

Day 1: Puppet Pal

Teacher: Our puppet's name is Christian (*or Christy if a girl*). Let's all call for him (*her*) together. *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up waving a mini sword as if pretending to sword-fight someone.*

Teacher: Hi there, Christian. What're you doing?

Puppet: Oh, I'm pretending to be King Arthur.

Teacher: Was he the boy who pulled a sword out of a stone?

Puppet: Yes! I read how he grew up and became a great king who fought enemies in England.

Teacher: I know that story. King Arthur and his knights of the round table lived in a kingdom called Camelot.

Puppet: Yep! The good kingdom fought against the bad kingdoms. King Arthur and his knights were really brave! One knight even killed a dragon! *Pretend to stab a roaring dragon.*

Teacher: That's exciting! But you know King Arthur's just a pretend story, right?

Puppet: I know.

Teacher: But did you know in real life there really are two kingdoms—God's good kingdom and the enemy's bad kingdom?

Puppet: What do you mean? *Stop sword fighting.*

Teacher: Well, the Bible tells us how everything used to be all good. There was only one kingdom.

Puppet: What happened?

Teacher: Well, we'll hear more about this tomorrow, but basically, an enemy named Satan came along and got the first man to disobey God's command (sin), which messed up the good kingdom on earth. So now we have two kingdoms. The good one is ruled by God, and the bad one is led by the enemy, Satan. *Point to the GOOD KINGDOM/BAD KINGDOM POSTERS you used earlier.*

Puppet: And they're in a battle?

Teacher: Yep. You're pretending just now, but there's a real battle going on out there. You can't see it, but it's really happening.

Puppet: Oh! Should I be scared?

Teacher: Not at all—if you're on God's side—'cuz you win! Nobody can beat our all-powerful God! The enemy is not equal to God. He can't beat God!

Puppet: That's so good to know.

Teacher: And of those two kingdoms, only one is good. Only one is kind. Only one is true! Do you know which one?

Puppet: God's!

Teacher: Right! God is great, and God's kingdom is great!

Puppet: And like you said, of the two kingdoms, only one is true—God's!

Teacher: *Hold up the DAY 1 RHYME TIME POSTER.* Yep! Let's say this together, "Of two, only one is true!" *Do so.*

Puppet: Of two, only one is true. I want to remember that! Well, I've got to go now, so see you later.

Teacher: Bye, Christian! See you soon.

Day 2: Puppet Pal

Puppet: *Come up looking around at the children and saying: Huzzah! Huzzah! (Ha-SAW!) That means hooray! I'm so glad you're here again today!*

Teacher: Christian, we just learned about the first two people. Kids, can you tell Christian who the first two people were? *Have the kids shout out responses.*

Puppet: Adam and Eve. Cool!

Teacher: And an enemy came along and tricked Adam and Eve. Kids, tell Christian what they ate that they shouldn't have. *Have the kids shout out responses.*

Puppet: Yeah, the enemy tricked Eve into eating the fruit she wasn't supposed to eat. And Adam ate it, too.

Teacher: Right. And because of that, there's a good kingdom and a bad kingdom. The enemy rules the bad kingdom, and we're actually all born into that bad kingdom—we all disobey God's commands. That's called sin.

Puppet: So you said we're born into the bad kingdom. Does that mean everyone's going to be stuck in the bad kingdom forever?

Teacher: Nope! God had a great plan to rescue us. He sent Jesus, the leader of the good kingdom. Jesus is God's only Son. He came from heaven to rescue us.

Puppet: Let's stand up and give Jesus the loudest claps we can to thank him! *Do so.*

Teacher: He actually came as a baby. That's what we celebrate at Christmas! *Hold up/put up BABY JESUS POSTER.*

Puppet: Let's go around the room and say, "Merry Christmas!" to each other. *Do so.*

Teacher: Jesus grew up and lived a perfect life. We all disobey God's commands (sin), but Jesus never did. He's the only one who never did anything wrong. But then, when he was a grown man, he allowed some men from the bad kingdom to put him to death. They nailed him to a cross, which would hurt a lot. *Hold up/put up JESUS CARRYING THE CROSS POSTER.*

Puppet: Why would he allow them to do that?

