

## God's Family

# God's Love is for Everyone

Parents,

We are missing all of you so much! Please let us know what resources might be helpful for you during this time and we'll do what we can to assist!

The story this week is "Jonah: Do THEY Belong?" and the theme of this month is:

**God's Love is for Everyone**

Let's think of creative ways that we can still be the hands and feet of Jesus - even during this time of uncertainty. Pantano is setting up a program where we can "Love our City." If you know of anyone who is in need of assistance, please contact the church office.

**March 29, 2020**

Reference: Jonah 1-4

Lesson: Jonah: Do THEY Belong?

**What We're Learning :**

About God: God loves ALL of us, no matter what!

About Us: We should love others the way God loves us

**"See what amazing love the Father has given us! Because of it, we are called children of God."**

**1 John 3:1 (NIRV)**

## Game

### Sharing God's Word

Supplies:

Bible (1 per team)

Ping Pong Balls (Or any small ball)

Instructions:

- Divide into teams and line up at a starting point - Designate a line on the other side of the room as the ending point
- Give each team a Bible and a ping pong ball
- Explain that the first person on each team will have to balance the ping pong ball on the Bible while holding the Bible with ONE HAND and keeping the other hand behind their back
- The person with the Bible and the ball has to try to get from the start to the finish and back without dropping the ball
- Let the kids be creative about how to balance the ball, but don't give it away - They ARE allowed to balance the ball INSIDE the Bible, but they have to be the ones to figure it out.

SAY: "God wants us to share His word and His love with others. Did you figure out that it was easier to carry the ball once you put it INSIDE the Bible? God tells us that we should have His word in our hearts. When we have the Word of God and the love of Jesus inside of us, it is SO MUCH EASIER to share His love with others. When we're focused on OUTER things - and being selfish, it's much more difficult to share God's love. Today, we'll hear a story about a man who had a really hard time sharing God's love with others - and how God got his attention!"



Pantano Christian Church

# Lesson - Jonah: Do THEY Belong?

Jonah was a man who spent time telling others the messages God had for them. He was a prophet. Can you think of any other prophets we've talked about? Does anyone remember Elijah and Elisha? Jonah did the same thing! He gave people messages from God.

But there was one group of people that God told Jonah to go to that Jonah DID NOT want to visit. They were the people of Nineveh. Jonah did NOT like the people of Nineveh because he didn't believe that they deserved God's love. Would you like to know what happened? It sounded like this:

God: Jonah, go to Nineveh and tell them that their sins have come to my attention.

Jonah: Uhhhhhhhh.....\*runs away to Tarshish\*

Jonah ran away from God! He decided to head towards a place called Tarshish but had to go to Joppa to get on a boat. Jonah paid for his ticket and boarded the boat. While he was on the boat, God sent a great storm to the sea. The storm was so strong that the boat was going to break! Everyone on the ship was afraid, so they prayed to their own gods (not the one true God). They threw things overboard to lighten the load of the ship, but where was Jonah? Why wasn't he crying out to God?

JONAH WAS TAKING A NAP IN THE BELLY OF THE SHIP! The captain of the ship went down to Jonah and said this, "How can you be sleeping through this storm? Get up and pray to your God! Maybe He can save us!" While this was happening, all the sailors decided that they would do this thing called casting lots. Casting lots is a way of chance, like rolling dice or pulling on a turkey's wishbone. The person who got the shorter end would be the 'unlucky' person. This was the way that the sailor's thought they could figure out who was at fault for the big storm. The lot fell on Jonah, so all the sailors asked "What did you do to cause this big storm?"

Jonah told them that he worshiped the Lord who created the sea and sky. The sailors were terrified!! They wanted to know why Jonah was running from God. The sailors asked Jonah what they should do to Jonah to make the sea calm down.

Jonah gave them a crazy suggestion. He told the sailors that they should throw him overboard into that giant storm! The sailors didn't want to throw Jonah overboard, so they tried to row the other way but they couldn't. The storm just kept getting stronger! The sailors were so afraid that they prayed to the one true God! They asked God to forgive them for throwing Jonah over, then they threw him out of the boat and into the stormy sea.

