How to Build Character

Lesson 1: My True Character
Lesson 1—My True Character

Unit Summary
Children grow up being told what to do and what not to do, learning behaviors that keep them out of trouble and earn them rewards. In this short-sighted approach, their walk with Christ becomes limited to seeking to please the adults in their lives. Remove those adults, and the kids’ pursuit of Jesus evaporates as well. Teach children to build solid Christian character, however, and you have disciples who can live victoriously, independent of adult supervision yet dependent on God. Isn’t that our ultimate goal? This unit trains children to evaluate and take ownership of their spiritual growth, following the model of Jesus’ growth in the short but powerful verse, Luke 2:52. In this verse we discover a comprehensive formula for Christian character in young people—wisdom, character, integrity, and reputation. Children can intentionally develop in these same areas, if we are willing to guide them!

Lesson Summary
It has been said, “Character is the person you are when no one is looking.” Character is who you really are. It is the set of qualities that describe what you believe, what is important to you, and how you make your decisions. Because humans are sinful, our character is damaged. When we become Christians, the Holy Spirit comes to repair our character and to inform us when our character is flawed—the process of changing to become more like Jesus begins. God becomes the center of our character, the Bible shapes our character, and prayer empowers the development of our character. It is a slow, daily, and difficult process, but with God’s help and our constant effort, we can do it!

Paul’s Power Principle: Character is who you are when no one is looking.

In this lesson, your children will...

KNOW
• “Character” describes who they really are, the people they choose to be.

FEEL
• Eager to build good character.

DO
• Name at least three positive character traits.
SPARK INTEREST

Choose from the following activities and ideas to engage kids and grab their attention.

Welcome!—Tower Challenge
Beforehand, set up two Jenga game towers at the room’s entrance. As children arrive, let them know that their dexterity skills are being tested and to proceed with caution. Have a leader supervise the Jenga games. Before a child can enter, he or she must successfully remove one Jenga block from the tower without causing it to fall. If a tower falls, move to the second tower. If both towers fall before most of the kids have had a chance to play, have the leader rebuild a tower and continue. Of course, if a tower falls, the player will want to blame the kids who went before and weakened the tower! Delay teaching the point of the activity at this time—it will be made during the main lesson. For now, just let it be a fun activity as the children arrive.

Let’s Meet-n-Greet!
Have everyone turn to one or two nearby people and give them three tries to guess each other’s favorite color jelly bean. When finished, take a quick poll to see which is the most common favorite jelly bean color.

Leaders, be sure to stop whatever you are doing to move through the audience and greet the children, especially those you do not recognize. Announce any birthdays for the week. (See the How to Use DiscipleTown guide for quick and easy ways to acknowledge visitors and birthdays.)

PowerPoint Presentation
As you plan your lesson, select PowerPoint slides that correspond to the lesson elements you choose. In the “Slide Sorter” View, you can rearrange and/or delete the slides as necessary. For descriptions of the included slides and tips on their use, see the notes accompanying each slide.

Supplies
General Supplies
- Bibles, puppets, video projection (optional)
- Pencils, pens, paper

Spark Interest
- WELCOME!: two Jenga games
- LET’S PLAY!: bags of cotton balls
- CONNECT WITH YOUR KIDS: none

Explore Scripture
- KEYVERSE: none

Inspire Action
- DRAMATIZE THE POINT: various props (see activity)

PowerPoint Presentation
As you plan your lesson, select PowerPoint slides that correspond to the lesson elements you choose. In the “Slide Sorter” View, you can rearrange and/or delete the slides as necessary. For descriptions of the included slides and tips on their use, see the notes accompanying each slide.
Let's Worship!
As you open in worship, emphasize that true character leads us to want to please God and follow Him.

