

Puppet Bible Lessons

KOLBY &
MARY BETH KING

Puppet Bible Lessons

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To contact the author, please email him at:
resources@threethirtyministries.org

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The following Bible lessons are a great way to introduce your kids to puppets. Not only are these lessons fun but they also teach the truth of God's Word in an interactive and creative way.

Simply add your own puppet-making craft to these great sessions and you'll have lessons your kids will remember. Just search online for a variety of ways to make sock and hand puppets.

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God Loves the World

Puppet Lesson #1

Discussion: **God Loves the World**

Scripture : **John 3, John 3:16**

YOU WILL NEED: *Two puppets for each student.*

SAY: From now on anytime I say “Who does Jesus Love?” I want you to say,
“Meeeeeee!”

SAY: Who does Jesus Love?... (Children: Meeeeeee!)

Puppet Rules

SAY: Before we pass out some puppets, we’re going to go over a few “Puppet Rules.”

RULE #1: *Puppets do NOT bite.*

REPEAT after me: *Puppets do NOT bite*

SAY: They don’t bite each other and they don’t bite at people. It tears up their mouths and these puppets are very expensive.

RULE #2: When I say, “Puppets Down,” lay the puppet in your lap. Keep your hand in it. Just lay it down. When I say, “Puppets Up,” bring your puppet up BUT KEEP HIM ALIVE. Let him look around, move, and dance a little...but *Puppets do NOT bite.*

RULE #3: *Puppets are kind.*

REPEAT after me: *Puppets are kind.*

SAY: Don’t let your puppet behave in a way that you wouldn’t and treat your puppet with kindness.

Puppet Practice

EVERYBODY SAY: “Now we’re ready.”

Pass out one puppet to each student. Practice with them looking around and giving their puppets emotions:

Make your puppet look surprised.

Make your puppet look sad.

Make your puppet look excited.

Make your puppet look mad.

SAY: Who does Jesus Love?... (Children AND PUPPETS: Meeeeeee!)

Puppet Repeat

Have every PUPPET REPEAT John 3:16 after you. Be sure to pause between each phrase to let them repeat. Encourage them to work on having the puppets' mouths move with the words.

“For God so loved the world /
that He gave His one and only Son /
That whoever believes in Him /
should not perish /
but have everlasting life.”
John 3:16

Practice saying the verse all together with the puppets mouthing the words.

SAY: Part of doing puppets is making the puppet look alive but be careful not to “drink water.” This is when a person is behind a puppet stage and his hand gets tired and you begin to see the puppet’s mouth open toward the ceiling.

Bible Story

SAY: Now we’re going to use the puppets to act out a Bible story, but in this story there are two characters. So...you’re going to need another puppet.

Pass a second puppet to everyone.

SAY: I’m going to read the following story to you and I want you act it out, using your puppets to do what the story tells you to do.

Story

Many times crowds would surround Jesus. (*Make your puppets look back and forth and at each other and have conversations saying, “Watermelon, Watermelon.”*)

The crowds would bring sick people to Jesus (“*Puppets Down*”) and He would heal them (“*Puppets Up*”).

They would bring sad people to him (*Make your puppet look sad*) and He would help them (*Make them look happy.*)

At the end of Jesus' life there was an angry crowd (*Have all the puppets look angry*), but most of the crowds came because they wanted to hear what He had to say.

One day, though, a man named Nicodemus came to visit Jesus. (*Choose one of your puppets to be Nicodemus.*) But he came at night when the crowds weren't there. He was a religious leader and probably didn't want people to know that he was visiting Jesus (*Have your puppet act like he's sneaking around.*)

Nicodemus had questions and he said (*Have your puppets repeat after me*), "**We know / that you have come from God / as a teacher / because no one could do / the miracles you do / unless God were with him.**"

Jesus replied (*Use your other puppets to say this*), "**Unless someone is born again / he cannot see the kingdom of God.**"

Nicodemus was confused. (*Make your "Nicodemus" puppet look confused.*)

He said, (*Have Nicodemus say*), "**How can anyone be born again / when he is old?**"

Jesus explained that He wasn't talking about being born physically. (*Have your "Jesus" puppet say*), "I'm talking about being born of the Spirit."