As soon as Jonah was out of the boat, the storm stopped. The sea calmed down. Everything was at peace. Meanwhile, Jonah was sinking down into the ocean! God sent a big fish to swallow Jonah! He was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. I bet it smelled so bad! Like..... worse than dirty socks!

While Jonah was in the belly of the fish, he prayed because God had saved him. He thanked God for keeping him safe & for showing him the way. God heard Jonah's prayer and had the fish spit him out!

Can you guess where Jonah was spit out? A three day walk away from Nineveh! God wanted Jonah to do the work He had asked for. Jonah saw God's goodness and went to the people of Nineveh. He told them God's plan that in 40 days Nineveh would be destroyed! Do you think the people of Nineveh believed God's warning?



# Lesson - Jonah: Do THEY Belong? Continued

YES! They heard what Jonah was telling them and turned to God! The king was so sad that he ripped his clothes and decreed that the people also dress for sadness and cry out to God! And they did! God saw this and was so glad that He decided to give Nineveh grace!

Do you think Jonah was happy that God used him to bring grace to Nineveh? NOPE. Jonah was so upset that he went outside of the city & prayed, "Lord why did you give them grace? I knew this would happen! Just take away my life!"

God asked Jonah if it was right for him to be angry. Jonah was cranky so he went to a place in the desert and put some branches over his head. He was waiting to see if God would destroy the city. God made a branch with a huge leaf grow over Jonah so he could have more shade. But then....overnight God sent a worm to eat the branch! Jonah was upset so he told God he would rather die! Again, God asked Jonah if he should be angry at the plant?

"But the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this plant. But you did not take care of it. You did not make it grow. It grew up in one night and died the next. And shouldn't I show concern for the great city of Nineveh? It has more than 120,000 people. They can't tell right from wrong." Jonah 4:10-11

Jonah was upset because God showed people that they were part of His family. Jonah didn't think the people of Nineveh were good enough for God's family. But the people of Nineveh were so thankful that God spared them! Jonah should have extended the people with that kind of grace. Instead, he was SO angry with God. He didn't want to admit that all people belong to God's family.

But isn't that the best part of being in God's family? That He loves us no matter what! God gives us grace when we make mistakes & walks alongside of us when we are in trouble. He invites us to be part of his family, just like he did with the people of Nineveh!

## Craft - Map of Jonah's Travels

### Supplies:

- Copies of Jonah map
- Crayons or Markers
- Scissors
- Tape

### Directions:

- Color both pages of the map
- Attach the two sides by taping along the seam
- Color and cut out Jonah figure
- Move Jonah through different locations on the map as you retell the story of Jonah

# Review Game- Wacky Workout

Materials:

Wacky Workout cards

Directions:

- Place the wacky workout cards on the floor
- When a child correctly answers a question, he/she may choose one card and the whole family has to complete the action on that card
- The person who answered the question will earn the number of points equal to the number of times they are instructed to do the activity listed on the card
- The player with the most points wins the game!

Review Questions from today's story:

1. What was Jonah's job? (He was a prophet)
2. To what town did God want Jonah to go? (Ninevah)
3. Where did Jonah try to go instead of going to Ninevah? (Tarshish)
4. What happened when Jonah was on the boat going to Tarshish? (A big storm came and started to destroy the boat)
5. What was Jonah doing during the big storm? (Sleeping)
6. What did the sailors do to try to stop the storm? (Throw Jonah overboard)
7. What happened as soon as the sailors threw Jonah overboard? (The storm stopped)
8. What did God send to save Jonah? (A big fish)
9. What did the big fish do to Jonah? (Swallowed him)
10. How long was Jonah in the belly of the fish? (3 days)
11. When the fish spit Jonah out, how far was he from Ninevah? (3 day walk)
12. After Jonah preached to the people of Ninevah, did they repent and ask for forgiveness? (Yes)
13. Did God give grace to Ninevah and not destroy it? (Yes)
14. Was Jonah happy that God was giving grace to Ninevah? (No)
15. What did God give to Jonah to protect him while he watched over the city of Ninevah? (A plant with branches)
16. What happened to the plant that was protecting Jonah from the sun? (A worm came and ate it)
17. What was God's question to Jonah about the plant being eaten? (Why are you so angry? Shouldn't I be concerned about Ninevah, who has more than 120,000 people?)
18. Did Jonah believe that the people of Ninevah deserved to be loved by God? (No)
19. Does God want everyone to be a part of His family? (Yes)
20. Should we show love to all people, just the way God does? (Yes)

