



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** God is Our Rescuer  
Summer Year 2, Lesson 9

# **Fooled People Worship False Gods**

**Take Home Point:** \*Only worship God.

\*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

**Bible Event:** Exodus 32. The golden calf.

**Key Verse:** Exodus 20:2-4, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. Never have any other god. Never make your own carved idols or statues..."

**We will help kids know:**

- Only worship God.
- The Bible event in which the Israelites created their own god, the golden calf. They quickly forgot God's rescue for them.
- God was faithful and remembered his promises throughout the generations. He did not destroy all the people but he continued as their rescuer.




**We will help kids feel:**

- A sense of fear and respect that God will tolerate no other rivals in our lives.
- A passion for never forgetting. A passion to never forget God as our rescuer.

**We will help kids do:**

- Identify things in their lives that might become like gods if allowed to more importance than the living God.
- Remember at least three blessings or promises that God has given them in their lives to be their helper and rescuer.

# THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

| DESTINATION   | PAGE #                         | DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY  | SUPPLIES NEEDED  |
|---|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Small Group Warm-Up</b><br>       | 3                              | Our lives can get backwards if we worship our favorite things rather than worshiping God. It can happen, and when it does we are the silly ones.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• craft stick for each child</li> <li>• square of aluminum foil for each child (approximately 8 x 8-inch)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Large Group</b><br>               | 4<br><br>8<br><br>10<br><br>13 | <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p><b>Puppet Presentation:</b> “Fooled People Worship False Gods”—Even though Gordy is pretty smart, the presenter reminds him that people can be pretty fooled when they put other things before God.</p> <p><b>Dramatic Storytelling:</b> “The Golden Calf”—the Bible event from Exodus 32 is told with audience participation. The Israelites quickly forgot how God had rescued them and turned to a man-made idol to follow.</p> <p><b>Puppet Conclusion:</b> “Fooled People Worship False Gods”—Just like the Israelites, we can quickly forget how God is our rescuer. We should remember to <i><b>*only worship God</b></i> and trust in Jesus.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gordy with a string around his nose</li> <li>• drop cloth</li> <li>• spray adhesive</li> <li>• plastic toy farm animal (preferably a cow if available)</li> <li>• cardboard box</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Small Group Application</b><br> | 4                              | Seeing their names written backwards help the kids to see that during the routines of life we often get things backwards and worship other things rather than God. We are be reminded to <i><b>*only worship God</b></i> .   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• craft sticks from Small Group Warm-Up</li> <li>• square of aluminum foil for each child (approximately 8 x 8-inch)</li> <li>• markers</li> <li>• one-half sheet of copy paper for each child</li> </ul> |

# Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



**Purpose:** *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

*Supplies:*

- craft stick for each child
- square of aluminum foil for each child (approximately 8 x 8-inch)

Each child is handed a craft stick and one sheet of foil (approximately 8 x 8-inches). Ask the children to draw a picture of something they treasure by placing the aluminum foil on a soft surface like the carpet and gently making impressions with their writing utensil.

**What is one thing you have in your life that you treasure very much? What is something that is yours and is important to you? Draw a picture of it with the craft stick on the foil sheet. Under your picture write your name.**

To make the indentation more plain, have the children set the foil on a hard surface and smooth it out with their fingers. Then say:

**Now flip the foil over and see the design. There is a raised indentation of your picture. Your name is spelled out but it looks funny. It is spelled backwards.**

Have the children pick a partner.

**Carefully pick up your foil picture and show it to your partner. See if you can guess what each other's favorite thing is. After you guess each other's, tell why it is your favorite thing.**

Have kids trade partners several times and see how many correct guesses the children get.

Before going to large group, tie the activity together.

**Did you notice how your name was written backwards? It would be a silly way to write your name, wouldn't it? Did you know that our lives can get backwards if we ever worship our favorite things rather than worshipping God? It can happen, and when it does, we are the silly ones. Perhaps I should say, we would be foolish to worship *things* rather than the true God.**

**Do you remember last week when we learned that God shows us the best path? The best path is keeping his commandments. One of those commandments is to have no other god before him. That means we should *\*only worship God*.**

Today we will hear out about the Israelites who acted in a foolish way when they made their own god. It was a pretty silly god because it was nothing but an idol.

You will need to take your foil with you, but leave your writing utensil here. We will use them when we come back to small group. Take your foil picture and sit on it when you get into large group because you will need to use it during the presentation.

## Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

**Puppet Presentation:** “Fooled People Worship False Gods”—Even though Gordy is pretty smart, the presenter reminds him that people can be pretty fooled when they put other things before God.

