

# LESSON 11: AN IDOL BOWS TO GOD'S ARK

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Monkeys

 1 Samuel 5:1-5

11/10/2019

## Teachers Dig In

### Dig In to the Bible

- Read: 1 Samuel 5:1-5
- In This Passage: The Philistines capture the Ark of God, a holy box that represents God's presence. They put the Ark in a temple with an idol named Dagon, and Dagon keeps falling before the Ark! This demonstrates that God is real and the idol isn't.
- Bible Point: God is real...
- Application: ...so we believe he's the one true God.
- Summary Verse: "So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows" (Matthew 10:31).

### Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is real.* This lesson will help kids explore modern-day idols. They're probably not statues like Dagon, but they may be things kids put before God. Help kids understand that because God is real, we believe in and worship only him as the one true God.
- Think About: Ask God to show you what might be an idol in your life—anyone or anything that becomes more important than God.

### Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that your kids will recognize God as the real, true God, regardless of what our society might tell them.

### Quick Tip

- Sunday school teachers must maintain a delicate balance. We need to prepare our kids for the things of this world they must face, but we don't want to take away their innocence in the process. That's why it's so important for you to know your kids. As you discuss today's point, some kids may stick to talking about idols such as sports or celebrities. Older kids might ask questions about other religions or scientific theories. Allow kids to grapple with this point on their level, but draw them back to the same conclusion: God is real, and we believe he's the one true God.

## This Lesson at a Glance



### OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

#### Supplies

- Bible



### CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers play a guessing game, use toys to act out the story, and compare photos.

#### Supplies

- Bible
- “Real Versus Fake Photos” handout (1 copy)  
(download [here](#))
- tall block
- plastic egg (1 per child)
- small blocks (1 per child)

#### Easy Prep

- Cut apart the photos on the “Real Versus Fake Photos” handout.



### LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers bow as they pray.

#### Supplies

- Bible



### OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers sort real and fake money.

#### Supplies

- new \$1 bills (1 bill per child) (You’ll get them back!)
- “Fake Money” handout (1 for every 3 kids)  
(download [here](#))
- baskets (2 for every 10 kids)
- \$5 bills printed in 2006 or later (1 bill for every 10 kids) (optional)
- \$10 bills printed in 2004 or later (1 bill for every 10 kids) (optional)
- colored tape or sticky notes (2 different colors)

#### Easy Prep

- Label baskets by placing a different color of tape or sticky note on each one. Write “Real” on one color and “Fake” on the other.
- Cut apart the “Fake Money” handouts. Make 1 pile of bills for every 10 kids, including 1 real dollar bill per child and 4 fake dollar bills per child. Mix the bills in each pile.



### HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers run to find photos of real things.

#### Supplies

- “Real Versus Fake Photos” handout (1 per child)  
(download [here](#))

#### Easy Prep

- Cut apart the pictures on the handouts.
- Spread all the photos facedown around the perimeter of the room.



### LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers decide whether things are real or fake.



## CRAFT

**Preschoolers make sunflowers.**

### Supplies

- white cupcake liners (at least 1 per child)
- yellow markers
- paper plates (1 per child)
- unused coffee grounds
- glue sticks
- green chenille wires (at least 1 per child)
- tape
- simple drawing of the sun

### Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

*\*Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



## Supplies

- Bible

## Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have children shake hands with four friends using the back of their hands.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers say “happy birthday” in the voices of their favorite cartoon characters.
- Collect the offering.

## Introduce the Lesson

Say: **The Bible says that God is real. He’s not a fake character we watch in a movie or read about in a book. God is real and living today. God is with us all the time. He’s the only true God. We don’t have to make-believe with God because he really is real. Let’s begin by talking about some toys we have that *aren’t* real but we wish they were.**

## Share

- Share about a toy *you* would’ve liked to see come to life when you were a child. Maybe you had a doll or a stuffed animal that you took everywhere or there was a make-believe character you would’ve enjoyed talking with.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share about a toy *they* would like to see come to life.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

## Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **It’s fun to think about our favorite toys coming to life. But we don’t have to pretend with God, because God is real and he’s alive today. He’s always with us! The Bible tells us how God showed he’s real to many different people. The people in the Bible saw that God is the one true God, and we can be sure of that, too. We can be friends with God and trust him because he’s real!**

Pray, asking God to help you and the children see that he’s real and he’s the one true God. Thank God for wanting to be friends with everyone.