Recommended Song: I'm Followin' Jesus by Rob Biagi from Get Out There CD, available at Kidology.org

Puppet Intro
Leader & puppet introduce today’s lesson. You will find a scripted version of this intro at the end of the lesson. Supplies: puppet, handheld gadget

Puppet* gives leader a handheld device and asks him or her to put it somewhere in the house where it can be seen all the time. Leader asks what it is, and puppet says it is a monitor. Leader asks, “A monitor? You mean like a TV screen? Of what?” Puppet says, “I installed cameras throughout my house, and they all feed wirelessly to that there monitor so you can see everything I do from now on.” Leader asks, “But why would you do that?” Puppet says, “Because when people are watching, I’m a better person. When no one is looking, I sometimes sin. So I figured, if you were always looking—or I thought you might be looking—maybe I’d be a better person.” Leader says, “I see. Well, you don’t need a bunch of cameras. There is someone always looking. And it’s not me.” Puppet says, “I knew that creepy guy down the street was peeking in my windows!” Leader laughs and replies, “No, I’m talking about God. He sees everything, so you don’t need to give me a monitor.” Puppet says, “I know God sees everything, but for some reason that doesn’t always motivate me enough.” Leader says, “You know, [puppet name], we’re about to start learning how to build our character—and character is who we are when no one is looking. Sounds like this will be a good unit for you.” Puppet says, “Really? I need it. Because when no one is looking, I sometimes change into a different person. And I don’t always like that person.” Leader says, “We all struggle with that. But the good news is, God wants to help us grow and change, and He will help when we ask!”

*PUPPET: Develop a puppet character to use regularly. The children will get to know the personality and enjoy these regular visits. Dee, Cy, and Paul puppets are available at DiscipleLand.com
Let’s Play!—Indoor Snowball Fight

**Supplies:** six big bags of cotton balls, masking tape

Tape a dividing line down the middle of the room. For an added challenge, put a free-standing chalkboard or divider on the line as an obstacle to block the kids’ view. Choose two teams of six to twelve children, or for smaller groups, simply divide all kids into teams so everyone can play. Give each team three bags of cotton balls. The object of the game is to have no cotton balls on your side of line. On “go,” everyone works together to throw the cotton balls onto the other team’s side. Set a three-minute time limit for the round. When time is up, the team with the least amount of cotton balls on its side wins! This crazy game is so much fun, your kids will want to play again as time permits. To play again, combine the cotton balls into a pile and, as evenly as possible, divide the pile in two.

**The Point:** One cotton ball on the floor doesn’t make that big of a mess—but a roomful makes for a very big mess! In the same way, the decisions we make may at times seem small and unimportant, but they can add up to big consequences. Good character results from many “small” good decisions. If you don’t want to make a mess of your life (hold up one cotton ball), show good character in the small things you do. It will make a big difference over time.

Connect with Your Kids

Tell the children of a time when you did something and you thought no one was looking—but it turned out someone was. Perhaps it was a struggle to do the right thing, and in retrospect you soberly realized that, had you not made that right choice, those watching would have seen you do the wrong thing. Point out that even if no one else had been watching, God saw your actions.

I remember my first week as a freshman student at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. My job was to get up at 5:00 a.m. and pick up trash around the entire campus, so that by the time everyone else got up, the campus was looking sharp. One of the first mornings on the job, I spotted the president of the college, Dr. Joseph M. Stowell III, crossing the campus in an area I had yet to clean. It was about 6:00 a.m., and as far as he could tell, he was alone. And yet, as he crossed the plaza of this school where he was the top executive, guess what this man did? Yup. He bent down several times and scooped up trash. Before entering the administrative building, he dropped it all into a trash can. The president of the college was doing my lowly job. On the very first week, this freshman knew that his president had true godly character, because he was willing to pick up trash when no one was looking.

What is your story of either seeing true character on display or being caught when your character was on display?

DiscipleTown Visitor

**Bob the Bricklayer**

Bob comes down the street dressed in overalls (preferably covered in paint or mortar), with a trowel and a broken brick in his hand. Leader asks who he is, and he gives his name and explains that he is a bricklayer, working on a large skyscraper just up the road. He explains that he must replace the brick in his hand because if he were to use a broken brick in his building, it would create a weak spot. Leader explains that just as Bob’s building is built one brick at a time, our character is built one choice at a time. When we make bad choices, it is like building with broken bricks. When we discover areas of our lives that are broken or weak, we need to replace or repair them.

*CHARACTERS:* These are suggested characters and names. Please feel free to change or adjust according to the actors and props you have available.
Let’s Search!—Bible Dash

**Supplies:** Bibles

Ask all kids with Bibles to participate, or invite a few volunteers to come to the front. As children hold Bibles closed with hands on covers, state the Bible reference twice, then on the command “SEARCH!” have the students race to locate the verse. Once they have a finger on the verse, they can stand and call out, “FOUND IT!” Have the first child read the verse aloud while you project the verse on a screen via PowerPoint. See suggestions below for comments on each verse. Keep your comments brief and to the point of the lesson.

