

Day 1: Lost to Found

Teacher: Can you help me call for Paddy? Here we go. *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up.*

Teacher: Hi there, Paddy.

Puppet: *Wave.* Top o' the mornin' (evenin') to ya!

Teacher: What have you been up to today?

Puppet: Well, I've been out in the fields trying to find a lost sheep.

Teacher: Oh no! That's baa-d!

Puppet: I know. I had a whole pasture full of sheep, and I had to leave them to go look for the one that wandered off.

Teacher: Did you find him?

Puppet: I sure did. He was down in the valley near the Emerald Crossing bridge.

Teacher: He'd still be lost if you hadn't found him.

Puppet: That's for sure.

Teacher: You know, that reminds me of a Bible lesson that talks about a lost sheep.

Puppet: Oh yeah?

Teacher: Yeah. Right here (*point to Luke 15:3-7*), it says there were 100 sheep and then 1 wandered off. The shepherd left the 99 and went to find the lost 1.

Puppet: I hope he found him.

Teacher: He did. Just like you found your sheep, the shepherd found his lost sheep.

Puppet: Then what happened?

Teacher: Everyone was so happy. It was a celebration. Let's do a happy dance! *Do so, making the puppet go crazy.*

Puppet: I'm so glad they found him!

Teacher: This reminds us that *we're* like sheep who are lost and wandering from our Good Shepherd, Jesus. We need to follow him.

Puppet: How do we follow Jesus?

Teacher: Remember how we said everyone sins (*Romans 3:23*)? Everyone does wrong things—everyone. *Uncover the word Admit on the GOSPEL POSTER.* God wants you to admit you do wrong things—admit you're a sinner. You need to tell him you don't obey all the time and you're sorry for it (*Mark 1:15*).

Puppet: Then what?

Teacher: *Uncover the word Believe on the GOSPEL POSTER.* Then you must believe what the Bible says—that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins (*Romans 10:9-10*). But then, he rose from the dead. This shows us God was pleased with his payment.

Puppet: Admit and believe. Anything else?

Teacher: *Uncover the words Forever Receive on the GOSPEL POSTER.* Yes. Forever receive Jesus by asking him to forgive you and make you part of his family. You aren't automatically part of God's

family. You aren't born belonging to the Good Shepherd. But you can become one of his sheep—one of his children—by admitting, believing, and forever receiving (*John 3:16*). If you do, you'll not only be part of your family here on earth, but you'll have God as your heavenly Father, and you'll be part of his family.

Puppet: I hope everyone here believes in Jesus and wants to be his child!

Teacher: I do too! If you want to be a child of God, make sure you talk to your leader or parents or me today.

Puppet: Admit, believe, forever receive!

Teacher: Yep! Well, bye for now, Paddy. See you tomorrow!

Day 2: Bible Basics

Teacher: *Have the kids help you call for Paddy to come up.*

Puppet: *Stay hidden and say: Just a minute! Teacher looks behind the hill, wondering what's taking so long, and then Paddy arrives.*

Teacher: Hey, what were you doing?

Puppet: Working on a puzzle.

Teacher: Fun! How many pieces?

Puppet: 40.

Teacher: That's a lot of pieces.

Puppet: Yeah, it is. It's gonna make a picture of the Bible when all the pieces are in place.

Teacher: *Reference the BIBLE BASICS POSTER as you go along through this script.* You know, that's cool because the Bible's kind of like a puzzle.

Puppet: I know it's a special book—the most special in the world—but what do you mean it's kind of like a puzzle?

Teacher: Well, the Bible isn't like any other book ever written because it was written by God!

Puppet: God? He wrote a book?

Teacher: Yep. He wrote the Bible.

Puppet: Did he get out a pen and write it?

Teacher: He chose some men and helped them know what to write. And of course, since God is perfect, his book is perfect and completely true. God can't lie, so every word is true. We can completely trust the Bible to lead and guide us through life.

Puppet: Kind of like how a shepherd or a border collie leads and guides the sheep?

Teacher: Right!

Puppet: But I still don't get how the Bible's like a puzzle.

Teacher: Well, God wrote the Bible over many, many years—1,500 years! That's a really long time.

Puppet: Wow! That is a long, loooong (*exaggerate*) time, all right!

Teacher: And the people God picked to write his words lived in different places, spoke different languages, and had different jobs.

Puppet: What kinds of jobs?

Teacher: Anything from fishermen to kings to doctors to shepherds! The Bible was written over a long period of time by people who didn't know each other or even speak the same language or live at the same time. Yet the Bible all goes together perfectly like a beautiful puzzle.

Puppet: It's comforting to know we can trust the Bible.

Teacher: It is. God's Word will never lead us the wrong way.

Puppet: I want to follow Jesus and do what he tells me so I can make right choices and walk down the right path.

Teacher: Yep, just as Psalm 23 says. Let God—through his Word—lead and guide you. Learn the Bible, love the Bible, and obey the Bible. Well, we’ve got to go, Paddy, but I hope you remember what we talked about today.