Review questions from the Good Samaritan story:

1. According to Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan, who is your neighbor? (Anyone who needs help.)
2. Who did not help the man who was injured? (The Levite and the Priest.)
3. Why was it strange for the Samaritan to help? (The Samaritan was used to being hated by Jews—he might have felt he didn't need to be nice to the Jewish man.)
4. How did the Samaritan help the hurt man? (He put on medicine and bandages; he carried the man on his own donkey; he took the man to an inn where he paid for the man to stay until he was well.)
5. How did Jesus' story answer the first man's question? (It showed that anyone in need is our neighbor.)
6. How should we treat others? (We should treat them the way we want to be treated; we should love all people the way Jesus loves us.)

## Discussion Time: (For Older Kids)

Read this month's memory verse: "See what amazing love the Father has given us! Because of it, we are called children of God." 1 John 3:1

Have you memorized the verse yet? Try to think of creative ways to help you memorize the verse. (Act it out, illustrate it, cover up words, fill in the blank)

When we hear the story of Jonah, we are probably a little annoyed with Jonah, right? Why would he be so unloving to an entire city? Why wouldn't he be happy when he finds out that they want to stop doing what's wrong and start doing what's right right? But, if we're honest.....we can probably say that there have been some people in our lives that we didn't think were worthy of our time, effort or God's love. But we need to remember that God can change people! The first thing you can do for someone that you think needs God's love is to pray for that person!

Questions:

- Besides prayer, what are some other ways you can show God's love to someone?
- Why do you think Jonah didn't want God to show His love to the people of Ninevah?
- Do you ever find yourself thinking that certain people don't deserve God's love, or your love?
- Can you think of anyone in the Bible who turned from doing wrong to doing what was right? Who if you can, who is it and what did they do? (Hint\* One person that did this was the apostle Paul\*)
- Do you think God can change people?
- What is something about yourself that you would like God to help you change?
- What are some ways you can show love to others during this time of schools being closed and church being online?
- Who is a person that you know needs the love of Jesus? Take a minute to pray for that person right now!



# Communion

Because we know that God loves us, and He loves EVERY person, we do something every week to help us remember.

Communion is a time we set apart each Sunday to remind us of how much God loves us. He showed us how much He loves us by sending His son to take the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross. The blood of Jesus will cover the sins of EVERY single person, if they will make the decision to follow Him and put Him first place in their life. This is a time for those that have made a decision to follow Jesus to remember their decision and to remember the sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus asks us to set aside a time to remember him and the decision we made to follow him. We do this every week because God knows that it's important that we remember His son, since we sometimes are forgetful people. Each of the emblems we take in communion has significance. The bread represents Jesus' body, which was broken for us on the cross. The juice represents Jesus' blood, which the Bible says covers our sins so that God doesn't see our sins anymore. Communion is a very serious time when we reflect on how much God loves us and how much we love Him. If you haven't made the decision to follow Jesus, you can still spend this time thinking about the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and thinking about what it would look like for you to make the decision to follow Jesus for yourself.

Pray something like this: "Dear God, thank you for sending your son Jesus to die in our place. Thank you that we have forgiveness of our sins because of Jesus' sacrifice. Help us to love others the way that you love us. In Jesus' name, Amen."

- Take the bread and the juice, and once you've finished, say your own prayer of thanks to God and ask him to forgive you of times when you did things that you knew weren't pleasing to Him. Ask Him to help you show the love of Jesus to others as you meet them each day. God's love is for everyone, and He counts on US to show His love to those we meet each day.