**Dramatic Storytelling:** “The Golden Calf”—the Bible event from Exodus 32 is told with audience participation. The Israelites quickly forgot how God had rescued them and turned to a man-made idol to follow.

**Puppet Conclusion:** “Fooled People Worship False Gods”—Just like the Israelites, we can quickly forget how God is our rescuer. We should remember to ***\*only worship God*** and trust in Jesus.

## Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

*Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.*

### Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Exodus 24 and 32 in their Bibles.

**Why did Moses go up to the mountain?** (*Exodus 24:12. God wanted to give him stone tablets with the teachings and the commandments for the people's instruction.*)

**How long was he there?** *(Exodus 24:18. He stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights.)*

**What did the people say to each other and Aaron when Moses didn't return?** *(Exodus 32:1. "We don't know what has happened to this Moses, who led us out of Egypt. Make gods who will lead us.")*

**Why was this so foolish?** *(They had forgotten God's power and how he had led them out of Egypt.)*

**What kind of idol did they make?** *(Exodus 32:4. They made a golden calf.)*

**What did they think the idol would do for them?** *(Exodus 32:4. Since this was the kind of god the Egyptians worshiped and they hadn't heard from Moses, God's spokesman, they turned to what they did remember for a leader. The calf was an Egyptian god.)*

**What did Moses tell God so that God would not destroy the people?** *(Exodus 32:11-13. Moses asked God to remember his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and to consider what the Egyptians would say?)*

**When Moses came down from the mountain what did he do with the calf? What did he have the people do?** *(Exodus 32: 20. He ground the golden calf into fine powder and put it in the people's water and made them drink it.)*

**What did Aaron say to Moses when Moses asked Aaron what happened?** *(Exodus 32: 24. Aaron told the people to remove their gold. He cast it in the fire and told Moses that the calf came from the fire.)*

### **Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?**

**Why do you think the people decided to make an idol even though God had told them to only worship him?** *(They forgot about God. They forgot what God said. They couldn't see Moses and became foolish and confused.)*

**What do you think about the choices the Israelites made?** *(They were sooo foolish.)*

**Years later, what do you think the Israelites thought when they remembered how they had made a gold calf and worshiped it and yet God still kept them as his people?** *(Then they remembered how God,*

*their rescuer, was patient with them and remembered his promise to bring them to a promised land.)*

## **Application Questions: What does this mean to me?**

**How are we like the Israelites? Do we ever make golden calves?** *(Literally, no.)* **What kinds of things do we do that are like making golden calves?** *(Anytime we make something in our lives so important that we put it in front of God, it becomes an idol to us.)*

**Our key verse from Exodus 20:2-4 says, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. Never have any other god. Never make your own carved idols or statues...”**

**Can you think of things people use today as idols? I will give you a list. These things are not wrong to have or want. But if they are so important that they keep you from worshiping God, or you trust them to meet your needs more than you trust God, it would be a false god.**

**Here are some things that might be idols or false gods. You tell me how they might be used as a false god.**

- **Money**
- **Having the hottest new toy**
- **Sports**
- **Wanting to become famous**

### Application Activity:

#### Supplies:

- *craft sticks from Small Group Warm-Up*
- *square of aluminum foil for each child (approximately 8x8-inch)*
- *markers*
- *one-half sheet of copier paper for each child*

For a hands-on activity, give each child a piece of paper and ask him to write his name with a marker. Now ask the children to flip their papers over and see if they can see their names through the other side. Have them trace over the letters to form their names backwards. Their names might look silly backwards, but that would be a lot like their lives being silly if they were backwards.

**Our lives get backwards when we put other things in front of God.**

Let the kids share certain things people might do that get to be so important to them that they get in the way of them following God.

***\*Only worship God.*** God wants us to remember that, even if our life gets backwards, we can go to him. He will always remember his promise to forgive us and help us follow him. Our Rescuer is Jesus and we always need to remember that, especially when our lives get backwards.

Pass out to each child an 8 x 8-inch piece of aluminium foil and craft stick. Have the kids study their names and what that looks like backwards. They should memorize how this looks. Then, without looking at the paper again, they can try to write their names backwards on the bottom of the foil. Above their names they are to draw a cross. When they flip it to the other side, they will see their names written underneath the cross. They can use this as a Bible bookmark reminding them to ***\*only worship God***.

Closing Prayer:

Ask kids to remember ways God has been faithful to them in the past and has helped them. These should be prayed over with thanksgiving. Then ask for God's help so we always ***\*only worship God***. Ask God to remind us to never forget what Jesus did for us or to become fooled people who worship false gods.

