**Full Lesson November 19**

**Bible Teaching: Jonah**

**Bible Passage: Jonah 1-4**

# **Bible Teaching Summary**

God called the prophet Jonah to warn the city of Nineveh that their city would be overthrown. Instead, Jonah went the other direction, refusing to obey God. He ended up on a ship. When God sent a giant storm, Jonah was thrown into the sea. God sent a great fish to swallow him. Inside the fish, Jonah prayed, recognizing that he was wrong. The fish spit him onto the shore. This time when God said to go to Nineveh, he went. Jonah preached and the people repented. Jonah was upset because he still wanted the enemy city to be destroyed. God used a vine to correct his attitude again.

**brite\* Idea:** God is compassionate.

**Memory Verse: Psalm 99:3**

*Let them praise Your great and awesome name! Holy is He!*

**Focus Verses: Micah 7:19, Matthew 9:36, Psalm 78:38**

**He Question: How does God show compassion?**

Even though we disobey Him, God rescues us and gives us a second chance. God’s compassion is not something earned or deserved. He loves us and wants us to follow His way – the best way!

**We Question: What can we do when we know we have messed up?**

Because of God’s compassion towards us, He made a way for us to be forgiven. We can repent by telling God we are sorry, turning away from sin, and turning towards Him.

**Me Question: What does God want me to know about Him and what does this mean for my life?**

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

# **Leader Tips: Invite Participation**

Your small group time provides space for kids to experience firsthand a variety of different types of prayer. As your group engages in prayer, be sensitive to where kids are at and their comfort level with participation. Some may not be ready to pray themselves or may not feel safe to pray aloud in a group setting. Always extend an invitation to participate rather than requiring it. Also, consider varying what participation looks like. Sometimes it can be writing down or drawing something; other times it might be praying aloud or praying silently to yourself. At times you might have the kids pray in pairs or smaller groups rather than all together. By inviting kids to participate in a variety of ways, you have a better chance of finding an option that feels like a lower risk and a starting point for a kid who is hesitant.

# **Navigating a Broken World: Guilt**

One study revealed that as many as 40% of believers struggle with guilt because they are afraid they are displeasing God.[\*](https://teleiosresearch.com/why-do-christians-feel-guilty/) Guilt is a normal human emotion that the Holy Spirit often uses to convict of sin. 2 Corinthians 7:10 says, “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.” The feeling of guilt is designed to bring us back to God, not to consume us with fear and take over our lives. Some kids struggle with guilt, especially kids who have experienced trauma. In today’s lesson kids will learn about sin and how God corrects us when we do the wrong thing. You will have the opportunity to help kids understand that guilt can lead us to turn away from our sin and turn back to God like Jonah did. Kids (and adults) tend to default to a works-based view of pleasing God. You can help kids understand the grace that God offers us and how His forgiveness frees us from guilt.

https://teleiosresearch.com/why-do-christians-feel-guilty/

**Large Group Experiences Overview**

 **Welcome:**

*Supplies Needed:* Whiteboard and dry erase markers (or large paper and markers), large candy bar, video player

**Find it in the Bible:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides*

**Bible Teaching:**

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, but instead, Jonah went the other direction.

*Supplies Needed: Bible, parachutes or bed sheets, spray bottle of water*

**Bible Teaching Review:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, 2 bells, teaching slides, video player*

**Bible Teaching Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides, video player*

**SPLASH FLOW**

Note: Advance slide at hi lighted lines

Theme Slide

**Kid’s Enter**

 Welcome and encourage to play games/interact with other kids and teachers

**Gather kids into their age groups**

 Do the “Belong” activity with the 2 groups

Play Countdown **when groups are winding down with their “Belong” activity and gather them into the main teaching area**

**Quick Welcome, ask to stand up, then Play worship videos**

Video: “Praise”

Video: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Offering

Theme Slide

**Ask all to sit, then teach through “Bible Teaching” section below**

**Welcome**

**Supplies:** Whiteboard and dry erase markers (or large paper and markers), large candy bar, video player

**Prep:** Choose students to come to the front to play the game.

**Say:** Today’s game is very simple. We have two kids who will compete in an intense game of tic-tac-toe, and the winner will receive this candy bar!

*Lead kids to play while others watch. Consider adding play-by-play or dividing the whole group into two teams to cheer for their “side.”*

**Say:** Congratulations! Now before I give you the candy, you have an option. Should we play best out of three so that your friend has another chance? It is totally your choice.

