

LENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

“Jonah: When We Sin, We Must Ask God to Forgive Us”

Series Objective: Students will learn:

- God chose Jonah and God chooses us
- We must ask God to forgive us when we do not do what God wants
- God uses us to help others know God
- God cares for everyone

Series Theme Verse: “I will offer sacrifices to you with songs of praise, for my salvation comes from the Lord alone.” Jonah 2:9 (NLT)

Lesson Objective: Students will discover and understand:

- We sin when we do not do what God wants us to do
- We must ask God to forgive us of our sin

Lesson Passage: Jonah 2

Materials Needed: Bag of M&Ms, Color paper to make a path, Balloons with Series Theme Verse in pieces, poster board of theme verse.

Lesson Plan: Remind the students of where we left off last week in the story of Jonah. Read Jonah 2 to the students. *The Message* translation is a great version to read this story out of, especially for children.

Talking Points:

- Who is Jonah? (A Prophet for God)
- What is a Prophet? (Someone who speaks to people for God)
- Where is Jonah? (In the belly of a giant fish)
- What is Jonah doing? (Praying)
- What does it mean to “Pray”? (Talk to God)
- What are some things that we should pray about in our lives? (People who need Jesus, safety, people who are hurting, etc.)
- What is Jonah saying in Verse 1? (That when he prayed to God, God answered him)
- Can God hear Jonah, even in the belly of a fish, way down in the bottom of the ocean? (Yes, God can hear us anywhere)
- Why does Jonah say he is in the belly of the fish? (Because God put him there for protection from the sea – Verses 3-6)
- Why did God put Jonah in the belly of a fish? (Because Jonah was not doing what God wanted Jonah to do, he was running from God which was a sin)

- What is sin? (Anything we do that God does not like, or when we do not do what God wants us to do)
- When Jonah sinned, and was in the belly of the fish, what did he ask God in his prayer? (To forgive him – Verses 7-9)
- Jonah says that only God can forgive our sin, and we must ask God to forgive us when we sin.
- After Jonah asks forgiveness and has been in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, what does the fish do? (Vomits or throws up Jonah onto land)
- What do you think Jonah looked like after being thrown up by a fish he was in for three days and three nights? (Slimy, smelly, etc.)
- What do you think Jonah will do now that he is out of the belly of the fish? (We will have to see next week!)

The Story Retold:

- Make a path of different colors of construction paper squares.
- Have each child stand on a colored square.
- The teacher chooses a student, draws an M&M out of a bag and calls out that color.
- The child moves to that color (even if someone is already on that color and says what can be prayed for based on the color they are standing on:
 - RED can be a person who they need to invite to Church;
 - BROWN can be for a ministry of the Church;
 - GREEN can be for a friend;
 - YELLOW can be for a parent;
 - ORANGE can be for something they are thankful for;
 - BLUE can be for God to forgive them.
- When each child has had a chance, tell the children that God is always listening, and we should pray to God about everything, because God wants us to talk to God.
- Jonah talked to God and we should, too!
- Like Jonah, when we sin, we should ask God to forgive us of the sin in our prayers.

The Story and Me:

- Remind students of the series verse.
- Have parts of the verse in balloons that have been blown up.
- Have students grab a balloon, pop it and piece together the memory verse (The verse is in the belly of the balloon, just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish).
- Remind students that prayer was important for Jonah and it should be important to us too. We must pray for God to forgive us of our sins just as Jonah did in the belly of the big fish.

