

DAY 1: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Okay, now it's time to meet our puppet, Samuel (*Samantha*). He (*she*) likes to be called Sam for short. Let's all call for him (*her*) now. *Do so.*

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

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: In a perfect world, every person would always keep every promise. But people sometimes make mistakes. It doesn't mean they don't care about you.

Puppet: Still, it's a bummer.

Teacher: It is. But there's some good news.

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, always, always keeps his promises. He's a treasure.

Puppet: Great! Who is he?

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

Puppet: How do you know that?

Teacher: Well, we talked about his birth. All those things that happened had been promised in the Bible long, long before they happened, and they came true *as promised*. In fact, they were promised hundreds of years earlier, and then they *did* happen, just as promised! *Show each section of the PROPHECY POSTER as you say the following.* For instance, the Bible promised Jesus would be born in a town called Bethlehem, and . . . he was! God promised that Jesus would be born as a baby, and . . . he was! God promised wise men would bring gifts, and . . . they did! God even promised Jesus would have his own special star, and . . . he did! It's a wonder that all these things actually happened, but they did!

Puppet: Jesus and his Word, the Bible, are promise keepers. And that's a much better treasure than finding gold.

Teacher: Yes! And Jesus even left the beauty of heaven to come to earth, because he loves me. Now he's with me—Immanuel, God with us.

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

Teacher: He really is. He's the treasure of all treasures—better than ___ *mention some things and have them come up with several 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: Since we've been talking about Jesus at age 12, let's do something silly and call for Samuel (*Samantha*) 12 times. *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?

Puppet: Oh, yes, thank you! *Put it in the puppet's hand so the tape will stick to it. The puppet nibbles on it while the conversation continues.*

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

Puppet: He got hungry like I do?

Teacher: He sure did. Even though he created the food, at times, he got hungry! It's a wonder!

Puppet: Do you think he ever craved 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 many times Jesus was tired.

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

Teacher: And that's not all. He had feelings like you do. Jesus sometimes got sad and even cried. Of course, he was often 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. You see, he had feelings like you, but he was perfect—unlike you—so he never got scared or worried. And he never complained or got selfishly mad.

Puppet: That doesn't sound like me. I get scared and complain a lot.

Teacher: Well, let's talk about a few ways Jesus was like us because we're all people and a few ways he wasn't like us because he was also God. First of all, Jesus had birthdays, like us.

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

Teacher: We don't know. We celebrate it on December 25, Christmas Day, but it may have been a different day. The date doesn't matter so much, but it's a wonder to think of God the Son having a birthday!

Puppet: What else?

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

Puppet: If you do, you have something in common with Jesus!

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

Puppet: Right. My family can't do fancy vacations and special trips and stuff like that.

Teacher: That's true of lots of people. Now here's a mind-blowing thought that really makes us see how different Jesus was: because he is God, he always obeyed his parents. He never rolled his eyes or had a bad attitude or selfishly took the last piece of pie. Jesus was perfect and always did the right thing. Can you imagine never, ever, ever hitting your brother or being grumpy or fussing about something?

Puppet: No way!

Teacher: It's a wonder. But the most amazing thing is that although Jesus was a child, he was also King of the whole world. He *made* the world, including his parents, and yet, he obeyed his parents.

Puppet: Wow, that is crazy amazing!

Teacher: Jesus is a wonder—fully God and fully man. He's someone to be in awe of and to love and adore.

Puppet: And obey!

Teacher: Yes, and obey! 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!

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 because, well, it was wild out there?

Teacher: I didn't know that.

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

Teacher: Yes, it would.

Puppet: When I finish this book, 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—100?

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: 500?

Teacher: Way more!

Puppet: 1,000?

Teacher: Not even close. It's more like half a million!

Puppet: *Twirl around and get crazy as you say this.* That's crazy! That's unbelievable! That's . . . WOW!

Teacher: Yeah, and you know what else? The Bible tells us 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, heal Peter's mother-in-law, 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 the Son! Jesus also 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, let alone thousands of people.

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

Puppet: Incredible!

Teacher: I wonder what other amazing things Jesus did that we don't even know about. We won't know this side of heaven.

Puppet: Nothing is too hard for God!

Teacher: That's right, Sam. Nobody else could 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.

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

Teacher: Hey, Sam, what are ya doing?

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

Teacher: What bad guy?

Puppet: There was a bad guy who really lived in the Old West named Billy the Kid.

Teacher: Tell me more . . .

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

Teacher: God says not to steal.

Puppet: I know. When he got out of jail, he kept stealing and even killed some people.

Teacher: Whoa, God says not to kill.

Puppet: He and his gang robbed banks, stagecoaches, and even trains. Other bad guys, like Jesse James and Butch Cassidy, also robbed banks and killed people.

Teacher: I've heard of them. *Show the WILD WEST BAD GUYS POSTER, pointing to each one of them.* Well, 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, 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 says we all sin. Some, like Billy the Kid, sin by robbing and killing. We, on the other hand, may sin by telling a lie or not being kind. But any sin separates us from God and deserves the punishment of death. And each one of us sins. The Bible tells us nobody is born good—not even one of us (*Psalms 14:3; Romans 3:23*). Kids, can you think of a time you've sinned? *Take responses or have them think about it silently.*

Puppet: I didn't know everyone sins.

Teacher: Yep! That's why we need Jesus to save us! *Show the ADMIT, BELIEVE, FOREVER RECEIVE POSTERS during this paragraph.* When you understand you sin and you're sorry for it, you can admit that to God (repent). Tell him you're sorry. Then tell God you believe Jesus died and rose from the dead to take your punishment. Finally, you can tell God you want to forever receive him and be 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 talk more about becoming a child of God, make sure you talk to your parent or leader or me today. It's the most important thing ever.

Puppet: Admit you sin, believe in Jesus, and forever receive him. That *is* the most important thing ever.

Teacher: It sure is! Well, bye, Sam! We're going to finish our last nugget of truth now. See you tomorrow!

DAY 5: PUPPET PAL

Teacher: Let's call for Sam so we can talk a little more about this. *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 so much like our Bible account. A master left his servants with some coins. Two of the servants used their time wisely to gain more, but one servant didn't.

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

Teacher: For sure! What God is saying is that while we're waiting for Jesus to come back, his children should be using their time and talents wisely and working hard for him. We need to live for his glory, which means we marvel at who he is and what he's done for us.

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. We can become part of his family by believing in Jesus and then learn more about him from the Bible.

Puppet: Know Jesus. We talked about that yesterday when we said we can admit, believe, and forever receive.

Teacher: That's right, Sam. I hope everyone here is a child of God.

Puppet: Well, what does the grow part mean, then? Should I grow taller to please God?

Teacher: No, 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 them 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 his glory. Tell others that Jesus came to save them from their sins. 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! You could say we're the hands and feet of Jesus. We get to use our talents and abilities for God!

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

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 care 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. Thanks for sharing so many special memories with me this week at Wonder Junction!

Teacher: It's been a great week! Yee-haw! Bye, Sam! So partners, let's talk about this for a minute. Do any of you love to bake and cook? *Pause for show of hands.* How can you bake and cook to the glory of God and use those abilities to share the love of Jesus with others? *Take quick responses.* Do any of you like playing a sport? *Pause for show of hands.* How can you use the time spent playing your sport to share the love of Jesus with others? *Take quick responses.* What are things you're good at or like to do? How can you live to bring God glory in school or home or wherever you are? *Take quick responses.* Let's remember to live like Jesus matters, for God's glory!