

DAY 1: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Our puppet's name is Samuel (*Samantha*). He (*she*) likes to be called Sam for short. Let's all call for him (*her*) now. *Do so.*

Puppet: *Come up acting dejected with a mini shovel taped to your hand.*

Teacher: Hi there, Sam. Is something wrong? You seem a bit upset.

Puppet: Well, my friend was supposed to go digging for gold treasure with me today at the Wonder Junction Gold Mine, but now he's too busy.

Teacher: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

Puppet: Yeah. He promised he'd come.

Teacher: Well, when people make promises, hopefully they keep them. But once in a while, they don't.

Puppet: That's terrible!

Teacher: Yes. But I have good news for you.

Puppet: What? Did you find some gold treasure?

Teacher: No, but in a way, I found a treasure much better than gold. I found the one person who always, always, always keeps his promises. He's a treasure.

Puppet: Goody! Who is he?

Teacher: Jesus. Jesus never fails. People in this world may let you down, but Jesus never will. He always keeps his promises.

Puppet: How do you know that?

Teacher: Well, you know how we talked about his birth today? All those things that happened when Jesus was born had been promised in the Bible long before they happened. *Point to each one on the PROPHECY POSTER as you mention it.* Jesus was born in a town called Bethlehem, just as the Bible promised. His mother laid him in a manger and named him Jesus, just as promised. Later, wise men followed a special star and came with gifts, just as the Bible promised. All these promises happened just as the Bible said they would.

Puppet: Jesus even left the beauty of heaven to come to earth. He's a promise keeper. That's a much better treasure than finding gold.

Teacher: Jesus is a treasure because he loves us, and he's with us—Immanuel.

Puppet: Jesus really is a wonder, isn't he?

Teacher: He's the treasure of all treasures—better than ____ *mention some things and have them come up with several, too, like: Jesus is a better treasure than living in a castle, having all the toys in the world, etc.* Always treasure Jesus, Sam.

Puppet: I will! Well, I think I'm going to try to dig up some gold treasure on my own now, but I'll remember—Jesus is our true treasure!

Teacher: Okay! Bye for now, Sam! See you tomorrow.

DAY 2: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Let's do something silly and call for Samuel (*Samantha*) 12 times since we just talked about Jesus being 12 years old. *Do so, counting on your fingers.*

Puppet: *Come up grumbling and grumpy.*

Teacher: What's the problem, Sam? You don't seem happy today.

Puppet: I'm not! I'm just sooo hungry. And being hungry makes me grumpy.

Teacher: Well, how about a cracker? Would that help? *Stick the play food to the puppet's hand.*

Puppet: Oh, yes, thank you! *Nibble on the food while the conversation continues.*

Teacher: You know, even though Jesus is completely God, he was also completely human, so he got hungry too.

Puppet: He got hungry like I do?

Teacher: He sure did.

Puppet: I wonder if he ever had pizza? Boy, would I love a pizza right about now!

Teacher: Pizza wasn't popular yet, but he definitely would've needed to eat something.

Puppet: Well, how about this: Did Jesus ever get tired?

Teacher: Yep. The Bible tells of lots of times Jesus was tired.

Puppet: Wow. God got tired and hungry. That's a wonder.

Teacher: It is. And that's not all. He had feelings like you do. Jesus sometimes got sad and even cried. Of course, he was happy too.

Puppet: Did he get scared or worried? Sometimes I do when I'm alone in my dark bedroom and I start thinking about monsters under my bed. *Shiver.*

Teacher: No, Jesus didn't get scared or worried. He had feelings like you, but because he is God, he is perfect. He never complained, and he never got mad about something selfish.

Puppet: That doesn't sound like me. I know I'm not perfect. I get scared and complain a lot when I'm unhappy.

Teacher: Well, let's talk about a few ways Jesus would have been like us, because he was also a person. And think of a few ways he wouldn't have been like us, because he is also God. First of all, Jesus would have had birthdays.

Puppet: Fun! My birthday is February 12th. I wonder what day his birthday was.

Teacher: We don't know exactly which day, but we celebrate it on December 25, Christmas Day. Isn't it a wonder to think of God having a birthday?

Puppet: What else?

Teacher: Like some of us, Jesus had (half) brothers and sisters. Kids, do you have any brothers or sisters? *Pause for nods.*

Puppet: If you do, you have something like Jesus had!

