



Pre-K & Kindergarten

Unit 8 - Standing Firm

Story 24.B - Jonah & the Big Fish (Jonah 1-4)

Some Pre-K kids may arrive at the beginning of the service. Do these two activities with them:

TABLE ACTIVITIES - Start with play-doh, puzzles, pop beads, or coloring from the cabinet.

WORSHIP - At 8:45 / 10:30 have kids clean up and gather on the carpet for music. Sing songs with them as you feel led. You may use the CD player and song sheet or sing a song of your choice.

WELCOME - About 15–20 minutes after service starts, have kids sit in a circle on the rug. Consider welcoming them with the following song, to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.”

We're glad you're here today (*clap*), we're glad you're here today (*clap*),
Wave your hands and say hello (*everyone waves*), we're glad you're here today (*clap*).
God loves you, so do we (*hug yourself*), God loves you, so do we (*hug yourself*),
We are all a family (*everyone puts hands in the middle*), God loves you, so do we (*hug yourself*).

Set behavioral expectations with the following questions:

Where are we? *We're at church.*
Why are we here? *To learn about God and worship him.*
How should we act in this special place? *Listen carefully and respect each other.*

Go around the circle and let each kid introduce themselves and answer the Question of the Day. (At your discretion, pass a stuffie around during introductions.) *What is something that you never want to do when your mom or dad asks you to? (ex: clean your room, eat your broccoli, etc.)*

*After the kids respond, you may want to close with: *Today we are going to learn about a man named Jonah who didn't want to go where God told him to go, so he ran away!*

BIBLE SKILLS - Get out the Bible. Explain that the Bible is our greatest treasure because it is the Word of God. (Pre-K will find the Bible in the Treasure Box.) Go over the Bible knowledge point below:

The Bible teaches us what is right and what is wrong.

Let kids pass the Bible around the circle, with each of them patting it gently and saying, “The Word of God.”

MEMORY VERSE - *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”*
~Romans 8:31

- Show them where the words are in the Bible to help them understand that it is a part of God's Word.
- Practice the verse together - Consider using one of the activities on the Memory Game List

BIBLE STORY - Have the kids move to the center of the rug if they are not already there for storytime. Using the pictures provided tell the story for today.

Do you remember Shadrach, Meshach, and Abedigo? (*Picture: four in the fire*) They were saved from a fiery furnace by God! Do you remember Daniel? (*Picture: Daniel among sleeping lions*) He was saved from hungry lions by God. They were both saved because they only worshipped the one true God and no one else. Today we are going to learn about a man who lived about 200 years later who God also saved from a scary situation. Unlike the others we've learned about, Jonah did not do what God said at first.

Jonah was a prophet who got a special message from God. He was told to go to a big city named Nineveh and tell the people there to repent of their sins. (*Picture: Nineveh*) God wanted them to change their ways so that he could forgive them, but Jonah had a problem. He didn't like the people of Nineveh. They were enemies of the people of God and were very wicked. Jonah knew that God was merciful and would forgive them, but he didn't want them to be forgiven.

He decided not to go to Nineveh like God told him. Instead he headed for another city in the other direction called Tarshish. To get there he would need to take a boat, so he paid for his ticket on a boat and got onboard. Jonah went below deck on the boat and went to sleep. Do you think the Lord could still see him inside of that boat? Yes! God sent a very bad storm. (*Picture: boat in storm*) The storm was so wild that the sailors thought the boat would break apart!

The sailors asked Jonah why the storm was so wild and Jonah told them that it was because he didn't do what God wanted. He told the sailors to throw him overboard so that the boat wouldn't sink. The sailors were very upset at this idea. Why do you think they did not want to throw Jonah overboard? The thought that Jonah would die if he was thrown into the sea in the middle of a storm. The sailors tried everything they could to get out of the storm. They even tried to row back to shore, but it didn't work. In the end, there was no choice but to throw Jonah overboard. As soon as Jonah was off of the boat, the storm stopped.

Jonah was very scared of drowning in the water, so he asked God for help. God had mercy on Jonah and sent a huge fish to come and swallow him up. (*picture: Jonah thrown from the boat*) What do you imagine it was like to be inside the belly of a big fish? It was probably dark, wet, and smelly! Do you know how long Jonah sat inside that fish? He was there for three days! While he was in the big fish, he prayed to God. (*Picture: Jonah praying in the fish*) He told God that he was sorry for running away and that he would do what God wanted from now on. God was merciful and told the fish to spit Jonah out onto the beach!

Big Truth: God is merciful, even when we make mistakes.

5. SNACK & REVIEW - Pass out snacks and water at the table (**check allergies on attendance roster**). Ask kids if they have any prayer requests and pray before eating. As they're eating, review the story and take some time getting to know them!

6. ACTIVITY: JONAH, JONAH - This is an adaptation of 'Duck, Duck, Goose.' Have children sit in a circle and place their hands behind their backs with palms up. Choose one person to be "Jonah," and have him carry the fish while walking around the circle. While Jonah walks, the rest of the children say, "Jonah, Jonah disobeyed. Until inside the fish he prayed." When the children finish, Jonah drops the fish into the hands of the child in front of him. The child with the fish stands up and chases Jonah around the circle. Jonah runs around the circle and tries to sit in that person's empty spot. If the chaser tags Jonah before he sits down, Jonah must sit in the "belly of the whale" (middle of the circle) for one round. The chaser becomes the new Jonah. Continue play until all children have had a turn.

7. PLAYTIME If time allows, kids may play with toys or do a community game until their parents come.