## Supplies

- Bible
- "Real Versus Fake Photos" handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- tall block
- plastic egg (1 per child)
- small blocks (1 per child)

## Easy Prep

- Cut apart the photos on the "Real Versus Fake Photos" handout.

## Play a Guessing Game

Say: **Today we'll read a Bible story that shows us God is real. He's the one and only real God.**

**Let's play a game to help us think about the Bible story we'll be reading.**

Stand up the tall block, and explain the game:

- All the children will close their eyes.
- You'll quietly choose a child to sneak to the block and knock it over. Then he or she will sneak back to his or her original spot.
- You'll tell the kids to open their eyes and guess who knocked over the block.

Check for understanding, and then play several rounds, taking about eight minutes total. For more of a challenge, have children spread out in your room so it's more difficult for them to tell who is moving.

Ask: • **How did you guess who knocked over the block?** Kids might share that they listened for noises around them like the sound of shoes or clothes or that they felt someone brush them as that person moved past.

## Stand Up Two Figures

Show the Bible. Say: **The Bible tells about a time a statue fell over and no one saw how it happened, kind of like in our game. The statue was of a fake god named Dagon (DAY-gon). Some people called the Philistines (FIL-ih-steens) thought Dagon was a real god even though it was just make-believe. The Philistines kept the Dagon statue in their city, Ashdod (ASH-dahd).**

**One time when the Philistines had a fight with God's friends, the Israelites, the Philistines stole something and took it back to Ashdod. What they stole was called the Ark of God. The Ark of God was a box filled with things that helped the Israelites remember that the one *real* God was always with them. The Philistines stood the Ark of God next to the statue of their fake god, Dagon.**

Give kids each one small block and one plastic egg, and explain that they'll use the blocks and eggs to show what happened in the Bible.

Say: **Let's pretend the block is like the Israelites' Ark of God and the plastic egg is like the Philistines' fake god Dagon.** Have kids stand their blocks and eggs next to each other on a table or the floor, holding on to them. **The Philistines stood the Ark of God next to their fake god Dagon, and then they went to bed.** Have kids let go of the objects and see how the eggs won't stand up, but the blocks do.

Read aloud 1 Samuel 5:3. Say: **That's like our blocks and our eggs. The eggs fell down. Let's try to stand up our eggs again since the Philistines stood up the statue of their fake god.**

Read aloud 1 Samuel 5:4, and have kids let go of the eggs so they fall down. Say: **Dagon's arms and legs even fell off!**

**The statue of Dagon was a fake god, but the Ark of God was a very special box that reminded God's friends that he was always with them. Dagon wasn't real, but our God is real. He's the only true God. What happened that day showed that God is real. Nothing happened to the Ark of God, but Dagon fell over twice, and the fake god was facedown in front of the Ark of God! That's how the Philistines learned about the *real* God, our one true God. Since Dagon was a fake god, it couldn't do anything. But the real God can do anything!**

Collect the blocks and eggs, and set them aside.

### **Compare Real and Fake Things**

Say: **Let's talk a little more about real things and fake things.** Show kids the "Real Versus Fake Photos," pair by pair. Have kids pass a photo pair around the group, and invite them to agree on which one is real and which one is only an imitation, or fake. Then move on to another pair until kids have looked at all four pairs.

Say: **Dagon was only an imitation god, like the imitation car and imitation food. But when the fake god fell down in front of the Ark of God, the Philistines found out about the real God. Since our God is real, we can trust him to take care of us. We can believe he'll use his power for good. And we can be sure he loves us.**

Share why *you're* glad you believe in the one and only true God.

Ask: • **Why do you like believing in the real God?** Help kids think of responses, if needed. For example, only a real God can take care of them. Only a real God can protect them from danger. Only a real God can love them. Only a real God can have a plan for them.

Say: **We believe in the one true God, and we can be sure that God is real and he's always with us!**



#### Supplies

- Bible

#### Practice Bowing

Say: **Today we found out that God is real and he's the only true God. We heard how there was a make-believe god that kept falling over next to the Ark of God. God made the fake god fall over to show everyone it was fake. And when it fell over, it looked like it was bowing down to the one true God.**

Show kids what it looks like to bow. Say: **Sometimes we kneel or bow to God to show him that we believe he's the one true God. When we bow like that, we can remember that God is real, he made us, and he's the most important one in the whole world.** Lead kids to practice bowing.

#### Bow and Pray

Say: **Let's bow while we talk to God today. We'll bow to show God we know he's the one true God and he's the most important one.**

Lead children in a short prayer as you all bow together. Pray: **God, we know you're real. We know you're here with us now and that you're our good friend. You made us and you take care of us. We believe you're the only true God.** In Jesus' name, amen.

