



Kids Club

Leader Guide

July

Week 1

July 7, 2024

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

Blue Solo Cup, String (about 18" long), Plastic easter egg, Permanent Marker
[Coloring Page](#)

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE:

5 minutes - Pick up kids/kids arrive - bathroom, wash hands, water break
20 minutes - Snack, Games, Prayer/Devotion, Quality Time, Clean-up
30-40 minutes - RBKids Lesson & Prayer
10-15 minutes - Free time, Clean-up and Dismissal

TODAY'S FOCUS:

God wants us to obey Him.

WEEKLY VERSE:

"Lord, show me your ways. Teach me how to follow you." Psalm 25:4 (NIRV)

KEY PASSAGE:

Jonah 2, Jonah's Prayer

ROCK BRIDGE MISSION:

As an expression of our love for God we look forward to obeying Him because we know that His plans for us are best.

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank you for always wanting what's right for us. In Jesus' name,
Amen

INTRODUCTION:

ASK THIS AS KIDS ARRIVE: Have you ever done something that just didn't feel right (feeling uneasy or strange) after you did it? Encourage kids to put their shoes on the wrong foot. How long does it take for them to notice it doesn't feel right? Offer a [coloring page](#)!

LG LESSON ABBREVIATED INTRO - SAY THIS: Sometimes, when things just don't feel right to us, we get a chance to fix whatever we did. What's cool is that people who make movies and write books know how much we love to hear a story about something going wrong and then things being made right again! Today, I want you to think about this one thing that a movie maker does, which is letting their characters hit "rock bottom". Does anyone already know what this means?

Movie makers understand that for their characters to make a change to themselves or their situation, they must experience being all alone with their own thoughts. Quite often they are cold and in a dark place. Movie makers call this "The Turning Point" of their story. For the characters to understand what they need to do next, they need the silence and stillness and no distractions to finally hear what their next move needs to be. We say they have "hit rock bottom." When someone hits rock bottom it's not a pleasant place to be. They are usually desperate, maybe even feeling really sad or embarrassed. They have often given up hope.

Jonah had hit rock bottom, and there was nowhere else for him to go. God chose to get Jonah all alone, in a dark, cold, quiet place to break him of his pride. God wasn't worried about the mess Jonah made, he wanted Jonah to get rid of his pride, quit trying to do things on his own, and ask for forgiveness. Then he could move forward.

When we sin, we are in a dark place. It's when we are feeling scared, out of control, or as if we've really blown it, that Jesus wants us to reach out to Him and ask for forgiveness. Wipeouts are no fun – Just like a surfer who wipes out on a big wave, it can be very frustrating and often scary to be underwater all alone with nothing but darkness. But when the wipeout is over, and you have cleansed

your heart by asking Jesus for forgiveness, His love brings light and warmth and goodness to our souls!

READ: Jonah 2

MAIN POINT - TALK ABOUT THIS: God's prophet, Jonah, is in the dark, lonely (and stinky!) belly of a great fish because he tried to run from doing what God asked him to do. While he was there, he had a lot of time to think and pray and talk to God. Was God punishing Jonah? Absolutely not! He was doing exactly what you would expect a loving heavenly Father to do. It wasn't best for Jonah to continue in disobedience. So as hard as Jonah was running, God was faithfully chasing Jonah and wanted to put Jonah in a position where he would repent and continue to love Him and obey Him.

For all Jonah knew, he could have drowned in the waters when he told the sailors to throw him overboard. But instead, God sent a great fish to save him. Jonah had to get to a place where he could understand his sin and ask for forgiveness for it. This story teaches us that sin is not only just doing something bad, but also failing to do what is good. Praying for forgiveness with a sincere heart was exactly where God knew Jonah needed to be!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

ASK THIS: If your kids are not as familiar with the story of Jonah, please use the first few questions below to help them recap the story!

1. Where is Jonah by chapter 2?
2. How many days was Jonah in the belly of the fish?
3. What did Jonah do when he was inside the fish's stomach?
4. How do you think Jonah felt after he asked God for forgiveness?
5. What should we do when we've done something wrong?
6. Why was Jonah in the belly of the fish for so long?
7. What physical changes probably happened to Jonah being in the stomach of a fish for 3 days?
8. How do we know God was still with Jonah, even when he seemed all alone?
9. How do we sometimes feel in the pit of our stomach when we've done something we shouldn't? Do you think Jonah felt that way?
10. How do we know God will forgive us if we ask for forgiveness?