Puppet: For sure! I can trust the Bible completely, and I want to always treasure it! In fact, I’m going to go listen to it right now.

Teacher: That’s awesome! And kids, I hope you listen when you hear the Bible too. It’s God’s special words that lead and guide you through life!

Day 3: Think on Such Things

Teacher: Kids, help me call for Paddy. *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up shaking and hopping around.* Boy, am I glad to see you!

Teacher: Why? What happened?

Puppet: A huge spider just ran up my leg.

Teacher: Yikes! That's scary.

Puppet: Yeah, it is. But that's not as bad as some of the other things I'm scared of.

Teacher: Like what?

Puppet: Oh, I get scared and anxious of the dark and bad guys and monsters under the bed and being away from my parents and bad storms and having to get up on stage all by myself. You know, stuff like that.

Teacher: I understand that. We all feel scared sometimes, just like David did when Saul was chasing him. But did you know God talks to us in the Bible about what to do when we're scared?

Puppet: Really?

Teacher: Yep! He tells us right here (*show your Bible opened to Philippians 4:6-8*) to not be anxious, which means scared or worried, but instead to talk to God and thank him for his goodness to you. Then tell him what you're scared about.

Puppet: So I shouldn't spend time worrying, but instead I should pray to God?

Teacher: Right! Don't worry . . . just pray. *Show the PHILIPPIANS 4:6, 7 VERSE SHEETS and read all or part of the verses to the kids.*

Puppet: What else does it say in the Bible?

Teacher: It says God will help us go from being fearful to peaceful. He can give us peace, so we're not so afraid anymore, when we trust in him.

Puppet: Sounds like I need to talk to God more and let him know about my fears.

Teacher: Yes, we all do. And we also need to think about God more.

Puppet: How does that help?

Teacher: *Show the PHILIPPIANS 4:8 VERSE SHEET.* The Bible says to think about things that are true and lovely and good. Instead of thinking over and over about scary stuff, think about how good and kind and loving God is.

Puppet: So I shouldn't keep thinking about monsters under my bed when I'm in the dark?

Teacher: Nope! When scary thoughts pop into your head, start thinking about how great God is and all the things you can thank him (praise him) for.

Puppet: How do you do that?

Teacher: Let's say you get in bed and it's dark and you start to get scared.

Puppet: *Shudder.* Ooo . . . creepy.

Teacher: So start talking to God! Tell him some good things you're thankful for, like the yummy food you ate today and the hugs you got and the fun you had and anything else good you can think of.

Puppet: Today I had pizza—yum!—*and* I had fun running around in the yard with my dog.

Teacher: Terrific! Think about those good things and thank God for them! And think about Jesus, the Good Shepherd himself. He's right there with you in that dark bedroom. In fact, he's always with you, wherever you are.

Puppet: That's comforting to know you're not ever really alone.

Teacher: God's always with his children. So remember—don't worry, just pray. And think on good things and the Good Shepherd. And one other thing . . . it helps if we think of others, too, and how we can help them and pray for them.

Puppet: I will. I'm going to go think of lots of good things I can thank God for today.

Teacher: That's fantastic! And if you get anxious tomorrow, think about God and good things again. Ad do it again the next day . . . and the next . . . and the next. Always go to God for help. Well, we'll see you tomorrow. Let's say bye to Paddy, everyone. *Do so.*

Day 4: God's Goodness

Teacher: Boys and girls, help me call for Paddy. *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up with an empty cup that supposedly had popcorn in it. Be mumbling and grumbling about it all falling out.*

Teacher: Whoa! Whoa! What's going on here?

Puppet: Well, I wanted some popcorn. I wanted *a mountain* of popcorn. So I filled my cup to overflowing.

Teacher: How high was it? Like this? *Puppet indicates even more. This? Keep getting higher.* Well, that sure was overflowing! But you know, that reminds me of Psalm 23.

Puppet: *Say incredulously.* Psalm 23 talks about *popcorn*?

Teacher: No, it talks about our cup overflowing.

Puppet: Why would it say that?

Teacher: Because it's showing us that God not only provides good things for us, but he gives us *overflowing* goodness.

Puppet: But don't people go through hard times sometimes? It doesn't feel good then.

Teacher: This verse doesn't mean we never have a hard time. If we live on this planet, we *will* have hard times once in a while.

Puppet: Then how does that work?

Teacher: Well, even when we go through hard times or have enemies or hard people in our life, God is still God, and God is still good. And as long as we're his children, we have God. That's the best *goodness* we can ever have.

Puppet: You mean it's like that prayer that says: God is great; God is good; Let us thank him for our food?

Teacher: Yes. God *is* great and God *is* good. And God *is* kind. And God *is* gentle. And God *is* caring. And God *is* with us. And . . .

Puppet: You could probably go on forever telling how great God is!