Jesus went on to tell him that (*have your "Jesus puppet say*):

"For God so loved the world / that He gave His one and only Son / that whoever believes in Him / should not perish / but have everlasting life." John 3:16

SAY: God loves you so much that He made a way for you to know Him and spend forever with Him in heaven. He made a way for you to be "born" into His family and to become His children. (*Have your puppet tell the puppets next to you, "God loves you!"*)

SAY: Who does Jesus Love?... (Children AND PUPPETS: Meeeeeee!)

Discussion

Have your students pass in their puppets and sit back down.

ASK: Jesus told Nicodemus that a person has to be born again. **What does it mean to be born again?** (To be saved, to have given your life to Jesus, to be spiritually born into God's family.)

Salvation Testimony: Share the story about how and when you were saved (or “born again”). This needs to be no longer than a few minutes, and the point needs to be focused on that fact that you needed Jesus and how you knew you needed Jesus, that you made the choice to let Jesus be your Lord and Savior. He saved you and made a way for you to go to heaven and to have a relationship with Him. Also be very clear about how a person can be “born again.”

Extra Time

If you have extra time, let other leaders on your teaching team share about how and when they were saved also. Then pray and thank God for loving us and making a way for us to be “born again.”

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God Gives Your Courage

Puppet Lesson #2

Discussion: **God gives you courage**

Scripture : **Daniel 3, Joshua 1:9**

YOU WILL NEED: *A puppet for each student.*

(NOTE: *This lesson may look long but it's really not—there's just a lot of dialogue and puppets repeating what you say.*)

SAY: From now on anytime I say “What should you do?” I want you to say, “Follow Jesus!”

SAY: What should you do?... (Children: Follow Jesus!”)

Puppet Rules

SAY: Before we pass out some puppets, we're going to go over a few “Puppet Rules.”

RULE #1: *Puppets do NOT bite.*

REPEAT after me: *Puppets do NOT bite*

SAY: They don't bite each other and they don't bite at people. It tears up their mouths and these puppets are very expensive.

RULE #2: When I say, “Puppets Down,” lay the puppet in your lap. Keep your hand in it. Just lay it down. When I say, “Puppets Up,” bring your puppet up BUT KEEP HIM ALIVE. Let him look around, move, and dance a little...but *Puppets do NOT bite.*

RULE #3: *Puppets are kind.*

REPEAT after me: *Puppets are kind.*

SAY: Don't let your puppet behave in a way that you wouldn't and treat your puppet with kindness.

RULE #4: *Puppets talk.*

REPEAT after me: *Puppets talk.*

SAY: Today you are going to give your puppet a voice! Once you get a puppet, any time I ask you to repeat something after me, I want your puppet to repeat it.

PUPPET PRACTICE

Pass out one puppet to each student. Tell their kids to keep the puppets “alive” from the moment they put them on.

SAY: Puppets Down!

SAY: To help you choose a voice for your puppet, we’re going to practice a few voices. I’m going to tell you what kind of voice to use and then I’ll tell you what to say. I want you to use that kind of voice. And remember...keep your puppets ALIVE. Keep them looking around anytime they’re up.

SAY: Puppets Up!

Using a high voice, have your puppet say, “Be strong and courageous!”

Using a scary voice, have your puppet say, “...Do not tremble or be dismayed”

Using a country (kind of “hick-like”) voice, have your puppet say, “...for the LORD your God”

Using a really low voice, have your puppet say to another puppet next to you, “...is with you”

Using a voice like someone from another country, have your puppet say, “...wherever you go”

Using a quick, squeaky voice, have your puppet say, “...Joshua 1:9”

SAY: Let’s do that again...

Do the section above one more time.

SAY: Let’s do that again...but this time using whatever kind of voice they want.

Be sure to pause between each phrase to let them repeat. Encourage them to work on having the puppets’ mouths move with the words.

“Be strong and courageous! /
Do not tremble or be dismayed, /
for the LORD your God is with you /
wherever you go.”
Joshua 1:9

SAY: What should you do?... (Children and puppets: Follow Jesus!)")

SAY: You can follow Jesus because you know He's always with you.

SAY: Puppets Down!