*If the player chooses to play again, continue to play best out of three. If not, give them the candy bar.*

**Say:** It would take a lot of compassion to give your opponent another chance after you won fair and square. We have compassion when we understand the tough thing someone is going through and we try to help. We will be talking about that word a lot more today. First, let’s check out Adventure Island.

 *Play the Intro video, then follow the script below****.***

**Say:** After the way Max treated Pat, he knew that he didn’t deserve Pat’s help.

**Ask:** Have you ever been given something you didn’t deserve?

**Say:** God cares about us and wants to help us, even though we don’t deserve it. Today’s Brite idea is: God is compassionate.

**Today we will answer these two questions:**

How does God show compassion?

What can we do when we know we mess up?

**And at the end of our time today, the question you will be able to answer is:**

What does God want me to know about Him and what does this mean for me?

### **Find It in the Bible**

**What is the Bible?**

The Bible is real and true. God gave us the Bible so that we could know Him. The Bible is filled with many books and stories, but it’s all a part of one BIG story—God’s Story.

**What is God’s Bigger Story?**

**Creation:** God is the Creator of all things, and He is very good.

**Fall:** Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God. Sin broke the world and people were separated from God. All people have sinned so the relationship with God is broken for each of us.

**Redemption:** People could not fix their sin problem on their own. God promised all throughout the Old Testament that He would send a Rescuer, a Messiah, to save the people from their sin. He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

**Restoration:** When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, our relationship with God can be made right again. We don’t do anything to earn it and we don’t deserve it. God restores us through His grace. One day, Jesus will return and restore the whole broken world, making it new again.

**Play “These Are The Books Of The Bible” Song video**

**The video can be viewed at this link:**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwDywQ5qaqM> **or on our Brite page.**

**Where is today’s Bible story?**

Today’s story is in the book of Jonah. Jonah is a book in the Old Testament. It is one of the twelve books of the minor prophets. The Old Testament tells us about God’s people before Jesus came. The Israelites always struggled with obeying Him. It began with Adam and Eve and continued to the Tower of Babel. Even after God delivered them from Egypt and gave them the Promised Land, they still turned against Him. Eventually God allowed the kingdom of Israel to split in two. Jonah was a prophet during this time.

*Open a Bible and show the kids the title page for the book of Jonah. Then show them how to get to today’s Bible passage (Jonah 1-4).*

**Bible Teaching:**

**Supplies:** Bible,Parachutes or bed sheets, spray bottle of water

**Prep:** Depending on your size of class, gather kids around one or more parachutes. Explain that they’re going to use the parachute to tell the Bible story today. Have them all stand, spread out evenly around the parachute, and hold the edge of it.

**Say:** Jonah was a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel. One day, God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, a city in the enemy country of Assyria.

*Walk clockwise around the kids. Kids won’t do anything at this point.*

**Say:** God told him to go this way. God wanted Jonah to tell the people of Nineveh they were doing evil in the sight of the Lord. Instead, Jonah ran in the opposite direction.

*Have children move quickly in a counter-wise direction, still holding the parachute.*

**Read Jonah 1:3 directly from the Bible,** *But 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.*

*Have kids place the parachute on the floor, and then all gather on it, as if they’re boarding a ship.*

**Say:** God sent a great storm, tossing the ship among the waves.

*Walk around the parachute, wiggling the edges in various places. Spray kids with water.*

**Say:** Jonah was sleeping downstairs when the men on the ship came to him, asking him to pray for his God to stop the storm. Jonah knew that the storm was his fault. He told the men to throw him into the sea. They threw Jonah into the water and as he sank, the storm ceased immediately.

*Have kids “jump out of the ship” by hopping off the parachute and grabbing the edge again.*

**Read Jonah 1:17 directly from the Bible,** *And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.*

*Have kids all gather under the parachute by first holding it low, and then lifting their arms high and walking under it, pulling the edge behind them and under their behinds.*

**Say:** Finally, Jonah prayed to God.

**Read Jonah 2:7,9 directly from the Bible,** *When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to You, into Your holy temple. But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to You; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord!*

*Lead kids in saying “Salvation belongs to the Lord” together.*

**Say:** Right then God commanded the fish to vomit Jonah out onto dry land.

*Have kids hop out from under the parachute.*

**Say:** Again, God told Jonah, “Go to Nineveh and tell them they are doing wrong things.” This time Jonah obeyed.

*Have kids hold the sides of the parachute again, and walk in a clockwise direction.*

**Say:** He went to the city and told them that God would destroy them because of their sin. And the people believed! They cried out to God, repented of their sins, and believed in Him. God showed compassion and didn’t destroy their city. But Jonah was mad again.

