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The Story of Job

Scripture: Job 1:1-42:17

Theme: God is sovereign even in suffering

Nursery (Ages 0-2)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

"God's Love is Big & Kind" "God loves everyone, even the fishy friend in the sea!" God is always kind, even when people are sad or scared. "He forgives and takes care of everyone!" "Let's sing: God's love is big and warm... God's love is for you and for me!"

Bible Story

Jonah and the Big, Big Fish

God loved Jonah very much. He told Jonah to go tell a big city, Nineveh, that they needed to be kind to others.

Jonah felt scared. He ran away on a boat, but God made a big storm. The boat got very rough, bump bump bump!, and the sailors were afraid.

The sailors prayed to God. "Please help us!" they cried. God listened and sent a big fish to save them. Swish! The fish swallowed Jonah whole.

For three days, Jonah was inside the fish. He cried, "I'm sorry!" because he didn't want to obey God. But God was still good.

Then the fish spit Jonah out on dry land. God told him to go to Nineveh again. Jonah didn't want to, but this time, he did.

God loved even Jonah, even when he didn't follow. That's how much God loves us too! He cares for everyone, even when we forget.

Why This Story Matters: God's love never ends, no matter what we do. He forgives us, just like He forgave Jonah. That's why we can always trust Him!

Key Verse

Job 1:21

For Babies & Toddlers: "God is so love, always there to save you! He helps you, just like the big wave helped Jonah, 'Thank you, God!' and sing, 'Salvation comes from YOU!'" (Repeat: "God loves you!" + clap hands for praise.)

Activities

Activity 1:

Use colorful fruit to show God's mercy, like how He forgives us and loves us always, no matter what.

1. Story Time (3 min): Read Jonah 1, 2 in simple words. Say, "God loves everyone, even Jonah!" while pointing to the Bible.
2. Make a Boat (5 min): Give each child a paper plate and let them draw a boat with crayons. Glue a balloon to the bottom to make a "fish."
3. Pretend to Swim (5 min): Say, "Jonah ran away, but God sent a big fish!" Have kids pretend to swim inside their balloons, then jump out with a happy "God loves me!"
4. End with Praise (2 min): Sing "Jesus Loves the Little Children" (simplified) while holding hands.
2. "God's Kindness Snack" (Simple Food + Discussion)
6. Story Recap (3 min): Tell the kids Jonah ran away but God sent a fish to help. Say, "God's love is like this food, He always gives us love!"
7. Colorful Snack (5 min): Give each child a cup with a grape (small) and a melon ball (big). Say, "The big fish saved Jonah, just like God saves us!"
8. Draw God's Love (4 min): Let kids glue a berry or crayon to their napkin with "God loves me!" written on a sticky note.
9. Pray Together (3 min): Close with a simple prayer: "Thank You, God, for your love and mercy!"
10. Tip: For both, use repetition of "God loves you!" and "He forgives you!" to reinforce the lesson. Keep it joyful and short, little hearts take in big ideas with simple actions!

Discussion Questions

- Here are four simple, open-ended questions about God's love based on Jonah and the Great Fish:
- God made you! What do you think God wants you to do when you feel sad or scared?
- (Repeat: "God loves you so much!")
- Jonah ran away from God, but the fish helped him remember. What is one way you can run back to God when you feel lost?
- Even when Jonah was angry, God still showed him mercy. How can you show mercy to someone who is sad or wrong?
- Jonah's big lesson: God forgives all people, even Jonah! Who is someone in your life who needs God's love today?

Prayer Focus

"Dear God, you love us all, just like a big fish saves Jonah! Thank you for being kind and forgiving, even when we run away. Help us trust that you always want what's best for us. Amen!" (Short repetition: "God loves us! God loves us! God always forgives!")

>> Missions Spotlight

Among the Tuareg people of the Sahara Desert, who are almost entirely Muslim, there is a deep sense of tribal identity. Jonah's story challenges the idea that God's mercy is only for 'our group', it's for every tribe, tongue, and nation.

-> To the Cross

Jonah ran from God's call to preach to Nineveh, a city he hated. But God's mercy reached even the worst of sinners. Jesus said, 'As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth' (Matthew 12:40).