

LIGHTHOUSE LESSON



DAY 1

GR + 8

GOD IS GREAT!

INTRODUCE IT! OLDER KIDS

Day 1 Mystery Clue (5–10 minutes)

Pre-prep: *Gather your tropical island costumes, which you'll wear all week. Either buy a fake treasure chest or make one out of a foam cooler or shoebox and put the Bible in it, bookmarked at Acts 17. Cut out the DAY 1 LARGE MEDALLION and place it in the treasure chest. Hide the TREASURE MAP POSTER according to the directions below.***

Teacher 1: Aloha, islanders, and welcome to Lighthouse Lessons. I'm _____, the lighthouse keeper, and this is my assistant, _____. Have you ever seen a lighthouse? *Take answers.* Lighthouses are important because they have a big light that shines so ships and sailors won't lose their way or run into land while they're out at sea. And keepers of the lighthouse have a huge job. They keep the light always going, and they sometimes rescue stranded people in the water.

Teacher 2 (or Teaching Assistant): Here at Mystery Island, we want to keep the light of God's Word shining brightly so you can know the way through life. With that in mind, let's dive right in with an activity called First Word. We'll say a word, then you shout out what the first thing is that comes to mind. Ready? Here's the first one: tropical island. *Take answers, then continue with the following: lizard, sun, sand, pirate, ocean.*

Teacher 1: Okay, here's the last one. For this one, don't shout out your answer, but just think of it inside your head. What's the first thing that comes into your mind when you think of the word God? *Give them a few seconds to think of it silently, then ask volunteers to share what they thought of.*

Teacher 2: Some people think of God as the big guy upstairs who is like a casual friend, or as a cosmic cop who's going to catch you breaking the law and hit you with a lightning bolt, or like a genie in a bottle who's ready to serve you and grant your wishes. But we can't make the one true God into who we want him to be. He is who he is. We'll be tracking down the truth about him all week in our Bibles to find out what he's really like. It matters more than anything, because what you believe about God is the most important thing about you. What you think about God matters more than how smart or good at sports you are, what you like to do, who you live with, what you look like, or anything else, because it determines how you live your life, and it determines your eternity!

Teacher 1: I'm so excited to talk about this, because God is more important to me than anyone or anything else in the whole wide world! He's wonderful! And if you're going to be right about anything in your life, it needs to be understanding who God is, so each day, we'll start our Lighthouse Lessons by finding a clue about God.

Teacher 2: We'll need a treasure map to do so, so let's find one now!

***Before class, hide the TREASURE MAP POSTER in the room, in sight but barely. Without moving, the kids search with their eyes to find the map. When they've spotted it, have someone retrieve it and the teacher can hang it up for all to see.*

Teacher 2: Now that we have the map, let's find the start of the trail on the map. *Do so.* Now, watching my finger, let's follow it from the start to the first stop. *Do so.* Where did I stop? *Take answers—Chameleon Cave.* Hmm . . . I wonder what we might find out about God at Chameleon Cave? Let me pull something out of this treasure chest to give us another clue. *Open the treasure chest, and pull out the DAY 1 LARGE MEDALLION that goes on the TREASURE MAP POSTER. Show them what it is and ask what they think the number one has to do with God. Place the medallion on the map in the Day 1 circle, using mounting putty or painter's tape. Then ask them to look carefully at Chameleon Cave and see if they can find a hidden clue there. They should see the number one hidden on the cave.*

Teacher 1: Yes, the number 1 means there's only one God—the God of the Bible. A lot of people have wrong views of God, but we can find out who he truly is by searching the Bible. *Show the DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER. See if they can find the hidden number 1 on it.* Camo the chameleon here is always changing, but the God of the Bible doesn't change. **He was and is and always will be the same.**

Teacher 2: We know God is completely true and can't lie (*Titus 1:2*), so since God is trustworthy and true, and the Bible is from him, then we know every word of the Bible is completely trustworthy and true, too. Let's pray, and then we'll open the treasure chest and get out our trustworthy Bible, which is the greatest treasure on earth. *Pray, and then pull out the Bible with care.*

INTRODUCE IT – PRESCHOOL VERSION

Pre-prep: Gather your tropical island costumes, which you'll wear all week. Either buy a fake treasure chest, make one from a Styrofoam cooler or a shoebox. Put the Bible in it, bookmarked at Acts 17. Hang the TREASURE MAP POSTER. Cut out the DAY 1 LARGE MEDALLION and put it on the TREASURE MAP POSTER at Chameleon Cave. Cut out and post some number 1s in various colors and sizes around the room so they are visible.