*Have kids stop walking and wiggle the parachute.*

**Say:** He was watching the city, waiting for God to destroy it. He was angry that God showed them compassion. God caused a vine to grow over Jonah’s head and give him shade. Then he sent a worm to eat the plant.

*Have kids bring the parachute low. Have them quickly move their arms up high like the vine, and then quickly bring it back down to the ground.*

**Say:** Jonah was angry. God told him, “You are worried about one plant that you didn’t even grow. I am more concerned about this great city of people who don’t know Me.”

*Have kids sit and put down the parachute.*

**Point to Jesus**

Jonah was a prophet, but he wasn’t perfect. He ran from God and he even pouted in the end. God loved Jonah and corrected him when he messed up. What should we do when we mess up? We can try running away or hiding our sin or even sitting down and pouting. None of those things fixes our sin problem. The Bible says that our sin is so serious that the punishment for it is death. God sent His own Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sin. He made a way for us to be forgiven. We can repent by telling God we are sorry, turning away from sin, and turning towards Him.

**Bible Teaching: Review**

**Watch the Bible Story Review Video and then play the game below.**

**Supplies:** Bible, 2 bell, teaching slides, video player

**Prep:** none

Bring up two kids at a time. After you ask the question, whoever rings their bell first will answer first. If they get the answer correct, they win. The winner stays and plays against a different kid.

**Discuss each question.**

1. Where did God tell Jonah to go? (Nineveh)

*Nineveh was a city in Assyria that was an enemy of the Israelites. Instead, Jonah ran the opposite direction.*

1. What did Jonah tell the men on the ship to do to make the storm stop? (throw him overboard)

*Jonah knew that God sent the storm because of his disobedience. As soon as the men threw Jonah in the water, the storm stopped.*

1. How did God rescue Jonah from drowning in the sea? (A fish swallowed him).

*God showed grace to Jonah by sending a giant fish to swallow him. God saved him.*

1. When Jonah prayed inside the fish, what did he say belonged only to the Lord? (salvation)

*Jonah praised God and acknowledged that salvation came only from God. After he prayed, the fish spit him up on the shore.*

1. What did God tell Jonah to do once he was back on shore? (Go to Nineveh)

*God gave Jonah a second chance. This time Jonah did the right thing. God showed Jonah a lot of compassion by correcting him when he did the wrong thing and giving him another chance.*

1. Why does God correct us? (Because He loves us.)

*God disciplines those He loves. Because He loves us, He corrects us so that we can live life in the way He knows is best.*

1. What can we do when we know we have messed up? (Repent)

*We can repent by telling God we are sorry, turning away from sin, and turning towards Him.*

**Bible Teaching: Wrap-Up**

**The brite\* idea for the day is:** God is compassionate.

**Memory Verse:**

Choose an older kid to look up the verse and read it aloud to the group. Have the whole group repeat it together.

*Let them praise Your great and awesome name! Holy is He! (Psalm 99:3)*

**Teaching Wrap-Up**

**He Question:** How does God show compassion?

Even though we disobey Him, God rescues us and gives us a second chance. God’s compassion is not something earned or deserved. He loves us and wants us to follow His way – the best way!

**We Question:** What can we do when we know we have messed up?

Because of God’s compassion towards us, He made a way for us to be forgiven. We can repent by telling God we are sorry, turning away from sin, and turning towards Him.

**Prayer**

God, we thank You for Your love and Your compassion. You truly care about Your people and we are so grateful. Thank You for the second chances You give us. Help us to turn to You when we mess up and accept Your compassionate grace. Amen.

**Small Group Activities and Wrap-Up**

**As time permits…**

**Gather kids into their 2 age groups**

 Do the “Believing” activity with the 2 groups

 AND/OR

 ***Do the “Becoming” activity with the 2 groups DEPENDING UPON TIME AVAILABLE***

**Supplies Needed:** Take-Home page (1 per kid), coloring utensils

**Prep:** None

**Me Question – Younger Kids**

**Say:** We are going to take a few minutes to think about what we have learned today about Jesus. God wants us to love Him even more as we learn more about who He is.

***Pass out the Take-Home page. Instruct kids to think about what they’ve learned about God today and draw/write an answer to, “What does God want me to know about Him?”***

**Choose Your Challenge**

**Say:** We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. During the coming week we also want to use what He’s taught us. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

*Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.*

**Prayer:** God, Thank You for being a loving and compassionate God! Thank You for sending Jesus to pay for our sins. We want to honor You by following Your Word and living as You want us to.

