



GOD'S KINGDOM

LOVE

LIFE



SALVATION



SPREADING THE KINGDOM

SIN

DEATH

Lesson 25: *Jonah and the Big Fish* (Condensed Version)

Saint Matthew's Anglican Church Children's Ministries

THE GREAT COMMISSION (Scripture: The Book of Jonah; Matthew 28:18-20)

Year 2. Kingdom Life
Unit 9: Spreading the Kingdom

Objectives: To explain that: *God used the prophet Jonah to save Nineveh from destruction. *Because the people repented, God had mercy on Nineveh, but Jonah was angry with God for saving them. He only cared about himself. *Now God is calling his new people, the Church, to share his love with others.

"I Wonder" Questions: (*Show lesson poster*) *What do you see in this picture? ***I wonder** why there are green circles growing out of God's Kingdom. *I wonder how the man who is lost can find his way into God's Kingdom. Let's find out more in our lesson...

Lesson Props: Jonah story poster on pg. 3 (cover each picture with post-it notes and reveal as outlined in story). Memory verse on pg. 4.

Lesson Summary: Have you ever told others about Jesus, maybe to a friend or a relative? (*Children respond.*) Sometimes that might be easy to do, but sometimes it can be hard. (*Switch to Jonah poster and reveal picture 1*) Today's story is about a man called Jonah who did not want to share God's message. He found it hard. Jonah was a prophet who lived in Old Testament times. (*Pic. 2*) One day God called Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh, which was far away in the country of Assyria. God said to Jonah: "Tell the people of Nineveh that I will destroy their city in 40 days because of the sin and great evil they are doing to each other." The Israelites were afraid of the Assyrians because they were so evil and violent. Jonah really did not care about the people of Nineveh, and he didn't want to go there and share God's message. Jonah said "no" to God. (*Pic. 3*) He got into a boat that was going in the opposite direction. But when they were out at sea, (*Pic. 4*) God sent a big storm, and the sailors were afraid. They said to Jonah: "Who are you? What have you done to bring this trouble on us?" Jonah said: "I'm sorry, I am running away from God. That is why he has brought this storm on us. You will have to throw me overboard into the sea. Then all will be calm." When the sailors threw him into the sea, (*Pic. 5*) God sent a very large fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was alive inside the belly of the fish for 3 days and 3 nights. There Jonah prayed and thanked God for saving him. Then God caused the fish to spit Jonah out onto dry land. (*Pic. 6*) God called Jonah again to go to Nineveh, and this time Jonah did go and delivered God's warning that he was going to destroy Nineveh in 40 days because of their sin. (*Pic. 7*) The people of Nineveh repented and turned from their evil ways. Therefore, God had mercy on them and did not destroy the city after all. But Jonah didn't think it was fair that God should have mercy on the people. Jonah did not care about the people in Nineveh. He only cared about himself and his own people. (*Pic. 8*) However, God had **always** cared about **all** the nations of the world. (*Switch to lesson poster*) **Now**, God is calling his **new** people, the Church, to share his love with others. Jesus wants us to say "yes" to God, just like **he** did when he came to seek and save the lost. Jesus is calling us to go to those who don't know him yet and tell them the wonderful news of God's love and forgiveness through Jesus. Our memory verse today is the last commandment Jesus gave his disciples before he went up to Heaven. It is called "The Great Commission". (*Read verse on pg. 4*) Not everyone is called to go to another country like Jonah was, but we are **all** called to tell others about Jesus. (*Point to green circles on poster*) When we lead others to Jesus, the Kingdom of God grows, and more people can know God's love and forgiveness. Jesus promised that he will always be with us. It is by the power of God's Holy Spirit who lives within us that we can tell others the good news about Jesus, our Forever King.

Suggested Questions: ***What does this story tell us about God?** (God is merciful when we repent of our sins and turn to him. God loves all people and all nations.) ***What did Jesus command his disciples to do just before he went up to Heaven?** (Go into all the world and make disciples.) ***How does the Kingdom of God grow?** (When we tell other people about Jesus, and they love and follow him.) ***What did Jesus promise before he went up to Heaven?** (That he would always be with us. Jesus is with us through his Holy Spirit who gives us power to tell others about Jesus.)

Bible Memory Verse: Jesus said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you." (Matthew 28: 18-20 – NIRV)

1



2



Nineveh
Sin and evil

8



The
World

3



Jonah and the Big Fish

7



Nineveh
Repented

4



6



Nineveh
40 Days

5



Back of page 3

Year 2 - Lesson 25 – Jonah and the Big Fish

(The Great Commission)

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(Matthew 28: 18-20)

Back of page 4

Year 2 - Lesson 25 – Jonah and the Big Fish