Teacher 1: Aloha, islanders! Welcome to our Lighthouse Lessons. I'm _____ and this is my assistant, _____. *You may want to adopt fun names like Surfin' Sarah, Captain Karl, Luau Lindsey, or Flip Flop Frank.* Have you ever seen a lighthouse? *Take answers.* Lighthouses are important because they keep ships and sailors from losing their way when the waters are stormy.

Teacher 2: Here at Mystery Island, we want to keep the light of God's Word, the Bible, shining brightly so you can know the way through life.

Teacher 1: So let's dive right in and play a game called If I Say. When one of us says a word, you need to shout out the very first word that comes to your mind. For instance, if I say red, what's the first thing you think of? *Take responses.* Okay, I think you're ready! Here we go.

Teacher 2: If I say sun, what do you say? *Have them shout out answers.*

Teacher 1: If I say ocean, what do you say? *Shout out answers.*

Teacher 2: If I say sand, what do you say? *Shout out answers.*

Teacher 1: If I say oranges, what do you say? *Shout out answers.*

Teacher 2: If I say pirate, what do you say? *Shout out answers.*

Teacher 1: Okay, here's the last one. If I say God, what do you say? *Shout out answers.*

Teacher 2: People have lots of different ideas about God, but we're going to learn who God really is and what he's like this week. I'm so excited to talk about this, because God is more important to me than anyone or anything else in the whole wide world! He's wonderful!

Teacher 1: We've hidden a clue about God around the room. Let's see if we can play I Spy to find any number 1s that are hidden. *Have them look around the room and point them out to you as they find them. Then have them sit down.* What do you think the number 1 has to do with God? *Take answers.*

Teacher 2: *Point to the TREASURE MAP POSTER.* Now look at our treasure map. Can you find a number 1 hidden somewhere there? *Take answers and point out the number 1 hidden on Chameleon Cave and the large medallion.* Today, we're going to find out God is the one and only God. There are no other gods. Let's put up our pointer finger and say, "There's only one true God!" *Do so.*

Teacher 1: Where do you think we should go to find out what God is like? *Take answers.* Yes, the Bible! The Bible is our greatest treasure on earth. Because God wrote it and he always tells the truth, we can trust the Bible to help us see who God really is and what he's really like. *Show the DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER.* Camo the chameleon is always changing, but the God of the Bible doesn't change. He was and is and always will be the same. Let's get the Bible out of our **treasure chest** and learn more about this wonderful God.

TEACH IT!

Open to Acts 17, and **share Paul's story** either from the Bible or pretend to be Paul and read the "Paul in Athens Script" teaching included in your pack or on the VBS Landing Page.

You may want to find some pictures of the different gods Paul talks about in the story and show the kids as you talk about each one.

Continue the lesson.

Teacher: Wow, that was cool hearing from Paul! Let's take a minute and see what we can remember about what he said. Show the PAUL IN ATHENS POSTER again. Why was Paul feeling upset? What did the people there believe? How many true gods are there? *Take answers and review. Remind them there's only one true God and he is great.*

SMALL GROUP TIME

If small groups aren't feasible, lead a discussion on these questions as a large group, or print off the DISCUSSION SHEETS and give them to the group guides who can lead a discussion during snack time each day. These are good to fit in at some point in the VBS day.

Divide into small groups of 4–6 islanders with a group guide in each group. Adjust depending on how many guides and kids you have. Discuss some or all of the following questions from the DISCUSSION SHEET. Any day a Bible passage is mentioned, help them look it up and read it together, or have it bookmarked and read it to them.

