

# Billy the Balloon

**SPIRIT**



*God and me*



No maximum number  
depending on adequate  
supervision



10-15 minutes

**Aim:** To teach that we must not leave God out of our lives or take things for granted

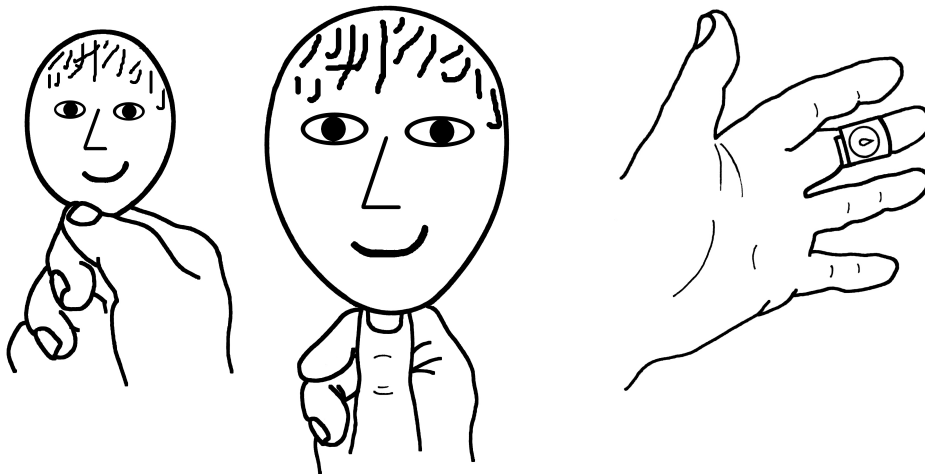
## Equipment:

- Balloon and drawing pin (see illustration below)
- Sticky tape
- 'Permanent' marker pen

**Relevant text:** Luke 12 (The story of the Rich Fool)

## Preparation:

Take a round balloon and blow it up to about two thirds of full size and, holding the neck closed, draw a face on the balloon using a permanent marker. Making sure the ink has dried, release the air from the balloon. Take a drawing pin (thumb tack), hold the flat head against the inside of the middle finger on your left hand (or right hand if you are left handed), and attach the pin to your finger using two or three turns of sellotape, allowing the pin to pierce the tape. The purpose of this is that you can suddenly pop the balloon without any risk of losing or dropping the pin. The illustrations below show Billy as a baby, and nearly fully-grown, and the drawing pin taped to the middle finger.



**Outline:** in three stages:-

1. A brief summary of the story in Luke 12, stopping short at the point where God said "you fool"
2. A short story in which Billy the balloon replaces the rich fool.
3. A brief application.

Typically it would be presented as described below. The details of the balloon story can be varied to suit individual circumstances. The idea is to make the story as relevant as possible to the listeners.

### Talk:

In the 12th chapter of Luke's gospel Jesus told a story about a rich man who left God out of his life, and was only concerned about himself. He was a successful farmer, whose crops grew so well that he had to pull down his barns and build bigger ones to store all the grain. Eventually he made so much money that he didn't need to work any more, so he decided to retire and enjoy himself. But then God spoke to him, and said to him.... I'll tell you what God said to him in a few minutes.

But before that, I'd like to tell you a story about someone else – here he is – *(blow a small amount of air into the balloon and hold it so that the boys can see the face)*. Billy the balloon was born at a very early age, and his mum and dad were very proud of their new baby, and everybody who saw him said "O what a cute little balloon". As he grew into a toddler *(blow a bit more air into the balloon)* it soon became clear that young Billy was going to be a clever balloon. When he was older *(more air)* he went to the school in Balloonville and started to think about what he would like to be when he grew up *(more air)*. He did really well at school, and then went to university where he got a degree in balloonology *(blow more air into the balloon to make it the final size, but avoid making it so big that there is a danger of bursting it prematurely)*. When he left university he set up his own business. Then Billy met Brenda, and fell in love and after a while they got married and had some little balloons. Billy's business was going really well and making loads of money, although he didn't seem to have much time for anything else. But then one day, when the little balloons had all grown up, he said to Brenda "Let's go on a world cruise. Then when we come back I'll retire. I don't need to work any more, we've got enough money so we can enjoy life." And Brenda was very pleased about that. The day of the cruise came. Billy watched as the taxicab arrived to take them. The suitcases were all ready, and then ... *(at this point burst the balloon suddenly without any warning)*.

You know what it was that God said to that man in Luke 12? "You fool. This night your soul will be required of you." Some of you may have realised that Billy was just like that man in the story that Jesus told.

### Application:

None of us can be certain about tomorrow, and we mustn't take it for granted. Most important of all, we mustn't leave God out of our lives. We must get right with Him while we still have an opportunity, and love Him and serve Him.