Teacher: *Hold up/put up HEART POSTER.* Because he loves each of us. And he knew we could never make it to God's good heaven on our own. So he gave his life in place of ours. He was a perfect substitute for us.

Puppet: Jesus must really love these boys and girls.

Teacher: He does! And the cool thing is that he didn't stay dead! He came back to life! *Hold up/put up EMPTY TOMB POSTER.*

Puppet: Say what? That's impossible! Once you're dead, you're dead.

Teacher: Not for Jesus, because he's God and the King of all kings. He can do anything!

Puppet: Wow! Since Jesus is alive, does that mean people can be part of his good kingdom and live with him in heaven someday?

Teacher: Yes! You can become a child of God and be part of his kingdom if you choose to turn away from sin and turn to Jesus.

Puppet: So everyone must decide their side—the bad kingdom or the good kingdom?

Teacher: Right. Remember that I said we're born as members of the bad kingdom? But kids, if you don't want to continue to be part of the bad kingdom but want to join God's good kingdom, then make sure you talk to your mommy or daddy or me today to learn more about that. *Hold up/put up the DAY 2 RHYME TIME POSTER.* Let's say, "Decide your side!" together. *Do so.* I sure hope each of you wants to be on God's side!

Puppet: I sure hope so, too! Well, I've got to go, but I'll be thinking about this.

Teacher: I hope so! Let's wave good-bye to Christian, everyone. *Do so.* Let's sing "I'm in the Lord's Army." (*Sing this while Teacher 2 gets ready for Part 2—see below. Words to the song are at the end of this lesson.*)

Day 3: Puppet Pal

Teacher: Good morrow, all! I wonder what Christian's up to today. Should we call him? *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up with a belt on, showing it off.* How do you like my new belt?

Teacher: I like it. Kids, what do you think of it? *Take responses.* Hey, Christian, does this have anything to do with the special belt I was telling the kids about yesterday?

Puppet: It sure does! It's called the belt of . . . the belt of . . . *Have the kids help finish the phrase.* Oh, right, the belt of truth.

Teacher: That's right. If you believe God's Word—every word of it—and you want to be a person who tells the truth, you're wearing the belt of truth.

Puppet: Are there any more pieces of the armor of God?

Teacher: Yep! The next one's called the breastplate of righteousness.

Puppet: Breastplate of right . . . breastplate of right . . .

Teacher: Righteousness. But you can call it the breastplate of right because it reminds you to do right. That means you'll follow God's directions by obeying the Bible and make the right choices God wants you to make, like telling the truth (*Ephesians 4:25*) and being kind (*Ephesians 4:32*).

Puppet: Can we see the breastplate of righteousness?

Teacher: No. Remember, the armor of God is spiritual armor. We put it on by believing in Jesus and by reading the Bible.

Puppet: What's a real breastplate look like?

Teacher: It's worn right here to protect your heart. *Put the mini breastplate over the puppet's shoulders and chest/back area.* Knights wore them to protect themselves from harm.

Puppet: Sweet! I feel protected with this on.

Teacher: Yep. When you obey God's Word and do right in God's sight, it protects you from the trouble bad choices can get you into. *Hold up the DAY 3 RHYME TIME POSTER.* Let's say, "Do right in God's sight!" together. *Do so.*

Puppet: I want to do right in God's sight and make good choices for God!

Teacher: Well, keep learning from the Bible every day. That's how you know what God wants you to do.

Puppet: Okay! And speaking of doing right, I hear my mom calling, so I need to do right and obey. Gotta go!

Teacher: See you around, Christian! Boys and girls, while Christian's leaving, let's sing "The B-I-B-L-E" before we hear about a king in the Bible who wanted to do right. *Sing the song together, once or twice.*

Day 4: Puppet Pal

Teacher: Huzzah! Hooray! I'm glad to see all of you today here in the strongest part of the castle, the keep. Do you think we can get Christian to visit again? *Take responses, then have the kids call for him.*

Puppet: *Come up with the belt and breastplate on from yesterday. Also have a mini shield.* Hey, everyone! Look what I've got!