- When we asked a little while ago what comes into your mind when you think of God, what did you think of? *Take responses.*
- How do you think you got that idea about God? *Take responses.* Where should we go to learn about who God really is? *Take responses, and remind them we can't make God into who we want him to be, but we learn of who he truly is in the Bible.*
- What is something you've learned so far today about God? *Take responses.*
- Does God seem exciting to you? Worth knowing? *Take responses, and tell them how excited you are to share more this week about your awesome God. You may want to share your testimony here. Your enthusiasm about God will be inspiring.*

PAUL IN ATHENS SCRIPT

Grace and peace to you! I'm Paul, a servant of the Lord here in ancient times. I've been traveling around, starting churches and telling people about our amazing God and what Jesus, the Son of God, did for us on the cross.

In my travels, I arrived in a city called Athens, which is in Greece. I decided to walk around the city, and as I did, I started to feel very upset inside because everywhere I went, I saw idols. Do you know what an idol is? *Take answers.*

An idol is an image or statue of a false god—a pretend god. The Greeks have many false gods that are made by the people. Sadly, the people worship these idols instead of the one true God. Listen as I tell you about a few of them.

One is called **Cronos**. He is said to have hurt his father and swallowed his own children so they wouldn't become too powerful and take his throne away from him.

Another is **Zeus**. He is said to be king of the Greek gods. His symbol is the lightning bolt, because he supposedly throws them down to earth in fits of anger. He's supposed to be the most powerful of the Greek gods.

Next is **Nike**. She is said to be the goddess of victory. She wants to win so much she's willing to be unfair and cheat.

And let's not forget **Poseidon**. He is said to be the god of the sea. He sinks ships or drowns people on a whim if he wants to. He's moody and unpredictable. You never know when he's going to whip up a storm because he's upset.

These are just a few of the many Greek gods I hear about here. Seeing all these idols upset me, because there's only one true God, and I want everyone to know him! So I decided to go to the synagogue, which is like the church Jewish people go to, and talk to them about the one true God.

One day, some of the scholars of Athens asked me to come to this rocky spot high up in the city where they have their court. It's called the Areopagus (**air-ee-OP-a-gus**). They wanted to know what I'd been telling everybody.

So I said to them: Men of Athens, I see that you're very religious. For as I passed along, I saw your idols, and even found an altar that said: To the unknown god. Well, what you're worshipping as unknown, I want to tell you about, because God can be known! He doesn't live in temples, and he isn't a statue of gold or silver or stone, but he is God, the Maker of the world! He made it, and he owns it.

And the awesome thing is that if we seek the one true God, we'll find he's not far from us, but wants to have a relationship with us. God sent his Son, Jesus, who lived and died and was raised from the dead, so we can have that relationship if we turn from our sins and seek him.

When I finished telling the men this, how do you think they responded? *Take answers.*

Some made fun of me, some said they'd like to hear more, and some came with me right then and there because they realized I was right—there really is only one true God!

You know, many people consider God a mystery, but he can **be known**, and he wants to **be known**. Of course, we'll never know everything about God—he's too big and great—but we can know him enough to understand who he is and to have a personal relationship with him. This week, I hope you will not only get to know about God, but also get to know God.

Well, thanks for having me in. Shalom!

REVIEW IT (5–10 minutes)

HANG TEN

To play: First, explain that surfers use the phrase “hang ten” to describe how their 10 toes hang over the front of the surfboard when they’re riding a wave. We’re going to play “Hang Ten” by trying to get all 10 questions right while balancing on our “surfboards” for 10 seconds.

Divide into teams of 3–5 players per team. Each team answers every question. Ask the question, have teams quietly confer (so the other teams don’t hear), and say the answer on the count of three. If they get it right, give them a point and let someone from the team try to “hang ten.” In our version, they have to balance on their surfboard (the wooden board) for 10 seconds without falling off. If they do so successfully, their team gets another point. To add fun, have them stand in different ways on their boards after each question—crouching, standing on one foot, standing on the other foot, feet crossed on the board, etc. The team with the most points at the end of the time wins.