Teacher: He also came from a poor family. Many people don't have lots of money.

Puppet: Yeah. My family can't go on fancy vacations and buy special stuff all the time.

Teacher: That's true of lots of people. Now here's a super amazing thought that makes us understand how different Jesus was. Because he is God, he *always* obeyed his parents. He never rolled his eyes or had a bad attitude. He didn't grab the last cookie for himself, because he was perfect and always did the right thing. Can you imagine never, ever, ever hitting your brother or being grumpy or fussing about something? What a wonder!

Puppet: I don't even make it through a day without fussing or complaining. And I sometimes snatch the last cookie so my brother won't get it.

Teacher: Me too. But the most amazing thing is that although Jesus was a child, he was also King of the whole world! He *made* the world.

Puppet: Wow, that is crazy amazing!

Teacher: Jesus is a wonder—fully God and fully man. We should love him, adore him, and be in awe of him.

Puppet: And obey him!

Teacher: Yes, and obey him! Well, it's time to move on, so let's say goodbye to Sam for now. *Talk to the puppet.* I think you should go get that pizza you were craving.

Puppet: Pepperoni and double cheese, here I come! Bye! *Exit.*

DAY 3: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Kids, help me call for Samuel (*Samantha*). On the count of 3, let's yell, "Sam!" Ready? 1, 2, 3—Sam? Hello? Are you in there? Hello?

Puppet: *Come up holding a little book.* Oh, hey, everyone!

Teacher: Sam, where'd you get your book?

Puppet: Oh, it's from the library. It's about the Old West. Did you know the Old West was also called the Wild West? That's because, well, it was wild out there.

Teacher: I didn't know that.

Puppet: Or that there were a lot of cowboys in the Old West? Most of them were young guys who worked on ranches and rode horses. That would have been cool to have your own horse!

Teacher: Yes, it would.

Puppet: When I finish this one, I'm going to go back for more. There's a whole row of books about the Old West. *Mention a couple titles: Rowdy Rachel's Lasso Tricks; The Adventures of Mustang the Horse; Cookin' for Cowboys.*

Teacher: Well, now you've got me wonderin'. How many books do you think are in that library?

Puppet: In the whole library? I don't know—10?

Teacher: I bet it's at least 40,000.

Puppet: That's sooo many books!

Teacher: And I wonder how many libraries there are in the world.

Puppet: 100?

Teacher: Way more!

Puppet: 1,000?

Teacher: Not even close. It's going on half a million!

Puppet: That's crazy!

Teacher: Yeah, and you know what else? The Bible tells us that Jesus did so many amazing things that the world couldn't even hold all the books that would be written about them!

Puppet: We just talked about him having power to calm the storm, and heal sick people, and raise people from the dead.

Teacher: That's just a drop in the bucket of all the wonder-filled things he did. He walked on water . . .

Puppet: Walked on water, did you say? That's impossible!

Teacher: Not for God! And he fed 5,000 men plus women and children with only two fish and five little loaves of bread.

Puppet: That doesn't even sound like enough for my little family and especially not thousands of people.

Teacher: Yeah, and the amazing thing is, there were even lots of leftovers! More than what he started with!

Puppet: Wow!

Teacher: He did so many wondrous things, we can't count them all.

Puppet: Nothing is too hard for God!

Teacher: That's right, Sam. Nobody else can do these things. Only Jesus because he's God. He's a wonder!

Puppet: He's mighty!

Teacher: He is! The Bible even calls him the Almighty! We should be completely amazed by him!

Puppet: I'm going to go lie down on my back outside and look up at the clouds. They always remind me of how mighty God is.

Teacher: Great idea! I'll join you in a bit, but bye for now.

DAY 4: PUPPET PAL

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

Puppet: *Come up pretending you're riding a horse.*

Teacher: Hey, Sam, what are you doing?

Puppet: I'm pretending to ride my horse and catch a bad guy.

Teacher: What bad guy?

Puppet: There were some bad guys who really lived in the Old West.

Teacher: Tell me more . . .

Puppet: One was named Billy the Kid. He started out stealing some laundry. He had to go to jail for that.

Teacher: God says not to steal.