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# Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

## Fooled People Worship False Gods Puppet Presentation

### *Supplies:*

- Gordy with a string around his nose
- drop cloth
- spray adhesive
- plastic toy farm animal (preferably a cow if available)
- cardboard box

Gordy comes out with a string tied around his nose.

Gordy: Hi, everyone!

**Presenter: Hi, Gordy. That is an interesting look you have.**

Gordy: What do you mean?

**Presenter: What is that on your nose?**

Gordy: My nose? Oh, I forgot. There is a string on my nose.

**Presenter: I can see that. What is the string there for?**

Gordy: It's to remind me of how smart I am.

**Presenter: To remind you of how smart you are? I didn't know string could remind you of that.**

Gordy: Don't you know? People tie strings around their fingers to remind them of something important. I tied it around my nose.

**Presenter: What is so important?**

Gordy: After church today I get to go to my friend's house, and I don't want to forget my best, most favorite possession.

**Presenter: What's that?**

Gordy: It's my super fancy chess set.

**Presenter: I didn't know you played chess. Really smart people play chess, don't they?**



Gordy: Of course only smart people play chess. That's why I play it. I don't want to forget to bring it to my friend's house so he can see how smart I am.

**Presenter: Gordy, if you are so smart, why do you need the string?**

Gordy: To remember! To remember to bring the chess set.

**Presenter: Since you are so smart, couldn't you remember something as important as that?**

Gordy: Hmm . . . I never thought of that. I guess I just forget easily.

**Presenter: Gordy, today we will hear how the Israelites so easily forgot that God had rescued them from Egypt. They were ready to make another god out of gold.**

Gordy: Wow! That's pretty foolish.

**Presenter: Right! They should have remembered: *\*only worship God.***

Gordy: Of course we should only worship God. Who else would we worship?

**Presenter: Sometimes people worship things. In today's Bible event the people actually made a golden calf and called it a god. They even said it was the god that delivered them out of Egypt. They were fooled.**

Gordy: They must have been fooled! How could a golden calf do that? I'm glad we don't make false gods like that today. That's just a false god for foolish people.

**Presenter: I'm glad you're not fooled like that, Gordy. Did you know that people today make false gods for themselves?**

Gordy: No way! How?

**Presenter: Well, take that super deluxe chess set for an example.**

Gordy: You mean people could make a god out of that?

**Presenter: They probably wouldn't bow down before it and worship it. But they could make playing chess and impressing people the most important thing in the world to them.**

Gordy: You mean making it too important?

**Presenter:** Yes, Gordy. Let's say it was so important that they never went to church because they were home playing chess. Then I think chess would be like a god.

Gordy: That would be pretty foolish.

**Presenter:** I agree. We need to remember to *\*only worship God*. We shouldn't let anything else become so important that we trust it more than God to take care of our needs.

Gordy: That would be foolish, indeed!

**Presenter:** Gordy, why don't you watch the presentation of today's Bible event so you can see what happens when people worship a false god.

Gordy: Yeah, they must have been fooled!

**Presenter:** Let's see if that's the case.

## The Golden Calf

### Dramatic Storytelling

*Throughout this paraphrased Bible presentation, there is audience participation. Since we are talking about how the people were foolish to so quickly forget God and to imagine that a handmade god had any power, the audience will respond at certain sections with, "That's soooo foolish!" They do this when a prompter points to them and then silently counts to three using his fingers. The response from the kids should be everyone lightly hitting their foreheads with their palm and saying, "That's sooo foolish!"*

*During the storytelling, the children will throw their aluminum foil onto the stage as loosely wrapped balls. These will be applied to a plastic toy animal (preferably a stuffed cow if available) to make the golden calf.*

The presenter asks for a volunteer to come forward to be the prompter for the audience and explain what to do.

**Presenter:** *(Speaking to the prompter.)* When I tap you on your shoulder, silently count with your fingers for everyone to see. You will show with your fingers, "One, two, three." After counting to three, put your palm to your forehead and say, "That's soooo foolish!" Let's practice.

Silent finger counting, "One, two, three." Then the whole audience with the prompter says, "That's soooo foolish!" and puts their palms to their foreheads.

**Presenter:** *(Speaking to the audience.)* You are going to have another part to play in the Bible event. Take your foil that you have been sitting on and

lightly crumple it and place it at your feet. Don't wad it up very tightly. When I tell you to, you will get to throw your foil onstage.

I need volunteers to be Aaron and his three helpers. These volunteers will help build a golden calf. Show plastic toy animal. Let's pretend this toy animal is our own homemade golden calf. Aaron and his helpers will use the aluminum foil that is thrown onstage to wrap the golden calf. Use the extra foil and cardboard box to make a base for the golden calf. Perhaps I could have an adult volunteer help with this.