- Who is today’s animal pal and how does he remind us of God? *Answer: Camo the chameleon. Camo changes, but God doesn’t change. He is the same forever.*
- Who went to visit Athens and found himself getting upset? *Answer: Paul.*
- Why was Paul upset? *Answer: He was upset because the people there had false gods called idols.*
- Name one of the false Greek gods. *Answer: Cronos, Zeus, Nike, or Poseidon.*
- What is an idol? *Answer: An idol is a statue or image that represents a false god. We can also worship an idol if we have a false view of the one true God. An idol can even be anything that is more important to us or that we care more about than God, such as sports or hobbies.*
- Paul tells the people of Athens that God is the Creator. Name three things God has created. *Answers will vary.*
- Yes or no: Do you think this view of God is correct? God is mean. *Answer: No. God is perfect, so he can only be always good and right.*
- Where do we go to find out who God truly is and what he’s like? *Answer: The Bible. That’s where we find out about the one true God.*
- What is one true character quality you know about God? Here’s one to help you get started: God is love. *Answers will vary*
- Can you recite our verse for the day from Psalm 145:1? *Allow them to use the poster if necessary.*



DAY 1

One and Only Bread

Ingredients (16 servings)

- 1 tube of Pillsbury® bread dough
- ¼ c. flour for dusting
- Optional: 2 T. melted butter or oil
- Optional: Salt or seasoning of choice

Tropical Punch Drink Ingredients

- Store bought tropical punch drink, such as Hawaiian Punch®

Basic Supplies

- Number 1 cookie cutter, approximately 3 inches long
- Rolling pin
- Parchment paper
- Baking sheet
- Optional: Pastry brush
- Spatula
- Small paper plates, napkins, and cups, 1 of each per child

Pre-prep

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees with a rack in the middle.
2. Open the bread dough and roll it out on a floured surface until it's ¼ inch thick.
3. Using the cookie cutter, cut out the dough into the shape of a number 1.
4. Optional: Brush with oil or melted butter and sprinkle on salt or seasonings of your choice.
5. Place on a parchment lined baking sheet and bake until golden brown, about 13–15 minutes.
6. Let cool and serve on a small paper plate.

Teaching Tie-In

What number is our snack in the shape of? Take responses. Yes, a 1. What's the number 1 got to do



with God? Take responses. The Bible makes it clear there's only one God. Read Psalm 86:10 or Isaiah 44:6.

We might hear many different things from school or movies or books about who and what can be gods, and what these gods are like. But the idea that there are many gods and we can choose which god we want is not true. There is only one God, the God of the Bible. One and done. And this one God is so amazing he can't be contained in a shrine or box or statue. When you see images of false gods, it's just a person's attempt to make a god, but think about it—*people* can't make *gods*! No, the one true God has always existed, and there is no other.

Pray to thank God for the One and Only Bread and eat.

While eating, share the Conversation Starters and WOW Facts about God that are found below.

Conversation Starters

- Can you think of something teeny tiny God created?
- Can you think of something humongous God created?
- Can you think of something orange God created? Green? Red? Blue?

Find [these items](#) in your teacher kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

WOW Facts

- When we think of God’s greatness, we often think of space and big animals, like the blue whale or dinosaurs. But God made all the tiny stuff, too, and that shows God’s greatness as well! Using an electron microscope that magnifies things up to 100 million times, we can see the tiniest of creatures and how intricately designed and complex they are. God is the maker and ruler over all things big and small. Wow!
- Aren’t you glad God made a colorful world? God made a beautiful world, full of so many different amazing colors. I wonder if we will recognize more colors in heaven? Wow!

Another option is to check with the Lighthouse Lesson teachers before VBS begins to see if they plan to do

small group time during Lighthouse Lessons. If not, ask them for the Day 1 Discussion Sheets and chat through those during snack time. They have good conversation starters.

Tip Corner

- Check out the Super Simple Options, the Healthy Options, and the Toddler Options. Any of these can work for Day 1 or other days or meetings. They are all yummy and lots of fun!
- For individual drinks any day, substitute juice boxes, juice pouches, or water bottles that are labeled “Sparkling Agua” or “Ocean Water.” See the Digital Resources for a pattern. Individual drinks are more expensive but require no prep and often no cups. Tropical themed drinks are particularly fun, such as Capri Suns®.

