

JONAH AND THE WHALE

VBS Lesson Outline | Jonah 1-4

THE BIG IDEA

God gives second chances. Jonah tried to run from God, but God pursued him. Even inside a fish, Jonah prayed, and God heard him. God wants to use us, and He is patient when we mess up.

MEMORY VERSE

"From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God." (Jonah 2:1, NIV)

OPENING (5 minutes)

Ask: Have you ever tried to hide from your parents? Did it work? Today we will meet a man who tried to run away from God. Spoiler: it did not work!

STORY TIME (10 minutes)

Tell the story from Jonah 1-4. Key points: (1) God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach, but Jonah did not want to go. (2) Jonah ran away and got on a ship going the opposite direction. (3) God sent a huge storm, and the sailors threw Jonah overboard. (4) A giant fish swallowed Jonah, and he lived inside it for three days. (5) Jonah prayed and repented, and the fish spit him out on dry land. (6) Jonah obeyed and went to Nineveh, and the whole city repented. (7) God showed mercy to Nineveh because they turned from their sins.

DISCUSSION (5 minutes)

Questions to ask: Why did Jonah try to run from God? Can we really hide from God? Why or why not? What happened when Jonah finally obeyed? How does God give us second chances?

ACTIVITY TIME (15 minutes)

Option A: Jonah in the Fish Craft (see craft sheet). Option B: Coloring page. Option C: Memory verse practice with hand motions.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for this story and what it teaches us. Help us to remember you cannot run from god. In Jesus' name, Amen.