11. Do you think Jonah should have been punished instead of forgiven?
12. Can you find anywhere in the Bible where the words "I'm sorry" are used? What about "forgiveness"?
13. When you ask God for forgiveness, how do you feel?
14. God used a storm and a fish to get Jonah's attention. Has God ever used an extreme measure to get your attention?

DRIVE IT HOME - SAY THIS: It is not fun or easy to ask for forgiveness, especially from someone like God who sees and knows all that we do. Jonah's hatred towards the Ninevites caused him to forget his real purpose, which was to fulfill God's plan for the Ninevites. As he ran from God, he just ran into more and more trouble for himself. Finally, he had nowhere else to run to. Even then, it took him 3 days in the belly of the fish to finally humble himself enough to come to his senses to ask for forgiveness so he could move forward.

Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? When you did something wrong and really had nowhere else to go but to admit you are wrong and ask for forgiveness? A good example of this is when we tell a lie and then get caught in our lie. Sometimes, we tell another lie to cover up for the first lie. And then our stories get bigger and bigger! Has that happened to you? What happened? Did your parents send you to your room? Did you have butterflies and feel sick to your stomach? Maybe you even felt like crying? Being wrong – and knowing it - is just the worst feeling! Now, imagine instead of being sent to your bedroom you have to have your "time out" in a deep, dark cave filled with slimy unknowns and flying bats! Would it take you 3 days like Jonah to admit your fault and ask for forgiveness?

The good news is to think about how it feels when the truth has finally been told, you admit your mistake, and you ask for forgiveness. Doesn't it feel great? You no longer feel bad, but you can feel victorious! When you ask, God always forgives. Always! He accepts and loves us no matter what we have done. Just like Jonah, God has great plans for your life, so it's good when we have to be corrected by God! Let's pray together! (Dear God, thank you for forgiving me for _____. I am sorry. Thank you for always forgiving us when we ask. In Jesus' name, Amen.)

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

“Lord, show me your ways. Teach me how to follow you.” Psalm 25:4

SG/ACTIVITY - DO THIS: Instruct the kids to write the memory verse using their opposite hand. For kids who are ambidextrous (use the right and left hands equally well), have them write the verse holding the writing tool in their mouth.

Have kids swap papers and read it. Even knowing what it’s supposed to say, they may still find it difficult to read each other’s handwriting! Ask them about how it felt to write with their non-dominant hand!

Together, read the verse again and remind kids that whenever we have choices to make, it’s important to remind ourselves to ask God to teach us how to do what He wants us to do.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

LARGE GROUP GAME - DO THIS: Poke a hole in the bottom of the cup and feed the string through it. Thread the string through the hole and wrap and tie it around the edge of the cup. Attach the other end of the string to the Easter egg by inserting it in one of the holes of the egg. With a marker, draw large fisheyes and scales on each side of the cup, and then draw a man (Jonah) on the egg. Let kids take turns holding the cup in one hand to swing the egg up and try to catch Jonah in the mouth of the fish.

DO THIS:

Use the 4-corners to let kids move around the room to show which multiple choice answer they choose in this Review Game.

How many days was Jonah in the belly of the fish?

- A. 1 day and 1 night
- B. 2 days and 2 nights
- C. 3 days and 3 nights*
- D. 4 days and 4 nights

The fish swallowing Jonah was God showing Jonah to do what?

- A. Keep running away
- B. To stop fleeing and ask for forgiveness*
- C. To be kind to animals
- D. To get back on the ship

What did Jonah do in the belly of the fish?

- A. He hid
- B. He read
- C. He slept
- D. He prayed*

How did Jonah get out of the fish's belly and onto dry land again?

- A. Someone caught the fish and pulled Jonah out.
- B. The fish vomited Jonah out.
- C. The fish sneezed Jonah out.
- D. He was blown out of the fish's air hole.

What can we learn about God from this chapter of Jonah?

- A. God likes to involve all the creatures of the earth in his plan.
- B. God has a great sense of humor.
- C. God doesn't like it when we don't do what He says.
- D. God is merciful and quick to forgive.*

SAY THIS: Share a story of when you had to ask for forgiveness. Make sure your story is age appropriate, but share how you felt, and then share the outcome. Make sure you explain how grace came into play in your experience.

Have the discussion with your kids about the difference between saying, "I'm sorry," and "Will you forgive me?" It is pretty easy to say we are sorry for a wrong action, but to ask for forgiveness means you are asking someone to cancel feelings of anger or hurt that your wrong action created. Talk about how walking in humility and asking for forgiveness tears down walls and builds bridges.