**Say Goodbye**

*Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.*

* *As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”*
* *As parents pick up their kids, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.*

**Older Kids Small Group Experiences Overview**

 **Belong**: (Choose One)

**Body Words:** Kids will construct words using only their fingers, hands or entire bodies for the other groups to guess.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve)**

*Supplies Needed: Printable page*

**Rhythm Categories**- Kids will follow a rhythm of clapping, slapping and snapping to name items in a specific category.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: No supplies needed*

**Believe:** (Choose One)

**Find Your Match-** Kids will work together to match up verses about God's compassion.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: Bibles, printable page*

**Mixed Up Verse-** Kids will toss a beach ball with parts of the memory verse on each color.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: Bibles, beach ball with parts of the memory verse written on different colors*

**Become:** (Choose One)

**Two Paths-** Kids will walk along two paths. The first path is the no-repentance path and will show how covering up our mistakes makes things worse. The second path is the repentance path and will show the steps of asking for God's forgiveness for our mistakes**.**

**Learning Styles: (Move, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: Printable pages*

**Sins Are Gone-** Kids will use an expo marker to write a sin on the back of a plastic spoon. After discussing how to ask God for forgiveness, they will dip their spoon in water and watch their sin float away**.**

**Learning Styles: (Create, Write)**

*Supplies Needed: Plastic spoons, expo markers, containers, water, writing utensils (one of each supply per kid).*

**Small Group Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Take-Home page, writing utensils*

**Older Kids Belonging Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title: Body Words**

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve

**Supplies:** Printable page

**Prep:** Print and cut out printable page.

**Instructions:**

1. **Say:** I am so happy to see you all today! What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
2. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
3. Divide kids into groups.
4. **Say:** We are going to play a guessing game**.** I am going to divide you into groups. Each group will choose a card that has a word on it. The rest of us are going to try to guess your word. But, there is a catch!
5. **Say:** You have to use your fingers, hands or entire bodies to form the letters to spell the word for us to guess. There is one more catch! You can’t talk while forming your words!
6. Allow kids to choose their cards and begin practicing forming their words. After some practice time, allow groups to go one at a time for other groups to guess their word.
7. **Discuss:** What was the most challenging part of this game?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** It was hard to form the words- especially without talking! But, once you got the hang of following the silent directions, it got easier. Today, we are going to learn about Jonah who was given directions from God, but chose not to follow them right away and there were some big consequences for him!

**Older Kids Belonging Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** Rhythm Categories

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** None

**Prep:** Have kids sit with their legs criss-cross in a circle.

**Instructions:**

1. **Say:** I’m so glad to see everyone today! What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
2. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
3. **Say:** We are going to play a game called “Rhythm”. It is important that you follow the rhythm. First, you will slap your legs two times, then clap your hands two times and then snap your fingers two times. Let’s practice.
4. Demonstrate. It may help to say the actions as you do them until everyone catches on. (Slap, Slap, Clap, Clap, Snap, Snap)
5. **Say:** Now that we have the rhythm, we are going to add in categories. The first category will be food. We will continue with the rhythm and this time when you snap, you will say a type of food. We will go around the circle until everyone has the chance. You cannot repeat what someone else has said.
6. **Say:** This time around we are going to speed it up a little. The category is places to go on vacation.

Repeat as time allows.

1. **Discuss:** Did anyone mess up in our game? What made it challenging?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** That took a lot of concentration! You had to focus on the rhythm and make sure you weren’t repeating someone else otherwise you would mess up! Today, we are going to talk about Jonah who really messed up when he didn’t follow God’s instructions. God is a loving and compassionate God and He gave Jonah a second chance.

**Older Kids Believing Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title: Find Your Match**

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** Bibles,printable page

**Prep:** Print one copy of the printable pages and cut out.

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss:** What does it mean to have compassion for someone?
2. **Say:** We have compassion for someone when we try to understand what they are going through and seek to help.
3. **Discuss:** Did God have compassion for Jonah even though he disobeyed Him? How?
4. **Discuss:** Does God show us compassion? How?
5. **Say:** God shows compassion to us by forgiving us when we mess up and loving us no matter what we do.
6. Divide the group in half.
7. **Say:** We are going to dig into some other verses that talk about God’s compassion. I am going to give half of you the chapter and verse number and the other half of you the words of the verse. The goal is for you all to work together to match the correct verses and references. Once everyone has found their match, we will switch places and play again.
8. **Say:** In order to find your match quickly, those of you with the chapter and verse number will need to look it up in your Bible.
9. **Say:** Ready? Find your match!
10. Pass out cards and allow kids to find matches. Repeat as time allows.
11. **Discuss:** Which of these verses stood out to you? Why?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** All of these verses talk about God’s compassion to us- even when we mess up! How do we ask for God’s forgiveness? Do we just say sorry and that’s it? To truly repent and ask for God’s forgiveness, we must turn away from our sin and not continue doing the same thing over and over.