- **Luke 2:52**  
  We should grow up in the same ways that Jesus did.

- **Deuteronomy 7:6**  
  God wants us to be holy.

- **2 Timothy 2:15**  
  God wants us to work hard.

- **2 Timothy 1:7**  
  God wants us to be brave.

- **Galatians 1:10**  
  God is whom we should be trying to please.

- **Colossians 1:10**  
  Good work pleases God.

- **Hebrews 11:6**  
  God rewards those who seek Him.

**Paul’s Power Principle:** Character is who you are when no one is looking.

**Suggested Bible Narrative**

**Joseph Grows in Wisdom—Genesis 37**

There is an incredible parallel between the Old Testament story of Joseph and the depiction of Jesus growing up in Luke 2:52 (growing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and people). It starts with the gift of wisdom God gave to Joseph through his dreams—revealing to Joseph that the Lord had an amazing plan for his life. It was a plan that this young boy could not understand, nor could he fully anticipate the high cost. Joseph misstepped in sharing his dreams with his jealous brothers, but such boyish enthusiasm aside, it’s clear that God had begun to instill a supernatural wisdom into him that would only continue to grow. Knowing that God had a special and unique purpose for his life kept Joseph going even in the darkest times to follow.

To tell this story, I have always found it best to simply dress in a “coat of many colors” and relate it in the first person, wearing the same coat throughout all four weeks. Even though the coat is destroyed in the story, it serves as an instantly recognizable symbol of Joseph. Simply turn your back, put on the coat, and turn back around in character—and speak as though you are Joseph. Speak from the heart, being emotional when necessary (as there is a lot of emotion in Joseph’s story), and the children will be glued to the familiar story in a fresh way.
Let’s Learn!—My True Character

Supplies: Bibles, soda can, tape, water

Review Welcome Activity: As you arrived this morning, you each took turns removing blocks from the wood towers. Those of you who were first to remove the blocks had it easy, but those of you who had to remove them later had a much harder job. Raise your hand if the tower fell when you removed a piece. Did you feel like it was completely your fault? Of course not—those who had removed blocks before you weakened the tower. That’s how character works. The little choices we make every day to please God build good character and strengthen our spiritual lives. But when we make poor choices, we weaken our spiritual lives—and eventually we can fall, even by the smallest temptation. Our lives are like those towers, and the choices we make every day impact our future. Having good character is very important, and character is built one decision at a time.

Because the story in Genesis 37 ends with Joseph being sent off with the slave traders, you are left with a powerful introduction to true character. Joseph had been horribly wronged. His father had been lied to. The brothers had betrayed their God, brother, and father. In a secular story, Joseph had every right to be angry. To plot revenge. To hate. To steal to eat. To wish evil of his brothers. Most of the children know the story and how it will end. Encourage them not to skip to the end too quickly. Instead, ask them to think about how it could have ended, and how people could say, “He had every right.” Why did Joseph’s story end the way it did? One reason—because of Joseph’s true character.

Why is this important? Because you are also going to experience bad things. Unfair things. Yes, even evil things. And how your story ends will depend on one thing, and one thing only—your character.

Your character determines the outcome of situations, relationships, hardships, and so much more. As Joseph was carried farther and farther away from his home and his family during those long, lonely, hard hours, he had a choice to make. How was he going to respond? With anger? Hate? Despair? Or trust in God? Was he going to change the kind of person he was or remain true to his good character? We face similar decisions every day. What kind of person will you be when no one is looking?

Joseph knew there was one Person that bad people could never take from him, who would never leave him, and who was with him every step of the way—and that made all the difference in the world. Who was that person? God.

Joseph knew the kind of person God wanted him to be, even in a far-off land where he was about to become a slave to someone who had no right to buy him. Joseph belonged to God, and he decided he would live to please Him.

That’s what character is all about—living to please God no matter what, even when no one is around to see.

Galatians 1:10—Whom do we try to please, people or God? The answer should be God. In every situation, we ask ourselves what God would want us to do.

Colossians 1:10—How do we please God? By bearing fruit and presenting a life worthy of the Lord. That means doing the right things—living a life of true character.