SAY: You can use whatever kind of voice you want for your puppet but make sure he repeats after me anytime I say, "Everybody Say..."

SAY: Puppets Up!

SAY: Puppets, you are going to help us tell a story. Okay?

EVERYBODY SAY: "Okay!"

SAY: But first we need to assign some special parts.

Divide the group into two parts:

-Assign one part to have their puppets make noise like trumpets playing a song. They can even use their hand as the instrument.

-The other part will need to make noise like guitars playing. They can even use their free hand to help the puppets hand strum an imaginary guitar.

SAY: Start the music when I say, "And THE MUSIC PLAYED!" and keep it going until I tell you to stop. Now, let's practice... and "THE MUSIC PLAYED!"

SAY: Puppets Down!

SAY: We also need four puppets to volunteer for some special parts. Who wants to volunteer?

SAY: Puppets Up!

Choose four puppet volunteers.

SAY (to the puppets): For this story I'm going to change your names. You (point to one puppet) are Shadrach.

EVERYBODY SAY: "Shadrach"

SAY (to another puppet): You are Meshach.

EVERYBODY SAY: "Meshach"

SAY (to another puppet): You are Abednego.

EVERYBODY SAY: “Abednego” ... “Not to bed I go!”

EVERYBODY SAY: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego...(pause) Not “My Shack, Your Shack or Abungalo?”

SAY (to another puppet): You are going to be King Nebechadnezzar...not King Nebecha-sneezer.

EVERYBODY SAY: “King Nebechadnezzar” ...(pause) Not “King Nebecha-sneezer”

SAY: So anytime I say, “King Nebechadnezzar,” I want your puppet to say “Who sneezed?” He really didn’t sneeze anywhere in the Bible but it’s a fun name, so we’re going to have some fun with it. Let’s practice...”King Nebechadnezzar” (Puppets: “Who sneezed?”)

BIBLE STORY

SAY: Now we’re ready for our Bible story.

SAY: I’m going to read the following story to you and I want you to act it out, using your puppets to do what the story tells you to do.

READ THE STORY

A long time ago God’s people lived in the land of Judah.

EVERYBODY SAY: “Who-Da!”

SAY: No, Judah. And among these people were three young men who loved God. Their names were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

EVERYBODY SAY: Shadrach (pause) Meshach (pause) and Abednego

SAY: They loved God and wanted to follow God but something terrible happened. People from the land of Babylon...

EVERYBODY SAY: Where?

SAY: Babylon...

EVERYBODY SAY: Where?

SAY: Babylon...

EVERYBODY SAY: You sure do!

SAY: Get it...Babble on...Anyway, people from the land of Babylon came and destroyed the land and took a bunch of people back to Babylon. And in Babylon, there was a king whose name was...

EVERYBODY SAY: "King Nebechadnezzar"...Who sneezed?

SAY: **King Nebechadnezzar** (Who sneezed?) build a huge 90-foot statue and said that when the music played everyone was supposed to bow down and worship this statue like it was God. So THE MUSIC PLAYED (puppets make music noises)... And everybody bowed down...have your puppets bow down...Except for three young men whose names were...

EVERYBODY SAY: Shadrach / Meshach / and Abednego

SAY: They didn't bow down. So, in our story the Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego puppets will be the only ones who don't bow. So, let's try that again. THE MUSIC PLAYED (puppets make music noises)... And everybody bowed down except for three young men whose names were...

EVERYBODY SAY: Shadrach / Meshach / and Abednego

SAY: When the king heard about it, he called them to him and said (*Have the King Nebechadnezzar puppet repeat after you*), "If you don't worship the statue I made, you will be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire!"

EVERYBODY SAY: "Ohhhhh-Nooooo!"

SAY: Puppets Down!

SAY: It would have been easier for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to just go along with what the king wanted. What do you think they did? What would you have done?

SAY: Puppets Up!

SAY: So, THE MUSIC PLAYED (puppets make music noises)... And everybody bowed down (the puppets bow down) except for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So **King Nebechadnezzar** (Who sneezed?) became so angry that the Bible says the look of his face changed.

SAY: I want you to make your puppet look so mad that he shakes! Go!

SAY: The king was even madder and he had guards tie up their hands and push them into a fiery furnace.