**Older Kids Believing Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title: Mixed Up Verse**

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** Bibles**,** beach ball with segments of different colors

**Prep:** Write parts of the memory verse on the different colored sections of a beach ball and inflate the beach ball.

**Instructions:**

1. Lead kids to find Psalm 99:3 in their Bible. Read the verse aloud together.
2. **Discuss:** Our verse tells us to praise His awesome and holy name! What are some reasons Jonah had to praise His name?
3. **Discuss**: What does it mean to have compassion for someone?
4. **Discuss:** Did God have compassion for Jonah even though he disobeyed Him? How?
5. **Discuss:** Does God show us compassion? How?
6. **Say:** God shows us compassion by forgiving us when we mess up and loving us no matter what we do.
7. **Discuss:** How do we show our appreciation for God? What are some ways we can praise Him?
8. Gather kids in a circle.
9. **Say:** We are going to play a game with our memory verse. Parts of the memory verse are written on the different colors of this beach ball. I am going to toss the ball to one of you and wherever your right pointer finger touches when you catch it is your part of the verse. You will then arrange yourselves in the correct order of the memory verse.
10. **Say:** The first time we do it, we will be able to talk and help everyone find their correct spot. After that, we will do it without talking and see how fast we can do it!

**Activity Wrap-Up:**  God showed compassion to Jonah when he disobeyed Him. God has compassion for us- even when we mess up! How do we ask for God’s forgiveness? Do we just say sorry and that’s it? To truly repent and ask for God’s forgiveness, we must turn away from our sin and not continue doing the same thing over and over.

**Discipleship Discussion**

**Goal:** To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom.

**HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?**

**Discuss:** Do you think someone could survive in the belly of a large fish? Why or why not?

**Say:** Some people think the large fish might have been a whale or a great white shark, which are big enough to swallow a whole person. There have been stories of people surviving in the belly of a whale, even in recent times a man survived after being swallowed by a humpback whale. Other people believe that God could have created a special fish just for this purpose. It can be a bit hard to imagine, but remember, God can do amazing things! Even if there are no good supernatural explanations, God isn’t limited by nature like we are. He can do all things!

#

# **BUT WHAT ABOUT … Guilt?**

**Discuss:** Have you ever felt guilty for something you did that was wrong?

**Discuss:** How can guilt be good? How can guilt be bad?

**Discuss:** What does the Bible have to say about that?

Some people struggle with feeling guilty even after they’ve been forgiven. Some people struggle with guilt for things that aren’t even their fault. God gave us the feeling of guilt to help us repent by turning to Him and away from our sin. Once we are forgiven, we don’t have to feel guilty anymore. Romans 8:1 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” That verse tells us that once Jesus forgives us, we are no longer punished. There may be consequences for what we did, but God isn’t looking down on us, mad at us for what we did. God forgives us and gives us a new start. God didn’t create us to live in guilt, afraid that He is mad at us. He sent Jesus so that we could live free of guilt, forgiven by Him.

**Older Kids Becoming Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** Two Paths

**Learning Styles:** Move, Talk

**Supplies:** Printable pages

**Prep:** Print printable pages and lay them out to create two paths.

**Instructions:**

1. **Ask:** What is the biggest mistake you have ever made? What did you do when you made that mistake? Did you try to hide it? Did that work? How did it make you feel?
2. **Say:** When we make mistakes, we can’t hide them. When we try to cover up our mistakes, it becomes like a spider web with everything overlapping and it makes it difficult to hide. We especially can’t hide them from God. Jonah tried, but that didn’t work out so great for him!
3. **Say:** I have created two paths for you. The first path is what happens when you try to hide your mistake from God. The second path is how to ask God for forgiveness.
4. **Say:** As you walk the first path, I want you to think about a time when you really messed up. Think about whether you handled it in some of the ways mentioned along the path. As you walk along the second path, I want you to think about how you can own up to your mistakes and ask for God’s forgiveness.
5. When you finish walking both paths, take a minute and pray asking for God’s forgiveness for any mistakes you have made recently.
6. **Discuss:** What were some differences between the two paths?
7. **Discuss:** Which path do we tend to take the most? Why?
8. **Discuss:** How does God’s compassion help us know we can seek His forgiveness?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God loves us and is compassionate to us. Praise God that He gives us a chance to repent – to turn away from our sin and turn to Him for forgiveness. This week, remember that when you mess up (and we all will), God looks at you with compassion and wants you to seek Him.