Hebrews 11:6—The good news is that God rewards those who earnestly seek him. That should be a great incentive!
Read Matthew 6:1-6. Talk about how God sees what is done in private and rewards right actions, because He knows they are for real. Actions springing from true character aren’t done to impress anyone. Emphasize that who you are when no one is around is the “real you.”

Object Lesson: Before class, take a soda can, drill a hole in the bottom, drain out the soda, refill it with water, and seal the hole. In front of the children, make a big deal out of shaking up the can. Be careful not to drop it or show that the can has been modified, but be very dramatic. Discuss what is happening to the soda inside the can while you are shaking it. Walk out among the children and ask them what would happen if you were to open the can! Ask the kids if they want you to open it (they will have mixed answers, but some will say “Yes!”). Walk up to some who answered positively and act like you are going to open it over their heads—have some fun with it. Finally, open it over a leader or volunteer’s head—nothing will happen. Why did nothing happen? There was only water inside the can, not soda. What’s inside the can matters. The same is true of our character. When we have good and pure character, we can be shaken by this world, but we won’t “explode.” But if our character is bad, we can explode when situations rattle us.

Character is the real you—the you when you are shaken. The you when no one is looking or no one is around. And how does God help build our character? One piece at a time.

Dee’s Disciple Tip: Each lesson, we’ll look at “Three Traits of Character.” Three traits that please God. Today is about “true character.” True character is who you are when no one is looking. Here are three aspects of character that have to do with that.

Listed below are the three traits followed by an opposite trait. Write each trait on a slip of paper, roll it up, and place it inside a 12-inch balloon. Inflate the balloons. Choose six kids from the audience and give each of them one of the balloons. Explain that inside the balloons are the three “True” character traits and three words that describe the opposite of each trait. On “go,” they are to pop the balloons by sitting on them and then read their words, pairing up with the person who has the related opposite word. Once the kids are paired up, stand beside each pair and talk about each trait using the opposite to further illustrate the trait’s meaning. A verse from the Bible Dash is included for reference.

**True Traits (When No One Is Looking)**
- Be holy >>> impure (Deuteronomy 7:6)
- Be diligent <<< lazy (2 Timothy 2:15)
- Be courageous <<< fearful (2 Timothy 1:7)
KeyVerse

Topic: Jesus’ Character
Reference: Luke 2:52

The focus this week is on wisdom. You may want to talk briefly about wisdom, which is not the same as being smart. **Wisdom is correctly using what you know. You can be smart without being wise. You can also have little knowledge, but be very wise—knowing how to act on what you do know.**

Memorization Activity: Because the KeyVerse is fairly straightforward, work on learning the entire verse this week. Use the following hand motions to teach the verse:

- And Jesus: sign language for “Lord”—right hand passes from left shoulder down to right hip, as though showing a sash
- grew: drop to floor and stand up with hands over heads, growing like a tree
- in wisdom: point to brain
- and stature: pose like a bodybuilder
- and in favor: create “OK” gesture with thumb and forefinger
- with God: both hands point to sky
- and men: point quickly to many people
- Luke: form an “L” with right hand
- 2: hold up two fingers with left hand
- 52: hold up five fingers followed by two fingers with right hand
Dramatize the Point—Birdhouse Bungle

Act this out or read as a story. Supplies: two actors, picture of a cool-looking birdhouse, large birdhouse blueprints/plans/instructions, assorted construction materials (wood pieces, paint, shingles, hammer, nails, sandpaper, measuring tape, small saw, etc.), work table

Use the following script. The names are suggestions—feel free to change or adjust.

[Enter Jeffry and Grant, carrying all the materials and talking excitedly about the new project.]

Jeffry: Man, I can’t wait to see this birdhouse finished! Grandma will be so impressed with me!

Grant: Yah, I agree. We need to work really hard on this and do our best!

Jeffry: Oh, this won’t take long, birdhouses are easy to make!

Grant: Really, have you made them before?

Jeffry: Nah...but how hard can it be, really? It’s just four walls, a floor, a roof and a little peek-a-boo door for the birds!

Grant: Well...I don’t know...we should look at the directions.

[Boys begin to organize tools and materials. Grant pulls out the instructions.]

Grant: Okay, the instructions say to measure and cut all the pieces from the wood.