Are you ready to begin? This story is from Exodus 32.

Tap the prompter when a ▲ appears in the script.

Moses had gone up to meet with God in a thick cloud on Mount Sinai. After many days had passed, the Israelites wondered if Moses would ever come back. They said to each other, "*We don't know what has happened to this Moses, who led us out of Egypt.*" ▲

The people had already forgotten the important commandment God had given them. Remember how he said, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. Never have any other god. Never make your own carved idols or statues..." Can you imagine making carved idols? ▲

Days turned into weeks and still Moses did not return. The people were restless. They soon forgot how afraid they had once been when they heard God's voice thundering from the smoky mountain. They seemed to forget about God altogether. ▲

They said to Aaron, "What happened to this fellow Moses, who brought us out of Egypt? Who will lead us now? Come and make gods for us who will lead us and show us the way to go." ▲

Aaron answered them, "Take off your gold earrings and gold jewelry you are wearing. Bring it to me."

Boys and girls, now is the time to throw out your aluminum foil and let's watch Aaron and his helpers build a golden calf.

Have the adult lightly spray the plastic cow and cardboard box with adhesive. While the volunteers wrap the statue with foil, the presenter continues.

Aaron melted the gold carefully in a fire. He shaped the gold in the form of a calf, just like the ones the Egyptians worshiped. When they were finished, the people said, "These are your gods, O Israel. These are the gods who brought you out of Egypt." They were fooled! ▲

**When Aaron saw fooled people worshiping the calf, he built an altar in front of it. He said there would be a festival the next day to the Lord. Maybe Aaron was trying to point the people back to the Lord, but God still would not want to be worshiped alongside a false idol like a golden calf. ▲**

**The people danced and had a big party celebrating their new god. They bowed down before it and worshiped it. They made a great big noise. ▲**

**God told Moses to go down the mountain because the people were fooled and had made a golden calf to be an idol. God was ready to destroy the people, but Moses prayed for their forgiveness. God remembered his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel that he would keep them as a special people. God knew he would love them even if they had been fooled and worshiped false gods.**

**Moses came down from the mountain and heard the great noise. He asked Joshua, “What is happening in the camp?” Joshua explained, “It must be the sound of war because it is so loud.”**

**Moses replied, “It is not the sound of war or victory. It’s the sound of singing and a great party the people are having to a false god.”**

**When Moses came to the camp and saw the golden calf and the dancing, he threw the stone tablets to the ground. The tablets broke into many pieces. He asked Aaron, “What have you done?”**

**Aaron explained, “You know how evil these people are. They made me build a god for them. I told them to give me their gold and I threw it into the fire. Then out came this calf.” ▲**

**Moses saw that the people were out of control and running wildly. He said, “Whoever is for the Lord come to me! Whoever is against the Lord will die!”**

**About 3,000 people died that day. Moses reminded the people of their sin. He took the calf they had made and melted it and ground it into a fine powder. He scattered the powder over the water and he made the Israelites drink it. Fooled people will follow false gods. The bitter water would remind them that they should not follow false gods.**

**God punished the people for their sin, but forgave them and renewed his promise to them. He would still be their God and lead them to the promised land through Moses.**

**Let's take a look at our golden calf. If this were an idol, would it have any power to be a god? ▲ Of course not!**

Thank volunteers for their help and have them return to their seats.

## **Fooled People Worship False Gods**

### **Puppet Conclusion**

**Presenter: Gordy, what do you think about those fooled people who made their own god?**

Gordy: That's sooo foolish! They sure had a short memory. How could they forget that God had rescued them?

**Presenter: I don't know, Gordy. I sure want to remember, don't you?**

Gordy: Remember what?

**Presenter: I want to remember that since God has given us Jesus, we can trust him as our Savior. We can know that God will always rescue us and show us his forgiveness as well.**

Gordy: I can remember that.

**Presenter: We should remember to *\*only worship God* and trust in Jesus. That's more important than anything else.**

Gordy: Even playing chess. Which reminds me... I get to play chess today. But that won't be more important than church. I'll wait until afterwards...unless I forget.

**Presenter: I don't think you'll forget, Gordy. Why don't you keep your string on your nose just in case?**

**Would you close us in prayer before we go back to our small group?**

Gordy: Okay. Dear God, we want to worship only you. We don't want to be fooled people who would worship false gods. Anything else anyone trusts more than you is a false god. Thank you for Jesus, who is our Savior. Thank you that because of him, you can always take us back if we ever mess up and forget to worship only you. In Jesus' name, Amen.