**Older Kids Becoming Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** Sins Are Gone

**Learning Styles:** Create, Write

**Supplies:** Plastic spoons, expo markers, containers, water, writing utensils (one of each supply per kid)

**Prep:** Print the printable page (one per kid). Fill containers with water.

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss**: What is the biggest mistake you have ever made? What did you do when you made that mistake? Did you try to hide it? Did that work? How did it make you feel?
2. **Say:** When we make mistakes, we can’t hide them. When we try to cover up our mistakes, it becomes like a spider web with everything overlapping and it makes it difficult to hide. We especially can’t hide them from God. Jonah tried, but that didn’t work out so great for him!
3. **Discuss**: How can we ask God for forgiveness? Do we just say “forgive me” and then go on about our lives doing the same things over and over?
4. **Say:** I am going to give everyone a spoon and an expo marker. I want you to think about a mistake you have made and draw a picture of it on the back of the spoon.
5. **Say:** When we sin, we need to repent and ask God for His forgiveness. We do this by praying and confessing our sin to God. I want you to put your spoon in the water with the sin you have drawn facing up.This represents repenting for our sin.
6. **Discuss:** What happens to the sin you drew on your spoon? (it floats away)
7. **Say:** When we confess and ask God for forgiveness, He shows us compassion and takes our sins away. Jesus paid the price for our sins when He died on the cross. He calls us to repent and God gives us a second chance.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God loves us and is compassionate to us. Praise God that He gives us a chance to repent – to turn away from our sin and turn to Him for forgiveness. This week, remember that when you mess up (and we all will), God looks at you with compassion and wants you to seek Him.

**Small Group Wrap-Up**

**Supplies Needed:** Take-Home page (1 per kid), writing utensils

**Prep:** None

**Me Question – Older Kids**

**Say:** We are going to take a few minutes to think about what we have learned today about Jesus. God wants us to love Him even more as we learn more about who He is.

*Pass out the Take-Home page. Instruct kids to think about what they’ve learned about God today and draw or write an answer to, “What does this mean for my life?”*

**Choose Your Challenge**

**Say:** We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. During the coming week we also want to use what He’s taught us. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

*Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.*

**Prayer:** God, Thank You for being a loving and compassionate God! Thank You for sending Jesus to pay for our sins. We want to honor You by following Your Word and living as You want us to.

**Say Goodbye**

*Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.*

* *As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”*
* *As parents pick up their kids, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.*

**Younger Kids Small Group Experiences Overview**

 **Belong**: (Choose One)

**Movement Memory-** Kids will mimic movements that have been done before them and then do a movement of their own.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: None*

**Museum Guard-** Kids pretend to be statues in a museum that come to life when the guard isn’t looking. If the guard catches a player moving, they’re out.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve)**

*Supplies Needed: None*

**Believe:** (Choose One)

**On the Right Path-** Kids will walk along a large game board by choosing different answers to questions leaders ask about how God is compassionate towards us.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Solve, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: Bibles, printable pages, colored paper, masking tape, writing utensils*

**Whale Toss-** Kids will create a whale from a paper cup that will catch Jonah. The kids will practice saying the memory verse while trying to catch Jonah.

**Learning Styles: (Move, Create, Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: Bibles, printable page, blue solo cup (1 per kid), googly eyes (2 per kid), glue dots (several per kid), permanent maker (1 per kid), string (one yard per kid), coloring utensils, flour, small funnel, scissors*

**Become:** (Choose One)

**Clean Heart-** Kids will create hearts while discussing sin and repentance.

**Learning Styles: (Create, Write)**

*Supplies Needed: Printable page, red cellophane paper, permanent markers (one per kid), red crayon (one per kid), stapler, kid scissors (one per kid)*

**God Forgives Our Sins-** Kids will watch a demonstration illustrating God’s forgiveness.

**Learning Styles: (Talk)**

*Supplies Needed: Printable page, milk, clear container, food coloring, dish soap, toothpick, writing utensils*

**Small Group Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Take-Home page, coloring utensils*

**Younger Kids Belonging Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** Movement Memory

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** None

**Prep:** None

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss:** I am so happy to see everyone today. What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
2. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
3. **Say:** We are going to play a memory game. We are going to stand in a circle. The first person will make a movement like clapping, jumping, waving or whatever movement you want to make. The next person will make that movement and then make one of their own. The third person will make both movements and then one of their own. We will continue until we make it all the way around the circle.
4. **Say:** Are you ready? Make sure you are paying careful attention! Ready, Set, Go!
5. Continue the game until everyone has had a chance to participate.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** Was it hard to follow what everyone was doing? Would it have been easier to just do your own movements? Today we are learning about Jonah who was given instructions from God, but wanted to do his own thing and tried to hide from God.