Jeffry: No, no...watch this, Grant! [Proceeds to hammer together random pieces of wood in a make-shift structure, asking Grant to hold pieces. Be sure to have fun—hitting fingers, dropping pieces, and trying to assemble in dramatic, silly positions. Generally make a foolish spectacle in these attempts. Final attempt should have at least the four walls nailed together.]

Grant: This doesn’t really seem to be working. This looks nothing like the picture! Why don’t we just follow the directions?

Jeffry: I don’t want to—it’s much easier this way!

Grant: But wouldn’t our birdhouse turn out much better if we used the right piece—at the right time and in the right order?

Jeffry: Why does that matter? It will all turn out fine in the end!

Grant: Jeffry, uh...this isn’t turning out right. This looks like a doghouse fell from the sky and landed in your garage! It doesn’t even have a hole for the birds to go in! How are the birds supposed to get in?

Jeffry: Instructions are too complicated. I wanna do it my way. Don’t boss me, man!

Grant: Dude, if you expect your project to turn out good in the end, you have to follow each step of the instructions, in the order it says! How can you expect it to turn out right if you only follow half the instructions and do what you want the rest of the time?

Jeffry: Well, I just don’t want to take all that time—sanding wood pieces and all. I really wanna just get it done fast so I can take it to Gram!

Grant: Ha, ha...well...if you bring her this, she might think it’s a flower pot or something!

Jeffry: [Pauses to look at his creation.] Wow...it does look pretty pathetic, doesn’t it? I better find a simpler project—I gotta learn how to do this right!
Grant: Hey! How about a flower box for her back porch? We could paint it and everything!

Jeffry: Great idea, but all this hard work calls for a snack. I’ve got some Liver and Onion chips inside. What do you think, you want some?

[Jeffry grabs Grant and drags him offstage while Grant pleads not to be forced to eat such horrendous chips.]

The Point: In order to build a birdhouse well, we have to use the right pieces, prepared the right way and placed in the right order—piece by piece by piece until the work is done. In the same way, God gives us guidelines to make good choices. If we make good choice after good choice after good choice, it will produce good, strong character. If we choose what we want over what is right, we will have character with poor construction.

Object Talks—Puppet Talks

Supplies: video projection

The video clip for this lesson features a puppet fourth grader, Luke, sitting at his computer video blogging about true character and how being holy, diligent and courageous relate to lessons he learned during the week. Featured verse: 2 Chronicles 16:9a

Let’s Talk!—Small Group Discussion

Supplies: Duplo Legos (or wooden blocks), paper slips, tape

Ahead of time, print and cut out the choices from the list below. Tape them to the side of large Legos (Duplo) or wooden blocks. Place all the blocks into a small bag or hat for each small group.

Instruct the children to each take a block from the bag and decide whether the choice printed on that block builds a good character trait or a bad character trait. Use the blocks to begin building a “good choices” tower and a “bad choices” tower. Have kids repeat for each block, adding to the corresponding tower, until all the blocks are used up.

**Good Choices**
- Eating a healthy apple for a snack
- Brushing my teeth before bed
- Completing my homework on time
- Allowing someone to go ahead of me in line
- Putting my trash in the garbage
- Saying “I’m sorry” when I make a mistake
- Keeping my eyes on my own test paper, even if I didn’t study
- Keeping my promises
- Helping clear the table without being asked
- Cleaning my room until the job is done
- Standing up for my friends when others gossip about them
- Using good manners every time

**Poor Choices**
- Always eating candy or chocolate for a snack
- Never brushing my teeth
- Forgetting my homework at school
- Butting in line at the drinking fountain
- Sticking my gum under the table
- Saying “it’s not my fault” when I make a mistake
- Looking on my neighbor’s test paper because I didn’t study
- Lying to my friend
- Whining about having to help after dinner
- Dumping my stuff on my bedroom floor for Mom to clean up
- Gossiping behind my friends’ backs because everyone else is
- Being rude, never saying “please” or “thank you”
Discussion Questions:
1) Which tower shows the most fun, or most desirable, choices to make?
2) Why are the right choices sometimes harder to make?
3) Often poor choices reflect what the selfish parts of us want. How do we make the right choices when our selfishness desires the wrong choices?
4) Why are our choices important?
5) Can we choose to build strong character even when we are kids?
6) Why is it important to build strong character when we are kids instead of waiting until we are older?
7) How do we change our character?
8) How does practicing good choices build our character?
9) What choices are you making right now that need to change?