Teacher: I could because God is everything good. And he shares his goodness with us. Sometimes it's in wonderful things he gives us, like food, a bed, and a pet. And besides those good things, anyone who's part of God's family has the Lord himself for his very own.

Puppet: Being a child of God must be the best gift God can give us.

Teacher: It is! *Review the gospel here if time.*

Puppet: But I have a question: Is it always God who gives us good things, or is it sometimes "good luck"?

Teacher: It's always God. There's no such thing as luck!

Puppet: But what about pots of gold at the end of rainbows? And lucky horseshoes? And wishing wells?

Teacher: There are lots of things we can enjoy just for fun like these. *Show the "GOOD LUCK" OR GOOD GOD? POSTER and point out the pictures.* But these are all just pretend. If we find a four-leaf clover or make a wish when we throw a penny in the wishing well or kiss the Blarney Stone—it's lots of

fun, but we're not going to get "good luck." God is in control of everything, and *he* is the giver of all good things.

Puppet: Good to know! But even with all those good gifts God gives us, it's still so easy to grumble about stuff, like spilling all my popcorn.

Teacher: You can either be on the complain train or have an attitude of gratitude (thankfulness). It all depends on what you think about. God tells us to think about whatever is lovely and good and beautiful and true—not about stuff that bothers us and makes us upset.

Puppet: It sure is easy to think about what bugs me, though.

Teacher: It is. But try to start thinking about the goodness of *God* rather than the things of *life* that bug us.

Puppet: Gotcha! That's good to remember. I will start thinking more about God!

Teacher: Well, it's time to move on, so maybe you can go make yourself some more popcorn.

Puppet: I think I'll do that. And I'll thank God for it too.

Teacher: Sounds good, Paddy. See you tomorrow. Let's say bye, everyone. *Do so.*

Day 5: Promise Keeper

Teacher: *Have everyone help you call for Paddy.*

Puppet: *Come up with a block taped to one hand.*

Teacher: Looks like you've got a building block there.

Puppet: Yeah, I was just gathering my blocks to see if I had enough to build a house.

Teacher: That sounds like King David.

Puppet: You mean the guy who wrote Psalm 23?

Teacher: Yep, the same one.

Puppet: Did he want to build a house out of blocks?

Teacher: Actually, he wanted to build a real house—a house for the Lord. It was going to be a really special place for God and his people.

Puppet: Like a church?

Teacher: Kind of. It was called a temple. *Uncover the first picture on the LORD'S HOUSE POSTER.* David wanted to build this special place for God, but God told him just to gather all the supplies and then his son, Solomon, would actually build it.

Puppet: Is that what happened?

Teacher: Yep! David got everything ready, and Solomon built God's house, the temple. So when David was writing Psalm 23:6, he was probably thinking about that.

Puppet: After the goodness and mercy part, it does say, "I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Teacher: Right! After Solomon built it, there was a house of the Lord here on earth. But something that's cool is . . . there's even *another* house of the Lord. *Show the second half of the LORD'S HOUSE POSTER.*

Puppet: Where is it?

Teacher: It's in heaven. When the psalm says, "I'll dwell in the house of the LORD forever," it means I'll live in heaven with God forever—if I'm in God's family.

Puppet: Wow! Is that for sure?

Teacher: It's for sure. God said it, so that settles it because God is a promise keeper. He even put a big rainbow in the sky to remind us that he keeps his promises!

Puppet: When was that?

Teacher: Do you remember hearing about Noah building a huge ship called an ark?

Puppet: Yes! Then God sent a big flood that covered the earth.

Teacher: Correct. Well, after the flood, God promised Noah he would never send another flood like that again.

Puppet: Did he keep that promise?

Teacher: Yes. God keeps every promise. The rainbow reminds us of that.

Puppet: Rainbows also remind us that there are pots of gold at the end of them.

Teacher: Hold on a second. Where'd you get that idea?

Puppet: I see pictures of rainbows with pots of gold all the time.

Teacher: There are real rainbows in the sky. Rainbows with pots of gold aren't for real.

Puppet: They aren't?

Teacher: Nope. The pictures you see of rainbows with pots of gold are just pretend, even if they're fun to look at. But sometimes people use rainbows in ways that are against God's design for rainbows.

Puppet: Well, I'm glad the ones in the sky are God's! They're so beautiful!

Teacher: They sure are. It's never boring to see a rainbow, is it? It's always a wow! When you see a rainbow in the sky, let it remind you that God is a promise keeper, and you really *will* live with him some day if you are his child!

Puppet: Admit, believe, forever receive. That's how we are part of the Good Shepherd's flock, God's family.

Teacher: Yep, that's right!

Puppet: Well, it sure has been "good luck" that I ran into you to talk about this—wait!—not "good luck." Let me try that again. It sure has been a *blessing* that I ran into you to talk about this.

Teacher: Way to go, Paddy. There's no such thing as luck. But it has been a blessing. Well, it's time to say bye to Paddy, everyone. Let's wave as he takes off. *Do so.*