Say: **There is no other God besides our God. We can trust him and know he's real. We can be sure he's always with us because he loves us! I hope you'll come back next week so we can all learn more about our one true God together.**



## OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

### Sorting Money

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#### Supplies

- new \$1 bills (1 bill per child) (You'll get them back!)
- "Fake Money" handout (1 for every 3 kids) (download [here](#))
- baskets (2 for every 10 kids)
- \$5 bills printed in 2006 or later (1 bill for every 10 kids) (optional)
- \$10 bills printed in 2004 or later (1 bill for every 10 kids) (optional)
- colored tape or sticky notes (2 different colors)

#### Easy Prep

- Label baskets by placing a different color of tape or sticky note on each one. Write "Real" on one color and "Fake" on the other.
- Cut apart the "Fake Money" handouts. Make 1 pile of bills for every 10 kids, including 1 real dollar bill per child and 4 fake dollar bills per child. Mix the bills in each pile.

#### Tip

- If you'd like to look at examples of bills online, go to [www.uscurrency.gov](http://www.uscurrency.gov) and click on "Denominations."

#### Sort Bills

Hold up a handful of money. Say: **I have a lot of paper money. Can you tell the difference between real and fake bills? Let's work together to sort and separate the real money from the fake play money.** Hold up the "real" basket. **We'll put all the real money in this [name the color] basket.** Hold up the "fake" basket. **And we'll put the fake money in the [name the color] basket.**

- Form groups of 10, and assign an adult or teen helper to each group. Have each group gather around a table.
- Place the two types of baskets on each table, along with a premade pile of bills.
- Have adult or teen helpers assist kids as they sort the bills, placing them in the appropriate baskets.

#### Test Real Bills

Say: **You've separated the real bills from the fake ones. Did you know that there are special ways to test and see if money is really real? Let's try some of them together.**

- Have adult or teen helpers give each child one of the real bills.
- Have kids feel the paper bills and then the real bills with their fingers. Share that real U.S. bills aren't perfectly smooth. They have some very small bumps that make them feel rough. (The printing press imprints a slight texture.)
- Optional: Give an adult or teen helper in each group a \$5 bill to hold up to the light, and have kids gather around their helper. Point to each 5 on the corners of the bill. Say: **Let's look for another number 5. When we hold it to the light, we'll see a 5 appear beside the face.** Have adult and teen helpers show kids the number 5 to the left of Abraham Lincoln's ear.
- Optional: Give an adult or teen helper in each group a \$10 bill to hold up to the light, and have kids gather around their helper. Say: **Look at the color of the number 10 in the lower right corner. It should change color from a brownish-gold (copper) to green. New paper bills have a color that changes when you move them.** Have adult and teen helpers also show kids the second face on the right side of the bill.

#### Test Fake Bills

Say: **We can test to see if the money is really real. Now let's look at the fake money.** Have helpers give each child a fake bill.

Ask: • **Does it feel rough?** Have children test their fake bills. If you did the optional activities with the \$5 and \$10 bills, have them test those qualities as well.

Say: **We answered "no," so we know that the bills aren't real...they're fake!**

#### Talk About It



Say: **We can tell the difference between real and fake money. And the difference is important—you can't use fake money to buy anything. In our Bible story, the people found out which god was real and which one was fake. We learned that our God is real.**

Share how *you* know God is real. Perhaps he healed you or a loved one, or maybe he answered a prayer for a new job. Say: **We know God is real because he answers our prayers, he sends people to love and help us, and we can look outside and see how amazing and beautiful he is!**



## HIGH-ENERGY GAME

### Is It Real?

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[10 min]

### Supplies

- “Real Versus Fake Photos” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

### Easy Prep

- Cut apart the pictures on the handouts.
- Spread all the photos facedown around the perimeter of the room.

### Run to Find Real Photos

Have all the kids gather in the middle of the room. Say: **God is real, and he’s the only real and true God. Let’s play a game where we’ll run to find real things.** Point out all the photos around the room. Tell kids that some photos are of real things and others are of fake things. Lead kids to play using these steps:

- Tell kids to run to find the real car and bring it back to you. Have them turn cards back over if they’re not the real car. Keep all the photos of real cars they hand you.
- Tell kids to run to find the real bear and bring it back to you. Have them turn cards back over if they’re not the real bear. Keep all the photos of real bears.
- Tell kids to run to find the real hair and bring it back to you. Have them turn the cards back over if they’re not the real hair. Keep all the photos of hair.
- Tell kids to run to find the photo of real food and bring it back to you. Have them turn cards back over if they’re not the real food. Keep all the photos of food.
- If time allows, have kids spread out all the photos and play again.
- Have kids pick up all the photos, and set them aside.