Day 1 Overview

God is ... GR+8

Lesson Focus		Bible Passage	
God is GREAT! He is the one and only God, the awe-inspiring Creator.		Paul in a City of False Gods Acts 17:16–34	
Treasured Verse	Animal Pal	Cool Contest	
Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. Psalm 145:3	Camo the Chameleon	Swedish Fish Guessing Game	
Deep Sea Science and Crafts	Tropical Treats	Ride the Tide Games	
Experiments: Rainbow Water and Mystery Color Crafts: Tropical Tree and Glass Gem Magnets	One and Only Bread Seascape Snacks	Island Ambush Island Olympics	

Find these items in your teacher kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

Island Ambush

Supplies

- 8 or more cones
- Sponges or splash balls
- Large number 1 (see Pre-prep)
- 2 buckets of water
- Rope, masking tape, or cones for start and finish lines

Pre-prep

Gather the supplies. Create a narrow rectangle for the running space using the cones. The rectangle should be about 10 feet wide and 60 feet long. Make start and finish lines, and place the large number 1 at the finish line. Either use a pool noodle for a number 1, or make a large number 1 out of poster board and laminate it. Gather sponges and/or splash balls, and place in buckets of water. One bucket should be on each side of the course.

Teaching Tie-In

What's the object we're trying to reach at the end of this obstacle course? Pause for responses. Yes, the number 1. God wants to be number one in our lives because he's the one and only God. He made us, he knows us inside and out, and he loves us more than anyone ever will. Think about that—he loves you more than anyone *ever* will. He is the amazing, one and only God!

So let's remember the one true God as we play our game, Island Ambush.

Class Time Directions

1. Divide players into two teams. One team will be the Island Explorers and one will be the Buccaneers.
2. Have the Island Explorers line up on the start line, getting ready to run to the finish line. Have the Buccaneers line up on the sides of the course, behind the side cones.



3. On the “Go!” signal, the Island Explorers run as fast as they can down the middle of the course and try to make it to the number 1 at the end. At the same time, the Buccaneers try to tag the Island Explorers by throwing the sponges and splash balls at them from behind the line. These should be thrown to tag from the waist down.
4. If an Island Explorer is hit, he has to join the opposing team and try to get the Island Explorers out. If a player makes it to the number 1, he is safe until the next round. The sponges and splash balls can only be used once per round. After all the players have run the course once, the Buccaneers can pick up the

sponges and splash balls and use them for the next round.

5. Once the round is complete, play again with only the players that made it to the number 1 running. Continue to play until there is only one player left who is the winner.
6. Once the first group has gone and has a winner, let the teams switch roles.

Tip Corner

- Another way to play is to just switch places after every round. Any players who make it to the number one without getting tagged with a splash ball win that round.

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God is . . . GR+8

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Experiments: Rainbow Water and Mystery Color Crafts: Tropical Tree and Glass Gem Magnets	One and Only Bread Seascape Snacks	Island Ambush Island Olympics	

DAY ONE CRAFT

EXPLORER COMPASS



SUPPLIES PROVIDED

- Paper plate
- Brass brad fastener
- Pipe cleaner

SUPPLIES YOU MUST PROVIDE

- Markers
- Crayons
- Stickers

TEACHING TIE-IN:

God is GREAT! He is the ONE and only God, the awe-inspiring Creator. Today we are going to make a compass to help us remember this Bible focus. There is only one God as revealed in the Bible. You can't make up a god of your own choosing. A compass always points to true north. We use a compass to find our way when we are lost. The compass serves as a reminder to keep our focus on God - our Creator and True North.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Give each child a paper plate and instruct them to create a North, South, East, and West compass face. First, draw a cross in the middle of the paper plate. Then label each direction.
2. Use a brass brad and insert just the tip of it into the center of the paper plate to make a hole. Wrap one end of the pipe cleaner around the brad before inserting it all the way and securing it.
3. Once inserted, the point of the compass will move freely so that it can point to any direction.
4. Continue to decorate the rest of the compass with stickers or drawings - write "God Guides Me" on the bottom of the compass.







GREAT!



