



On your marks

Sometimes we just seem to hope that children will 'pick up' why the Bible is our special book and why it is here that Christians turn for stories of inspiration and hope. There are many books out there, and children are encouraged to experience a variety of types of literature in schools and are drawn to try out others through special offers and mass marketing. How can we help children and their families to discover the specialness of the Bible and encourage them to make this their key sourcebook for nurturing faith?

Why not have a particular focus on the Bible as the Christian's special book over a series of Sundays, maybe leading up to Bible Sunday, which is in late October? Perhaps the following drama sketch for two people could be used each week when all ages are present. What follows is further material for two-person sketches written to be a fun way to introduce the Bible and its contents.

Get Set

Originally, these sketches were used each morning as part of a Holiday Club each morning and were performed by one person talking to a puppet who was in the persona of a Bible. However, these are the sort of sketches that could be used in a wide range of settings and so would prove equally useful in the first part of a children's group session or special children's event, before the children go off to explore particular stories or themes.

You may have access to a Bible puppet for this, but it will work equally well between two people with one speaking the Bible's words, perhaps holding a large, painted box Bible. For fun and variety the accent for the Bible voice was one from the deep south of America - Kentucky Fried Chicken style - which explains some of the language and references.

The original dialogues were used during a summer holiday period, so there may be some time references you may need to adapt. You will also need a few hardback books to hand.

My thanks goes to Philip Wooley from my church, who helped me devise the original sketches.

Go!

Further ideas for sketches for two people about the Bible

(The two characters are A and B. A is enthusiastic and a bit naive. B has to try and put him/her right. These four sketches complement the four pieces with Holly Bible - see above.)

Sketch 1

A: 91, 92, 93, 94...



B: What are you up to ?

A: 97, 98, 9... Oh dear, I've missed a line and now I've gone wrong! I'll have to start all over again!

B: I'm sorry, but just what were you doing?

A: I'm counting God's promises. There are hundreds of them. They're all listed out in this other book I was recommended by Holly Bible. It's got something to do with airplanes?

B: What on earth do you mean? How can a book about planes have all God's promises in? What's it called?

A: It's called a... Concord-ance.

B: Oh! I might need to explain that one, but not now. Are you ready to hear some more about God's Story- about **His Story**?

A: About more promises?

B: Yes, plenty more and about how the promises start to come true.

A: Of course, because God's promises always come true. At least I've learned that and I've been remembering some of my other favourite bits from God's Special Book.

B: What bits?

A: There's the story about the man who brought the house down - that's Samson.

Or the man who once felt very down in the mouth - that's Jonah.

And the man who did a balancing act, on his wrist, while on the walls of Jerusalem, with his eyes shut!

B: A balancing act? On his wrist? With his eyes shut?! Who on earth was that?

A: It says here... it's the man who fell asleep on his watch!

B: Oh dear, again. That's another I'll have to explain later! But those stories all come from the Old Testament part of God's Book. There are also promises in the New Testament. Are you ready? Promise you will listen. Promise that you won't interrupt?

A: I promise, I promise. Is this going to be about the disciples and the crowds and about Jesus and...

A: Hold on, hold on, you're getting ahead of things again. Yesterday the promises were linked to the sand. Today the promises are linked to... fish . Listen and I'll explain...



Sketch 2

A: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

Acts and Romans follow on...

B: Hi there, what are you up to this time.

A: Oh hi. I'm trying to learn the story books in the new part of God's Special Book. The trouble is I keep getting muddled up with all the ones ending in -shuns.

B: -shuns?

A: You know the effy-shuns and glos-shuns. It's complicated.

B: They don't all end like that, do they? Which others do you know?

A: Well, there's a Peter or two and a James and a Timothy. I've got friends with those names, so they're easy. But I just don't see where the islands and the dogs come in.

B: Islands and dogs????

A: The Philippines and the Alsatians.

B: You mean Philippians and Galatians! Don't worry about that for now. It's the promises that matter. Do you remember what they were?

A: Well, Jesus was the one God promised and he has given us a load more special promises.

Like he promises that he will never turn us away... that's great! And he promises us that life with him even beats death.

And... and...

B: Can anyone help us out with some more? That's right.

A: He promises a brand-new start for anyone who comes to him and says sorry.

B: He calls it forgiveness.

Sketch 3

A: Guess what?

B: What is it?



A: Guess what? I'm writing a book!

B: A book?!

A: Yes! You see, I've been talking to everyone here and they've told me about the books they like...

B: You mean like... (*mention some of the groups*)

A: And some said they like the titles in the 'Horrible Histories' series - you know the ones. Well, I've decided to write my own series. I'm going to write my version called... 'the Heavenly Histories' - all based on God's story!

B: Sounds good. What titles have you thought of?

A: Well, let me try a few out on you.

There's 'the Itchy Israelites' ... they must have had itchy feet, because they were always on the move!

'The Jumping Judges'... because they were always jumping up and reminding people to trust in God.

'The Konfused Kings'... because some were good and some were bad.

And the 'Paint-pot Prophets'.

B: The 'Paint-pot Prophets'!! Why on earth were they called that?

A: Because they were always shouting out 'Re-paint, re-paint' (*make this sound like 'repent'!*)

And then I thought about 'The Fine, Friendly, Fiery, Faithful, Funny, Fast, Fantastic Fishermen'

B: Wow, but why so many 'fs'?

A: Well, there were twelve of them!

Or there's 'The Dazzling Disciples', 'The Magnificent Missionaries', and 'The Travelling Translators'.

B: This sounds great. When's the series coming out?

A: Well, there might be a delay.

B: Why's that?

A: You see, I only just thought of it this morning and I'm not a fast writer.

B: What you need to do is make a Talking Book!



A: Like Holly Bible, you mean? Like God's book, in fact.

B: Actually, did you know that God *does* want you to write a book but it's a book without words or pages or even a cover.

A: No words? No pages?? No cover??? Not even any full stops???

B: That's right. It's a book about you and God. His-story linked up with Your story!

A: Wow... How do I get started?

B: Well, it starts as soon as you ask Jesus to be your friend and co-writer for ever.

A: You mean, I can be part of God's story, like Abraham and Moses... like Ruth and David... and Mary and Paul.... and all the others we've heard about?

B: Yes, that's right. It's what God wants all along.

Sketch 4

A: Listen, listen, I've been talking with Holly Bible and she's shown me something amazing about the Book of books.

B: What is it?

A: Well, it sort of sums it all up, in a really neat way.

B: Sums what up?

A: The whole of the story... history... His-story... you know.

B: Go on.

A: What are the *first* words of God's special book?

B: (*with help from those listening*) 'In the beginning **GOD**'

A: That's right, the book starts with GOD.

Now, what are the almost *last* words of God's special book?

B: Oh, that's harder. Can anyone help me? 'Come Lord **Jesus**'.

A: That's right, the book ends with JESUS.

Now what are the middle words in God's special book?



B: Now, that's an impossible question! No one knows that.

A: Holly Bible does!

B: She would! So what is it?

A: (*imitating Holly Bible's accent*) 'Psalm 118, verses 8 and 9'... and guess what the key word in these verses is? TRUST.

B: So?

A: So, God's special book starts with God, ends with Jesus and it all hinges on putting our trust in him. Isn't that amazing!

B: Wow, that is neat. We must remember that!