EVERYBODY SAY: "Ohhhhh-Nooooo!"

SAY: But they didn't die. They weren't even hurt. Instead the king looked into the blaze and saw four people walking around.

EVERYBODY SAY: "There were three of them!"

SAY: Yes, but in the fire was Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and the "angel of the Lord" was right there with them, protecting and taking care of them. They weren't alone! So **King Nebuchadnezzar** (Who sneezed?) called them out of the fire. And they weren't hurt or burnt. The Bible says they didn't even smell like smoke. They were just fine and the king realized that their God was real.

SAY: Puppets Down!

SAY: Our God is real. And He loves you and has great plans for your life. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego followed God and we want you to know that the greatest thing you'll ever do in your life is to give your life to Jesus and follow Him everyday in every way. And when you follow Jesus, you're not alone. Jesus is right there with you. That's why you can have the courage to do what you know is right.

SAY: What should you do?... (Children and puppets: Follow Jesus!)"

SAY: Louder...:What should you do?... (Children and puppets: Follow Jesus!)"

Have your students pass in their puppets and sit back down.

PRAY and thank God that Jesus is always with you. Also, ask God to give your students the courage to follow Him everyday and to always do what's right, just like Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego."

Creating Your Own Puppet Lessons

If you want to create your own Puppet Bible Lessons, look for stories that have a lot of emotion and a variety of characters. This will not only keep the story very interactive but you can also assign parts to your kids. Remember, more than one kid can play the same part. For example, in the story of Jesus walking on the water, you could have half of your group represent Jesus with their puppets and half represent Peter.

You can also look for stories that work on different aspects of puppetry – mouthing words, showing emotion, looking up and around and other movements, etc.

Here are some great stories with which to have fun:

- **Moses and the Exodus from Egypt**
- **Joshua and Jericho**
- **The Spies in the Promised Land**
- **David and Goliath** - For this story, I would suggest making puppets that have arms that your kids can swing around when David shoots the stone.
- **David Running from King Saul**
- **Elijah on Mount Carmel**
- **Jesus is Born** - Some of your kids could make animal puppets for this one.
- **Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration**
- **Jesus Feeds the 5,000**
- **The Parable of the Good Samaritan**
- **Jesus Calms the Storm** – This story has great emotion and can have a lot of action as you act out the storm with your puppets.
- **Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch** – Lots of dialogue
- **Paul and the Philippian Jailer** – Again, this story has a lot of action, a lot of emotion and can have some singing too!

These are just some examples to consider.

However, as you create your lessons, be very careful to stay completely Biblical. Unlike a lot of Bible cartoons that “fill in the blanks” where Scripture is silent, keep to what God’s Word says. This is a great opportunity to simply read and have your kids (and puppets) repeat Scripture straight out of the Bible.

Using Puppets to Act out Life Situations

If your kids really connect with using puppets, then have them create some “life situations” where their puppets act out right and wrong. Divide your class into groups and assign each one a Scripture passage and a topic (i.e., lying, anger, hate, stealing, etc). Let your kids come up with a scenario that their puppets can act out. Then, one at a time, let each of your groups share their dramatization, the Scripture verse and the life lesson that the class can learn from it.

Also, be careful, as you use puppets, not to mix too much fiction and reality. For example, we never act out with our puppets the scenario of a puppet getting saved. I have seen some puppetry that actually showed a puppet praying to receive Christ. Of course some will disagree with us, but in our opinion this mixes fiction and reality in a way that could be confusing for some kids, especially younger ones.

Using Puppets to Introduce Your Kids to Ministry

When we train elementary-age mission groups, we begin by teaching them basic puppetry—the same skills that they learn in the Puppet Bible Lessons. Then we have them lead a song using their puppet from behind a puppet stage. This gets them used to walking up on stage and sharing on stage without being seen. Choose a song that is fun and practice with your kids. Help them to have their puppets look at the audience and not to “drink water” by looking up. Encourage them to give their puppets a personality and to “dance” with the song. Have fun. You can even video them to help them see what their puppets look like. This is actually the best way to help them get better! Then practice with them and set-up an opportunity for them to share in front of your church or a preschool or adult Sunday School class or even at a retirement center in your community.