**Younger Kids Belonging Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to experience God’s love through a welcoming community

**Title:** Museum Guard

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve

**Supplies:** None

**Prep:** None

**Instructions:**

1. **Discuss:** I am so happy to see everyone today. What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?
2. **Discuss:** How did God use those experiences to grow you as a resilient disciple of Jesus?
3. **Say:** We are going to play a game called “Museum Guard.” I am going to choose one of you to be the guard. The rest of you will be statues who will come to life when the guard isn’t looking.
4. Choose one kid to be the “guard.”
5. **Say:** The guard is going to stand by the door. When they turn to face the door, it is time for the statues to come to life by dancing and moving around. The guard is going to turn around and try to catch the statues moving. If they see you moving, you will sit down. The guard will turn back around and the remaining statues will dance and move and the guard will try to catch you!
6. Play until all statues have been caught by the guard.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** That was a lot of fun! Was it hard to keep from getting caught by the guard? If the guard caught you, the consequence was to sit down. Today, we are learning about Jonah and the consequences he faced for not obeying God’s instructions but the great compassion God showed him.

**Younger Kids Believing Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title:** On the Right Path

**Learning Styles:** Move, Solve, Talk

**Supplies:** Bibles**,** printable pages, colored paper, masking tape

**Prep:** Print the printable page on cardstock and cut out cards. Use the colored paper to create a game board (think Candyland) on the floor

**Instructions:**

1. Lead kids to find Psalm 99:3 in their Bible. Read the verse aloud together.
2. **Say:** God showed compassion to Jonah and forgave him for not obeying. God could have gotten really angry and punished Jonah, but He didn’t. God loves us enough to forgive us.
3. **Discuss:** Why is it important we praise God for forgiving us? What are some ways we can praise Him?
4. **Say:** We are going to find our way down a path. Everyone will choose a path Card and a number card. I will read the question on the path Card. If you answer correctly, you will move forward the number of spaces it says on your card. If you get it wrong, you will move back to the starting line and get a chance to start over.
5. **Discuss:** How does God show compassion to us?

**Activity Wrap-Up:** What happened when you chose the wrong answer? Does God give a chance to start over? What do we have to do to get that chance?

**Younger Kids Believing Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

**Title:** Whale Toss

**Learning Styles:** Move, Create, Talk

**Supplies:** Bibles, printable page, blue solo cup (1 per kid), googly eyes (2 per kid), glue dots (several per kid), permanent maker (1 per kid), string (one yard per kid), coloring utensils, flour, small funnel, scissors

**Prep:** Print the printable page. Fill the balloons with flour so that the balloon is full and tie the balloon. Poke a hole in the bottom of each cup. Cut a piece of string about a yard long for each kid.

**Instructions:**

1. Lead kids to find Psalm 99:3 in their Bible. Read the verse aloud together.
2. **Say:** God showed compassion to Jonah and forgave him for not obeying. God could have gotten really angry and punished Jonah, but He didn’t. God loves us enough to forgive us.
3. **Discuss:** Why is it important we praise God for forgiving us? How do you think it makes God feel when we praise Him?
4. **Discuss:** What are some ways we can praise Him?
5. **Say:** We are going to make a whale toss game and use it to memorize our verse
6. Lead kids to color the whale tail blue and then cut it out. Next they will fold the tail on the dotted line and glue it to the bottom of the cup. Glue an eye on both sides of the whale.
7. Next, lead kids to use the black permanent marker to draw Jonah on the balloon.
8. Tie one end of the string to the balloon. Thread the string through the hole and knot it so the string stays inside the cup. The string will be wrapped and tied around one edge of the cup.
9. **Say:** See if you can toss Jonah up and catch him in the whale.
10. Give the kids time to practice this.
11. **Say:** Let’s practice saying our memory verse and catch Jonah as we say each word.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** Do you think it was hard for Jonah to praise God after being trapped in the whale? God is compassionate and loves us even when we mess up. All we have to do is ask for His forgiveness. He is worthy of our praise!

**Discipleship Discussion**

**Goal:** To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?**

**Discuss:** How does this true story from the Bible show us that God is near to us?

**Say:** Even when Jonah really messed up, God never gave up on him. Jonah had consequences for his bad choices, but God used those to bring Jonah back to Him again.

