



The Word Is the Method

SUPPLIES

Needed



TO PRINT:

- Large Memory Verse to hold up (1 copy)*
- Jonah & Jesus comparison chart (for Hearing the Word Activity #1)

TO GATHER:

- Hymnal/lyrics for songs* (*Optional: guitar or music to sing along with*)
- Basket for offering*
- Jonah and sailor costumes, oar prop, blue fabric (water prop) (for Activity #2)

OPTIONAL:

- Kid's Activity Sheets (1 copy/child)
- Elements of Worship Icons* (*Found in the introduction section.*)

*These items will be needed every week.

LEADER'S Review

The story of Jonah gives us hope and teaches that God will not be thwarted in any purpose He has. We may not be as obstinate as Jonah (no big fish needed yet), but often when we are “sure” of the direction we want to take, the Lord will step in and lead us back to the path He has planned for us.

Sue Jakes, CDM's Children's Ministry Coordinator, shares that when she finished seminary, she did not want to work in children's ministry, but God had other plans. “I had worked with children all my life and wanted to do something different. However, the Lord had been preparing me for children's ministry all the time. Now as I look back over my years in children's ministry, I can't imagine life any other way. I would have missed being part of the stories of so many covenant children and witnessing God work in their lives to draw them to Himself. I've had a front row seat to see His work in the lives of hundreds of children. What an incredible blessing! And to think, like Jonah, I had wanted to run away from God's plan for me.”

*I love to tell the story; tis pleasant to repeat
what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet.*

*I love to tell the story for some have never heard
the message of salvation from God's own holy Word.*

— “I Love to Tell the Story”



THE Lesson

Call to Worship – Psalm 100:1–2

(1 minute)

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the LORD he is God! It is he who made us and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Praise

Sing worship songs with the children. (10 minutes)

- “Wonderful Words of Life”
- “Holy, Holy, Holy”

Tithes and Offerings

Recite the following verse before passing around the offering basket. (2 minutes)

Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He’s given
Jesus Christ, His Son.

Confession of Faith

Lead the children in confessing their faith by teaching the following catechism question. (5 minutes)

My First Catechism Questions 14-15

14. **Q. Where do you learn how to love and obey God?**
A. In the Bible alone
15. **Q. Who wrote the Bible?**
A. Chosen men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit





Reading of the Word

Read scripture. (3-4 minutes)

Jonah 1

¹Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ²“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.” ³But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD.

⁴But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up. ⁵Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried out to his god. And they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep. ⁶So the captain came and said to him, “What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish.”

⁷And they said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸Then they said to him, “Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” ⁹And he said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” ¹⁰Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

¹¹Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?” For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. ¹²He said to them, “Pick me up and hurl me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you, for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you.” ¹³Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get back to dry land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them.

¹⁴Therefore they called out to the LORD, “O LORD, let us not perish for this man’s life, and lay not on us innocent blood, for you, O LORD, have done as it pleased you.” ¹⁵So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. ¹⁶Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

¹⁷And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Prayer

Pray a prayer of praise to God who is “holy, holy, holy... the LORD of hosts.” (1-2 minutes)

You, O Lord, are the Holy One, our Creator and King! We praise You for the plans You have for each and every one of us, plans for our welfare to give us a hope and a future. Thank You for keeping Your promises to Your people. In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.





Hearing the Word

Review Questions

Last week we talked about the importance of hearing God's Word as it is taught by men who have been called by God to preach.

- Who was the prophet in the Old Testament who preached about Jesus long before He came to earth? *Isaiah*
- What are some of the things Isaiah said about Jesus? *He would be born of a virgin; He's Immanuel, God with us, a light to the Gentiles.*
- How did Isaiah know he was called to preach? *He had a vision in the temple; God spoke to him.*
- What did the seraphim do? *They cried, "Holy, Holy, Holy" and touched Isaiah's lips with a burning coal.*

Isaiah was an important prophet of the Old Testament who preached about the coming Messiah, Jesus. Today we are going to look at another prophet. You've probably heard his story before; his name was Jonah. God told him to go preach in Ninevah and tell the people there to turn away from their wicked ways. The only way for them to know God's way was for God to send a preacher. God told Jonah to go, so Jonah immediately obeyed God, right? No? He didn't? What happened? ***(Let the students tell the story up to Jonah's being swallowed by the fish.)*** That's right. There was disobedient Jonah in the belly of a fish. He probably thought he would die in that fish where it was very dark like a grave or a tomb.

Sitting there in the dark with all the rotting, slimy food the fish had eaten, Jonah had plenty of time to think. He realized he was wrong for trying to run away from God. He began to pray to God to forgive him for not obeying. After three days that big fish spat Jonah right out onto the beach. Then Jonah heard God calling him again to go to Ninevah.

This time, Jonah obeyed God immediately and completely! The message Jonah had to preach was one he understood in a new way: "People of Nineveh, even though you have run away from God, pray to Him, so He can forgive you!" Jonah knew God's Word was true because of what had happened to him. The people of Nineveh listened to Jonah. They turned to God, and He forgave them.

Hearing the Word leads us to God's way. The people of Nineveh—and Jonah—stopped running away from God. Just as Jonah's preaching showed the people of Nineveh the way, Jesus, the One Isaiah preached would come, came to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life for those who believe in Him.

When we hear the Word preached, we learn that the way to God is through His perfect Son, His perfect promise: Jesus. Just like the people of Nineveh and Jonah, we have all disobeyed God. What is the penalty for disobeying God? *(Death)* Who died for us to pay the penalty for our sin? *(Jesus)* Why? Because He loves us, He has promised to make a way for us to live with Him forever. Jesus is the Way. When we hear the Word preached, we are called to believe in Jesus, to turn away from our sins, and to follow Him. The only thing required of us is faith to believe, and that faith is a gift from God.

(Hearing the Word—Continued)

ACTIVITY #1: Use the Jonah-Jesus picture page to tell the children the gospel story in one more way.

Just as Jonah got on the boat with the sailors, Jesus came to dwell with us. Remember, when He was on the boat with the disciples? A great storm came in both stories, just as storms come in to our lives. To save the sailors, Jonah was thrown overboard, but Jesus calmed the storm for His disciples just as He calms the storms in our lives. Jesus was not thrown overboard as a sacrifice. He died on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins. Jonah spent three days in the belly of the fish. Jesus spent three days in the tomb. Jonah came out to preach the Word. Jesus rose from the dead and is the living Word forever.

ACTIVITY #2: Act out the Jonah story. Arrange chairs like a boat. Jonah could crawl under the chair and fall asleep. Have a boat oar, costumes for sailors and Jonah, blue water (sheet or fabric) for Jonah to be thrown into. A table next to the boat could be the fish that swallows him up. Have Jonah kneel there, pray and then “jump out” onto dry land and start off for Ninevah.



Benediction

Recite the following verse. (1 minute)

May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!
(Ps.29:11).

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