**ONE &
ONLY**

1



✦ **reasured Verse**

**Great is the LORD, and
greatly to be praised,
and his greatness
is unsearchable.**

PSALM 145:3



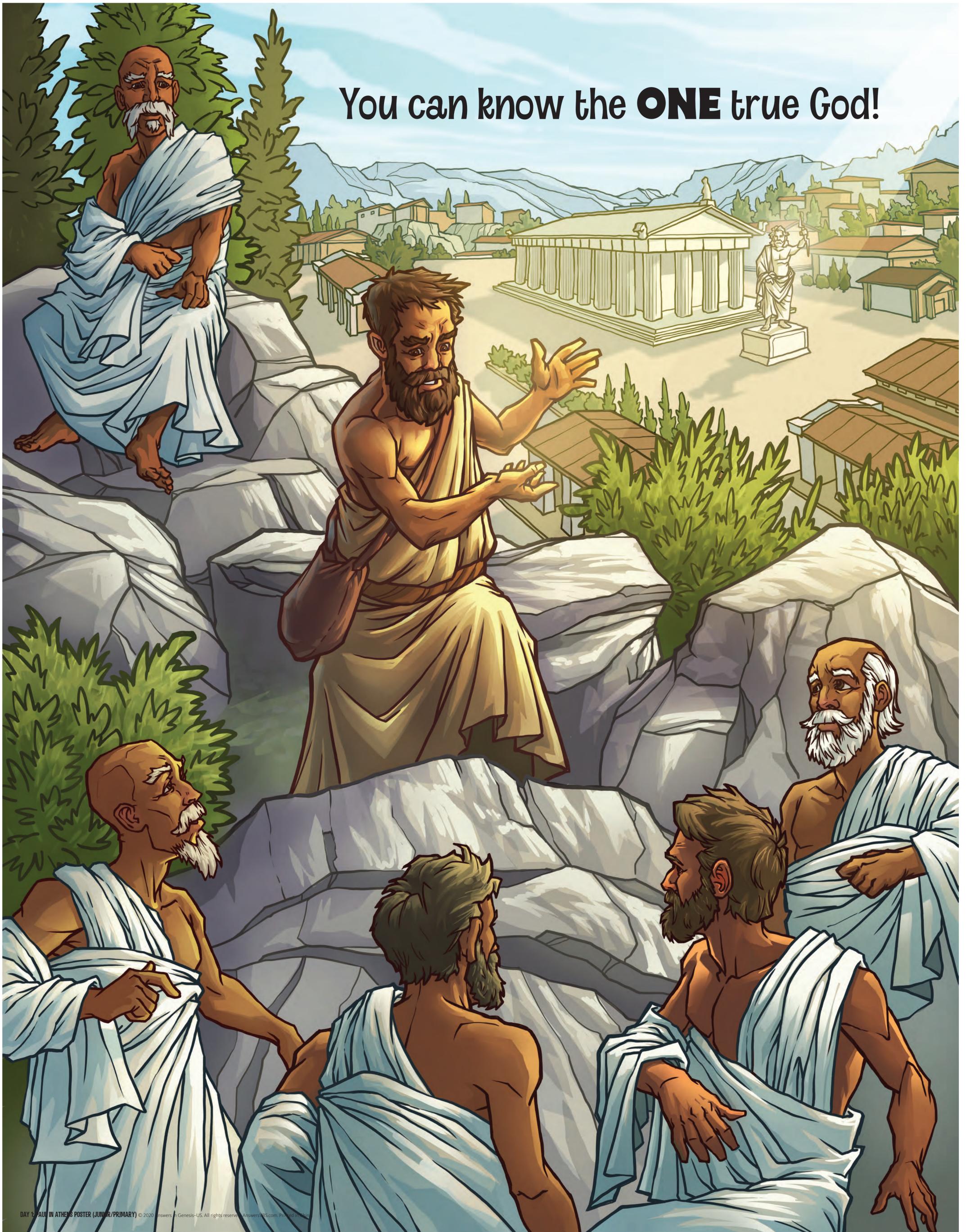
✦ **reasured Verse**

**Great is the
LORD, and greatly
to be praised.**

PSALM 145:3



You can know the **ONE** true God!





CHAMELEON

Over 200 different species make up the chameleon family.

The smallest chameleon is about the size of a quarter. The largest chameleon is about the size of your pet cat!

God designed the chameleon's eyes so that they can move in opposite directions. When one eye spots a tasty treat, the other eye swivels to lock on to the target, giving the chameleon the ability to see how far away his food is.

Chameleons change color primarily based on how they're feeling but can also change in response to their environment. God designed their skin with different layers that provide the beautiful color patterns we see. They use their tail to hold on to branches, but, unlike some reptiles, can't regrow it if it gets chopped off!





CAMO THE CHAMELEON

changes color, but
God never changes.

GOD IS FOREVER GREAT!