Puppet: I know. But when he got out of jail, he kept stealing stuff, and he even killed some people and robbed some banks and trains.

Teacher: Whoa, God says not to kill.

Puppet: Right! And there were other bad guys, too, like Jesse James and Butch Cassidy. They robbed banks and killed people too.

Teacher: I've heard of them. *Show the WILD WEST BAD GUYS POSTER and point out each one.* That sure is *sad* to be sooo *bad* like those guys. But you know what?

Puppet: What?

Teacher: All of us have the same problem Billy the Kid and Jesse James and Butch Cassidy had. They were sinners, and so are we.

Puppet: *Act shocked.* But I don't go around robbing banks and killing people!

Teacher: Thankfully, you don't! But the Bible tells us all of us sin. Some, like these bad guys, sin by robbing and killing. We may sin by telling a lie or not being kind. The Bible says nobody is born good—not even one of us (Romans 3:23). Only God is good. Kids, can you think of a time you have sinned? *Take responses.*

Puppet: I didn't know everyone sins.

Teacher: Yep! That's why we need Jesus to save us! And he *will* if we ask to be in his family.

Puppet: That's the Admit, Believe, Forever Receive we just talked about, right?

Teacher: *Show the ADMIT, BELIEVE, FOREVER RECEIVE POSTERS again during this paragraph.* Right! Admit you sin, believe in Jesus, and forever receive him. This makes

you his child. You'll still be your parents' child. But this means you'll have God as your heavenly Father, and you'll be part of his family.

Puppet: I hope the kids believe in Jesus and want to be his child!

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

Puppet: Admit you sin, believe in Jesus, and forever receive him. That's the most important nugget of truth ever.

Teacher: It sure is! Well, bye for now, Sam! See you tomorrow!

DAY 5: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Let's call for Sam. *Do so, and have Sam come up.* Hey, what are you up to, Sam?

Puppet: I'm on a mission.

Teacher: What kind of mission?

Puppet: Well, the other day, I was going to dig for gold, but it didn't work out, so today I decided to pan for gold instead.

Teacher: Have you ever found any gold nuggets?

Puppet: Yes! I have three from my last try at panning for gold. I'm hoping with some hard work, I can find three more.

Teacher: That sounds like the story Jesus told in the Bible. A master left his servants with some coins. Two of the servants used their time wisely and earned more, but one servant didn't.

Puppet: I want to be like the ones who earned more!

Teacher: For sure! What God is saying is that while we're waiting for Jesus to come back, his children should use their time and talents wisely and work hard for him. We bring him glory when we love him and obey him.

Puppet: What are some ways we can do that?

Teacher: Well, I like to say our mission is to know, grow, and go.

Puppet: What's that mean?

Teacher: The first part of our mission is to get to *know* God. Become part of his family by believing in Jesus and get to know all about Jesus by reading the Bible.

Puppet: Know Jesus. Okay. What does the grow part mean? Should I grow taller to please God?

Teacher: No, that's not what it means. It means to *grow* in your love for Jesus and all the things Jesus loves.

Puppet: What does Jesus love?

Teacher: Well, he loves people—all people—so we should love people too. Jesus wants us to love one another. And Jesus loves it when we love and obey *him*.

Puppet: Get to know him, grow to love and obey him, and then go. What does the go mean?

Teacher: He wants you to *go* and live for him. Tell others about him. Show others you care, just like Jesus did when he was here. Jesus isn't on earth right now, but you are. Let your life show others how wonderful Jesus is!

Puppet: When I think of what a wonder Jesus is, I want everyone to know that he's amazing!

Teacher: Awesome!

Puppet: Powerful!

Teacher: Loving!

Puppet: Kind!

Teacher: He's the Creator!

Puppet: Immanuel!

Teacher: Carpenter!

Puppet: Almighty!

Teacher: Savior!

Puppet: King of kings!

Teacher: Let's get out there and share the good news that Jesus offers eternal life to all who believe in him. Let's remember our mission and use our days wisely for him.

Puppet: I will! Know, grow, and go. That's our mission! I won't forget. Well, speaking of going, I'm actually going to go right now to tell my friend Charley about Jesus, but thanks for sharing so many special memories with me this week at Wonder Junction! It's been a great week!

Teacher: It *has* been a great week. Let's say "bye" to Sam, everyone. *Do so.*