The second step is to help them get used to talking on stage. For example, have two puppets in a conversation or share a Scripture verse between two songs. Or, better yet, have a student or two step out from behind the stage. Teach them how to speak clearly into a microphone and how not to fidget by putting their hands behind their backs. Simply have them share a Bible verse, an important truth or even their salvation testimonies. You can learn how to teach your kids to share their salvation stories at www.threethirtyministries.org/my-salvation-story.

Finally, as you continue to teach your students how to do ministry, you can also add some simple dramas. You can also teach them how to lead songs with hand motions and to quote Scripture passages and even chapters that you can memorize together as a class.

Beginning with puppets, you can help your kids develop a heart for ministering to people both in your church and in your community.

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P.O. Box 2334, Owasso, Oklahoma 74055

"Jesus must become greater; I must become less." John 3:30

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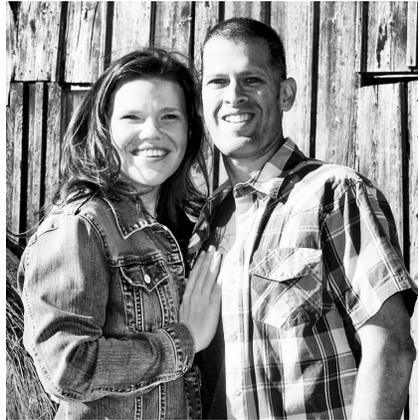
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Kolby & Mary Beth King

Kolby and Mary Beth King are the founders of three-thirty ministries, a resource ministry for the purpose of providing affordable resources, training and events to churches and families around the world. God changed their lives and they are passionate about challenging the church, helping people to understand and know God and to share Him in their daily lives.

Find more resources and learn more about the events and training conferences they can bring to your church or organization at www.threethirtyministries.org.

Find more books by Kolby and Mary Beth King at
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“Jesus must become greater; I must become less.” John 3:30

Sample Family Devotion

Find it. Taste it. Touch it. Make it. Know it. Grow it. See it. Show it. Live it!

Below is a sample of a family devotion from Kolby and Mary Beth King's book, *72 Family Devotions For Spiritually Training Kids*.

The purpose of this book is to help families experience God's Word in a colorful, fun, surprising and creative manner; to ignite in them a hunger that leads them to dig in, crawl inside, explore, enjoy and live out God's truth.

Learn more at www.threethirtyministries.org/bookstore.

Build a Fort

YOU WILL NEED

- 1 flashlight
- Your Bible marked at Psalm 56:3 and Psalm 18:1-2

GET STARTED

Have your family members “ransack” the house to get pillows, blankets, chairs, and whatever else they can find to build a fort. Take your time making it and let your kids be creative with it. (For example, they might want to make a tunnel entrance.) Build it big enough for everyone to fit inside.

From inside the fort use your flashlight to **read Psalm 56:3**.

ASK—**What is something you're scared of?**

SHARE—Share something you were scared of when you were a child.

ASK—**What should we do when we're scared?** (Trust God.)

ASK—**Why can we trust God?** (He's faithful. He'll never let you down. He'll always keep His Word, etc.)

Read Psalm 18:1-2 from your Bible.

ASK—**How is God like a fort (fortress, stronghold) for you?** (In old days people went inside a fortress to be safe. Its walls protected them from harm. God is a shield for those who follow Him and like a fort, you are safe in Him.)

ASK—**Does this mean that bad things will never happen to someone who is living for Jesus? Why or why not?** (Bad things still happen to good people, but there's nothing so bad that God can't turn it to your good.)

If they want a further answer, explain that sometimes we do wrong things and these bad choices bring "bad" things into our lives. But sometimes we do everything right and someone else does something wrong and we get hurt because of it. Even so, there's nothing your children will ever do that is so bad that God can't forgive them and there's nothing so bad that can happen to them that God can't turn it around to their good if they love Him and are walking with Him. (See Romans 8:28 for a great promise.)

PRAY—List prayer requests and thank God that He will always take care of you.

After you're done playing in the fort, feel free to have a pillow fight or time your family to see how fast they can tear the fort down and put everything away. Have fun and enjoy!

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