

Discussion: **God gives you courage**

Scripture : **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.)*

## **God Gives You Courage Puppet Lesson**

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 Nebuchadnezzar...not King Nebecha-sneezer.

EVERYBODY SAY: "King Nebuchadnezzar" ...(pause) Not "King Nebecha-sneezer"

SAY: So anytime I say, "King Nebuchadnezzar," 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 Nebuchadnezzar" (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 Nebuchadnezzar"...Who sneezed?

SAY: **King Nebuchadnezzar** (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 Nebuchadnezzar 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 Nebuchadnezzar** (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.