Teacher: Well, I see you have your belt on. What's that belt called, boys and girls? *Take responses.*

Puppet: It's my belt of truth. God's Word is true!

Teacher: And you have your breastplate on. What's the breastplate called, kids? *Take responses.*

Puppet: The breastplate of right(eousness). When I learn the Bible, it helps me to do right.

Teacher: But now I'm wondering what you're holding there.

Puppet: That's the next piece of armor. It's called the shield of faith.

Teacher: That's really important to have because it'll protect you. You see, the knights always carried great big shields into battle because the shield protected them from flaming arrows.

Puppet: I'm not going to have real flaming arrows come my way, am I?

Teacher: No, but the enemy sends lies and bad ideas your way to try to get you to mess up.

Puppet: I sure don't want the enemy's arrows to make me mess up and sin.

Teacher: That's why you need your shield of faith to block them. And you need another piece of armor too—a helmet. *Put the helmet on the puppet's head at this point.*

Puppet: What does that do?

Teacher: The helmet of salvation reminds us that Jesus saves us from sin, and he doesn't want us to keep doing the same sins over and over. Now that you have your shield of faith and your helmet of salvation, you're protected from the arrows the enemy will throw your way.

Puppet: What's sin again?

Teacher: Sin is when you don't obey God.

Puppet: But that's why God gives us armor, right? To help us say no to sin so we don't do it.

Teacher: Right! God wants us to win against sin. Let's say that together. *Do so, showing the DAY 4 RHYME TIME POSTER.* Just remember, any time the enemy gets you to disobey God's commands, you're sinning. Let's take a look at how the enemy got a very wise king in the Bible to mess up and sin. Here we go.

Day 5: Puppet Pal

Teacher: Welcome, knights and maidens, to our last day in the castle keep. Should we check in on Christian one last time?

Puppet: *Come up with a juggling ball and jester hat (optional).*

Teacher: What's wrong, Christian? You don't seem very happy today.

Puppet: I'm not! I want to be a juggler so, sooo much, but I just can't get the hang of it.

Teacher: Let me see you try.

Puppet: *Throw up the ball and drop it. Sigh a big sigh, then say dejectedly:* Boy, I sure was hoping I could be the best juggler ever!

Teacher: Well, have you been practicing?

Puppet: Well, no. But I sure do wish I was good at it.

Teacher: How do you expect to get good at it if you aren't putting any effort into it?

Puppet: I don't know. I just hope I will.

Teacher: Kids, what do you think Christian should do? *Take responses.* You know, the more you practice, the better you'll be.

Puppet: Well, maybe I'd better go outside and practice some juggling.

Teacher: I think you should, Christian. But before you go, let me tell you something else you need to practice to get good at.

Puppet: What's that?

Teacher: It's our next piece of armor. Just like the knights used swords, the last piece of our invisible armor is a sword, too.

Puppet: Ooh, I've seen sword fighting in the movies.

Teacher: Well, our invisible sword is called the sword of the Spirit. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, which is the Bible. A knight's sword wouldn't do him any good if he never used it during a battle, would it? Well, the Bible won't be the help it should be if we aren't really learning it and practicing how to use it.

Puppet: What do you mean? How can we learn and use God's Word?

Teacher: You know, sometimes God's children leave the Bible just laying around. Boys and girls, if you have a Bible somewhere in your house, shout, "I do!" Does that Bible ever sit there and not get opened for days and days? Every day, you've got to be hearing and memorizing and using the Bible. You've got to train your brain with the Bible. *Hold up the* DAY 5 RHYME TIME POSTER. Let's say, "Train your brain!" together. *Do so.*

Puppet: Wow! That's a lot to remember—to wear all the armor and train my brain.

Teacher: That's why God tells us to put on the armor, then *pray*. He'll help his kingdom keepers use the armor to fight against sin and obey him.

Puppet: Whew! I'm so glad God will help. Well, I'm going to try to train my brain by memorizing my Bible verses! And I'm going to pray and ask God to help me!

Teacher: That's awesome, Christian! Now let's listen to a great example of how Jesus used the sword of the Spirit in this Bible account.