### Talk About It

Have kids gather in a circle. Say: **Sometimes it’s hard to tell what’s real and what’s fake.**

Tell about a time *you* thought something was real but was really fake. Perhaps it was a Christmas tree, flowers in a vase at the doctor’s office, or a toy gerbil.

Ask: • **When did you see something that seemed real but was really fake?** Kids might mention plants in a store, hair on a baby doll, or a plastic baseball.

Say: **In our game, there was photos of real things right next to photos of fake things. We looked carefully to find the real things. That’s like in the Bible story. The Philistines’ fake god Dagon was right next to the Ark of God. They found out who the real God is. Our God is real. He’s the one true God.**



## LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

### Real or Not Real?

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#### Stand Up if It's Real

Say: **Let's play a game of "Real or Not Real." I'll name some things. If the thing I say is real, stand up. If it's not real, then fall down on the floor, like this!** Demonstrate how to fall gently to the ground, and invite kids to practice with you.

Have kids sit on the floor with plenty of space around them to easily stand up or fall down.

List a variety of things, pausing after each one for kids to stand or fall. Be sure to add some silly, nonsense things to the list in addition to real things kids see in their everyday lives. Ideas include:

- elephants
- tigers
- Snuffleupagus
- dogs
- cats
- Tinker Bell
- Curious George
- your adult or teen helper's name
- Humpty Dumpty
- pumpkins
- magic dust
- God

#### Talk About It

Say: **In our game you stood up for what's real! In our Bible story, the fake god, Dagon, fell down because it wasn't real. Only God is real. He's the one true God, and we can stand up for him!**

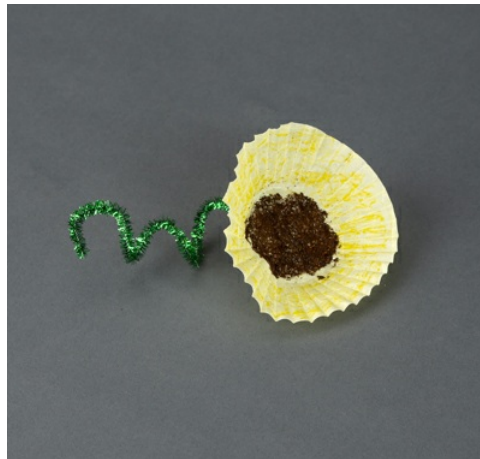


## Supplies

- white cupcake liners (at least 1 per child)
- yellow markers
- paper plates (1 per child)
- unused coffee grounds
- glue sticks
- green chenille wires (at least 1 per child)
- tape
- simple drawing of the sun

## Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



## Make Sunflowers

Show preschoolers the sample craft.

Say: **Today we're going to make sunflowers! Did you know that God made sunflowers to follow the sun? The flowers turn and face the sun wherever it is in the sky.** Use a sample craft to show kids what you mean.

Say: **Only God could make sunflowers to do something as amazing as that. Seeing the amazing things God has created helps us know God is real.**

- Give each preschooler a cupcake liner and a paper plate.
- Have preschoolers color the cupcake liners on both sides with yellow markers.
- Have preschoolers spread glue over the center of the cupcake liners and then set them on paper plates.
- Show preschoolers how to sprinkle coffee grounds over the glue and then gently press down to help the grounds stick to the cupcake liners.
- Have preschoolers shake off the extra coffee grounds onto their paper plates.
- Show preschoolers how to each wrap a chenille wire around their finger to give the wire a twisty shape. They could also wrap it around a partner's finger.
- Help preschoolers each tape one end of the wire to the back of the cupcake liner to create a stem for the sunflower.
- Let preschoolers make multiple sunflowers as time allows.

## Follow the Sun

Say: **Let's make our flowers follow the sun like real sunflowers.**

Have preschoolers stand up and hold their sunflowers. Move around the room holding the picture of the sun, and have preschoolers turn in place so that their sunflowers always face the sun picture.

As time allows, let preschoolers take turns leading and holding the picture of the sun while moving around the room.

Say: **God made sunflowers to follow the sun, and we follow God because God is real. We know he's the one true God.**

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