

Discussion: **God Loves the World**
Scripture : **John 3; John 3:16**
YOU WILL NEED: *Two puppets for each student.*

God Loves the World Puppet Lesson

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.”