. *Do so.*

DAY 4: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Let's call for Charlie—Agent Lookout—to talk more about the prodigal son story we just heard. *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up with a small suitcase.*

Teacher: What's going on? Why do you have a suitcase?

Puppet: I just got a bunch of money from my dad—like, tons!—and I want to go on a trip.

Teacher: Is your dad going with you?

Puppet: No, just me. He's sad that I want to leave and go spend all my money.

Teacher: That kind of reminds me of the prodigal son and his father.

Puppet: The who?

Teacher: The prodigal son. He received some money too, and he left his father and went and wasted all of it. But thankfully, he realized he had been foolish and came back to his father.

Puppet: Was his dad mad at him?

Teacher: No. His dad was gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and loving.

Puppet: What's *gracious* mean? What's *merciful* mean? What's *slow to anger* mean?

Teacher: Gracious means the father gave his son good gifts he *didn't* deserve. For instance, he threw him a big celebration and gave him the most special robe and shoes to wear even though he didn't deserve it. And merciful means sort of the opposite—the father *didn't* give his son the punishment he *did* deserve for wasting all that money. Slow to anger means the father was patient. He waited for his son to return and gave him a second chance.

Puppet: It seems like the father was a really good and loving father.

Teacher: He was. And guess what?

Puppet: What?

Teacher: We are like the prodigal son—we sin and make bad choices. God is like the father. He is gracious and gives us good things even though we don't deserve them. And God is merciful—he *doesn't* give us the punishment we *do* deserve. He is slow to anger and patient with us.

Puppet: God sure is a loving and good Father.

Teacher: He sure is. Just like the father of the prodigal son came running to hug him, I like to picture God with his arms wide open, ready to give me a big hug. Do

you see God as this kind of Father to you? And even though I sin, God loves me and will forgive me if I ask. He wants each and every one of us to be part of his family. But we have to want to be part of God's family, and we have to ask God.

Puppet: I hope each boy and girl here is part of God's family.

Teacher: I do too! Following God is more important than anything else. Thanks, Agent Lookout, for talking with us today. Let's say bye to Agent Lookout. *Do so.*
Show the DAY 4 CIPHER POSTER and figure out the answer.

DAY 5: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Let's call for Charlie. *Do so, and have Charlie come up.* Hey, what's that you're wearing, Charlie—I mean, Agent Lookout?

Puppet: It's my exercise sweatband. I've been working out.

Teacher: How come?

Puppet: Well, I heard you talking about loving the Lord with all your heart and soul and mind and strength, so I decided to do some strength training exercises.

Teacher: Great! If you're able to, it's awesome to take good care of your body so you can serve God with it.

Puppet: Yeah, and I want to love him with my heart and soul and mind too. But I don't really know what that means.

Teacher: Well, even if your body isn't strong, you can still love the Lord. When the Bible tells you to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, it's really telling you to love God with all of you. Love the one and only God with everything you've got.

Puppet: How can I do that in real life?

Teacher: Let's talk about loving him with all your heart. That means to treasure and value God. How? Give him your time and attention. Believe every word in the Bible. Trust him. Praise him by singing. Those are just a couple of ways you can love him with all your heart.

Puppet: What about with my soul? I don't even know what my soul is.

Teacher: Your soul is the part of you that decides things. The choices you make and your decisions come from your soul. It's not something you can see, like an elbow or a toe, but it's very important.

Puppet: So if I decide to obey my mom, that's coming from my soul?

Teacher: Right! Choosing to obey God and the rules he tells us to follow in the Bible is a way to love God with all your soul. Of course, you can't follow every rule perfectly. But God wants you to *want* to!

Puppet: How about loving God with all my mind? What's that mean?

Teacher: Your mind has to do with the things you're thinking about in your head. What are you focused on? Do you like to learn about God? Do you like to listen to his Word? Do you want to keep getting to know more and more about God? That's all part of loving God with your mind.

Puppet: So when I enjoy learning about God, that's a good thing.

Teacher: Yes, it is!

Puppet: And loving God with all my strength. Does that mean I should keep exercising?

Teacher: It's more than just exercising. Even a person who isn't able to exercise can love God with all his strength. This includes the actions you do. You may know lots about God, but are you obeying him and using your body to serve him? There are so many ways you can serve God, like helping a sick person, writing an older person a card, helping your teacher with a task, holding a door open for someone, or doing your chores to obey your parents. These are just a few of the kazillions of ways we can love God with our strength.

Puppet: I hope the cadets out there want to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength!

Teacher: I hope so too! God is the greatest, and he is worth following forever! Well, Charlie, I'm so glad we've gotten to talk with you this week. Keep being on the lookout for ways to love and serve the one true God!

Puppet: I will! Over and out, cadets.

Teacher: Let's say, "Over and out" to Charlie, everyone. *Do so.*