**Read Proverbs 3:12 directly from the Bible,** *​​for the Lord reproves (corrects) him whom He loves, as a father the son in whom He delights.*

**Say:** God is near to us even when we mess up. Through His compassion He gives us a chance to be forgiven and helps us learn from our mistakes.

# **BUT WHAT ABOUT … Guilt?**

**Discuss:** Have you ever felt guilty for something you did that was wrong?

**Discuss:** How can guilt be good? How can guilt be bad?

**Discuss:** What does the Bible have to say about that?

Some people struggle with feeling guilty even after they’ve been forgiven. Some people struggle with guilt for things that aren’t even their fault. God gave us the feeling of guilt to help us repent by turning to Him and away from our sin. Once we are forgiven, we don’t have to feel guilty anymore. Romans 8:1 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” That verse tells us that once Jesus forgives us, we are no longer punished. There may be consequences for what we did, but God isn’t looking down on us, mad at us for what we did. God forgives us and gives us a new start. God didn’t create us to live in guilt, afraid that He is mad at us. He sent Jesus so that we could live free of guilt, forgiven by Him.

**Younger Kids Becoming Experience (Option 1)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** Clean Heart

**Learning Styles:** Create, Write

**Supplies:** Printable page, red cellophane paper, permanent marker (one per kid), red crayon (one per kid), stapler, kid scissors (one per kid)

**Prep:** Print the printable page (one per kid).

**Instructions:**

1. Lead kids to cut out the heart on the white paper. They will trace the heart on the red cellophane paper and make two red hearts. After tracing, they will cut them out.
2. Guide the kids to staple the red cellophane hearts on top of the white heart. Staple the hearts together at the top of the heart using one staple. You will need to be able to lift the cellophane hearts up.
3. **Say:** Sin is anything we say, think or do that disobeys God.
4. **Discuss:**  Who sins? What are some things we do that are sins?
5. **Say:** The white heart represents our clean heart. When we sin, it makes our heart dark and troubled. We feel guilty because we know we have gone against God’s word. On the white heart, use a red crayon to write or draw some things that we do that are sins.
6. **Say:** We can’t fix our sin on our own. In fact because of our sin, we are separated from God and deserve to be away from Him forever. But God is compassionate and loves us so much. He sent Jesus to die for our sin. Because He died on the cross and rose again, we can be forgiven.
7. **Discuss:** What do we need to do to ask for forgiveness?
8. **Say:** The red hearts represent asking for forgiveness. Pull the red hearts down to cover the white heart. What happened to the sins you wrote down? By asking for Jesus to forgive us, our sins are washed away and we have a clean heart.
9. **Say:** Take a minute and think about ways you may have sinned recently. Say a prayer asking God for forgiveness and His help to turn away from this temptation.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God is loving and compassionate. He is willing to forgive us even if we don’t deserve it. He gives us the chance to turn away from our sin and turn towards Him.

**Younger Kids Becoming Experience (Option 2)**

**Goal:** For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

**Title:** God Forgives Our Sins

**Learning Styles:** Talk

**Supplies:** Printable page, milk, clear container, food coloring, dish soap, toothpick, writing utensils

**Prep:** Print the printable page (one per kid)

**Instructions:**

1. **Ask:** What does it mean to sin? How does it make you feel when you sin? Does God give up on us when we mess up and sin?
2. **Say:** I am going to pour milk into this container. The milk represents our heart. It is pure and unblemished, just how God wants us to be. But, sometimes we mess up. We make mistakes. We sin. What are some things we do that are sins?
3. **Say:** I am going to add some food coloring to the milk. The food coloring represents sin. It is coloring our heart and making it blemished and not pure. How can we fix this? How can we make our heart pure again after sinning?
4. **Say**: I am going to put this toothpick in the dish soap. This represents asking God for forgiveness. How do we ask God for forgiveness?
5. **Say:** Watch what happens when I touch the toothpick to the milk after putting it in the dish soap. The colors separate! When we ask for God's forgiveness and turn away from our sin, our hearts are pure and clean again. It is just that easy! God loves us enough to forgive us when we mess up!
6. **Say:** I am going to give you a sheet of paper that says “God Forgives”. On one side, I want you to write or draw things that are sins. On the other side, I want you to draw or write how to ask God for forgiveness.

**Activity Wrap-Up:** God is loving and compassionate. He is willing to forgive us even if we don’t deserve it. He gives us the chance to turn away from our sin and turn towards Him.