DiscipleTown Super Citizen
Choose a child who made a good choice (e.g. obedience, friendliness, tidiness, etc) and present him or her with the Super Citizen Award.

Let’s Pray!
Dear Jesus, each choice we make helps build up or tear down our character. Please help us make good choices every chance we get so that our character becomes more and more like Your perfect character. Thank You for forgiving us when we make mistakes and for helping us grow. Fill our hearts with Your love and make us more like You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Cy’s Challenge: This week, do something good for someone that only God will know. That way you know that you have done it out of true character.

Let’s Review!
If you have extra time, use these review questions to keep the kids focused on the lesson until time to dismiss. A handful of candy will help you keep their attention. After each question, take a minute to reiterate the lesson point related to the question.

1) Character is who you are when no one is ____.
2) Character is built one ____ at a time.
3) Jesus grew in ____ and stature and favor with God and people.
4) Joseph’s brothers were ____ of him.
5) Name two of the “True” character traits.
Dear Mom and Dad,

This week in children’s church we began a new series on How to Build Character. We learned that every decision and choice we make is like a brick in the tower of our character.

Many times we focus on following the rules instead of encouraging our kids to be self-disciplined—to govern themselves according to the good character they want to build. I would challenge you to sit down with your child(ren) this week and list the character traits that each of you feels is important for your own lives. Answer the question, “What kind of person does God want me to be?” Put your lists on the fridge and encourage each other this week to practice choices that build those characteristics.

Use the DiscipleTown Table Talkers to discuss in more depth the importance of good character. Tell your child(ren) stories about times in your life when it was hard for you to make right choices.

As we go through this series we will be challenged to look at our character, how God changes our hearts, and how our character affects our actions and our reputations. Personal transformation is of great importance in God’s Kingdom. Learning to develop strong character is a great first step in a lifelong journey to become everything God has created us to be.

The specific character traits we looked at this week were the “true traits” (the ones that we exhibit when no is looking)—being holy, diligent, and courageous. Perhaps you can discuss these with your child(ren).

Building young disciples,

[Your Name]
Chip’s Snack Time!

**Supplies:** strawberries, bananas

Before showing the children the fruit, list a fruit’s characteristics to see if they can guess which one you described. Once they guess, divide the fruit among the kids.

**Strawberry:** I am a fruit that is very sweet and grows only in the summer. I’m a berry maybe one or two bites in size. I have no pits inside, but have tiny seeds in my skin. What am I?

**Banana:** I am a fruit that is full of potassium. I am firm and very sweet. You need to peel my yellow skin to get at my yummy inside. I have no pits or seeds. What am I?

*When I described the characteristics of a fruit, you knew which fruit it was before you even saw it. In the same way, our character tells a story about what kind of person we really are inside. God wants the fruit in our lives to be good fruit, not rotten fruit.*

**Additional Ideas**

**A Lego Tower**—Use Legos as you talk to drive home this object lesson. *If I want to build a strong tower out of Legos, what is the best way for me to do it? Should I put the Legos in a big pile? Should I make a tower-shaped box and pour all the Legos inside?* Allow kids to respond. *Why wouldn’t my ideas work? If I am to build a strong tower, I must build it one brick at a time. If I place one brick on poorly, will my tower be strong?*

The same way that a strong tower is built with each brick placed well on the next one, our character is built one good decision on top of another. Poor decisions create weak spots in our character that we need to fix or change.

**When No One Is Around**—Ask the pastoral and office staff if you can make a funny video of them doing what they supposedly do when no one is around. Tell the kids that you hid a camera in the offices of the pastors and/or office staff to see what they do when no is around. The staff could do things like sleep in funny positions with a stuffed animal and pillow or dance and jam to music with an inflatable guitar. You could have the senior pastor play video games or read comic books, etc. Come up with really funny or silly things, film the video, then show it to your kids. Make the point that character is what you do when you think no one is looking or filming you. The kids are sure to run to these staff members to tattle on you!

**BONUS MATERIALS**

Use these options to extend your time or as substitutes for the ideas above.
DIRECTOR’S NOTES
The words in italics are notes for you and your puppeteers; they are not to be read aloud.
You will need a handheld gadget that the puppet gives the leader at the beginning of this skit.

Puppet*: Um...[leader name], can I get your help for a minute? I need you to put this somewhere in your house where you can see it all the time.

Leader: What is it?

Puppet: Oh...you don’t know? It’s a monitor!

Leader: A monitor? You mean like a TV screen? Of what?

Puppet: I installed cameras throughout my house, and they all feed wirelessly to that there monitor so you can see everything I do from now on!

Leader: But why would you do that?

Puppet: Well, because when people are watching, I’m a better person. When no one is looking, I sometimes sin. So I figured, if you were always looking—or I thought you might be looking—maybe I’d be a better person.

Leader: I see. Well, you don’t need a bunch of cameras. There is someone always looking. And it’s not me.

Puppet: I knew that creepy guy down the street was peeking in my windows!

Leader: [Laughs.] No, I’m talking about God. He sees everything, so you don’t need to give me a monitor.

Puppet: I know God sees everything, but for some reason that doesn’t always motivate me enough.

Leader: You know, [puppet name], we’re about to start learning how to build our character—and character is who we are when no one is looking. Sounds like this will be a good unit for you.

Puppet: Really? I need it. Because when no one is looking, I sometimes change into a different person. And I don’t always like that person.

Leader: We all struggle with that, but the good news is, God wants to help us grow and change, and He will help when we ask!

Puppet: Whew...that’s a relief. I can’t afford any more tech help, let me tell you! Now, what should I do with those cameras? Hey, maybe I should give one to each of these kids. Then I could see what they are doing every day...

** END HERE IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO USE THE OPTIONAL CLOSING SKETCH**

Optional Closing:
Puppet: Wait, I have an even better idea! Okay, so I have all this equipment...who wants to be on my new reality TV show?

Leader: Uh...what is your TV show called??
Puppet: Oh...ha ha...it’s called “The Real Life of Alien Kids Church Leaders!”

Leader: Ha ha...I see. Get outta here you goofball, I’m not an alien!! Say goodbye, kids. Ha ha ha!

*PUPPET: Develop a puppet character to use regularly. The children will get to know the personality and enjoy these regular visits. Dee, Cy, and Paul puppets are available at DiscipleLand.com
DIRECTOR’S NOTES
The words in italics are notes for you and your volunteers; they are not to be read aloud.

[Bob the Bricklayer enters carrying a broken brick and a trowel—whistling a happy tune, sort of in a hurry.]

Bob the Bricklayer*: Good day, [sir or ma’am]. [Tries to continue walking on, but is stopped by the leader.]

Leader: Oh, hello there...and where are you off to in such a hurry?

Bob: Me? Well...I’m just getting a new brick. You see, this one broke! I’m working on that skyscraper just over there! [Points behind him.]

Leader: Well it’s just one brick—it’s not like one broken brick will make a difference. It seems like a lot of work to replace one brick!

Bob: Oh no [sir or ma’am], not in my buildings! I only build quality buildings, and in my construction, every brick counts!

Leader: But...does one brick really make that big of a difference? I mean, it’s not like the skyscraper is built out of marshmallows or something!

Bob: Marshmallows—oh my, that would be a sticky mess, can you imagine!

Leader: Surely if you used just one broken brick, no one would notice!

Bob: Every broken brick causes a weakness in my building. If I am not diligent to ensure every brick I use is strong, then I could get lazy—and I could find hundreds of broken bricks in my building by the time I am done. Then we could have a real problem! And don’t call me Shirley...the name is Bob—Bob the Bricklayer!!

Leader: Sorry Bob, I guess I never thought of it like that! The boys and girls and I were just chatting about how our character is built one decision at a time, kind of like your skyscraper!

Bob: It’s just the same—one poor decision often leads to another! That’s why I choose strong bricks...and these young builders can choose good, strong, right decisions! Then when they’ve built strong character, they can come and work on my buildings because I know they will make good choices never to use broken bricks! I gotta run now... got a ‘scraper to build, ya’ know!

Leader: Ah yes...happy building, Bob! Everyone say goodbye to Bob the Builder.

Bob: No...not Bob the Builder—that’s my cousin. I’m Bob the Bricklayer...and Shirley is my sister!

[Bob runs offstage—and Shirley is my sister!]

*CHARACTERS: These are suggested characters and names. Please feel free to change or adjust according to the actors and props you have available.
Each DiscipleTown Unit will teach your kids an essential "how to" skill to become victorious disciples of Jesus!