

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

When we run away from God, we always run into trouble.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that moving away from God is never a good decision.

KEY PASSAGE:

Jonah 1-2, Jonah Flees From God

MEMORY VERSE:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

SUMMARY:

God had a special mission for Jonah. But when God told Jonah to “Move!” Jonah went the other way. Kids will run an obstacle course backwards as a reminder that when we don’t go God’s way, we find nothing but trouble.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Forgive us for when we stray away from You.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen

MEMORY VERSE

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways remember him. Then he will make your paths smooth and straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (NirV)

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT)

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV)

LARGE GROUP:

Choose four kids who think they know the verse. Line them up on stage. Have the kids recite the memory verse, with each kid saying one word, starting left to right. When you get to the kid on the right, go back to the kid on the far left. Keep going until they get through the whole verse.

SMALL GROUP:

Give each kid one word or a few words of the verse on a notecard. See if they can arrange the cards and get the verse right. Then read the verse aloud with the kids.

SKIT

MOVING WITH MR. SIMMONS: OBSTACLE COURSE!!

ITEMS NEEDED:

None

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

2M

CHARACTERS:

Mr. Simmons - A fitness guru

Ernest - A lazy, out of shape man

Mr. Simmons enters alone from stage left.

SIMMONS: Hi there, kids! We're going to have some fun with my friend Ernest today. I set up an obstacle course for him outside, something challenging to get him moving between his house and the stage here. I also sent him an email with a map of the obstacle course and told him I would give him fifty bucks if he could get all the way to the stage.

Ernest enters from stage right.

ERNEST: Well, I'm here. Pay up.

SIMMONS: Ernest, hi! How did you get here so quickly?

ERNEST: Your email said if I got to the stage, I could get fifty bucks. Let's have it.

SIMMONS: No, no, Ernest. I said if you made it here the way I sent in that map, you could earn the fifty bucks.

ERNEST: Map? What map?

SIMMONS: You didn't open the attachment?

ERNEST: Attachment!

SKIT

SIMMONS: I sent you a map to an obstacle course!

ERNEST: Obstacle course???

SIMMONS: You didn't think you were getting money that easy, did you?

ERNEST: I saw some crazy things on the way here, but I went around them.

SIMMONS: Oh Ernest, now you have to pull a Jonah and go back to the beginning.

ERNEST: Pull a what?

SIMMONS: Jonah disobeyed God, and he went off course and got swallowed by a whale because he didn't follow instructions. But just as God gave Jonah a second chance, I'm giving you one to complete my ultimate, over the top, over budget obstacle course!

ERNEST: What's in this obstacle course?

SIMMONS: First, you have to run through a mob of over a hundred Girl Scouts trying to sell cookies without buying a single box.

ERNEST: But I love Thin Mints!

SIMMONS: Then, you have to dodge through your aunts on your father's side trying to pinch your cheeks!

ERNEST: No! Not Aunt Rosaline!

SIMMONS: Then, you have to swim across a one hundred foot pool filled with man-eating sharks!

ERNEST: Well, that's better than Aunt Rosaline.

SIMMONS: Then, you have to walk over a twenty foot pit of LEGOS in your bare feet!

ERNEST: You monster!

SIMMONS: Come on, Ernest! I know it's hard to admit you messed up and do it all over, but I believe in you!

ERNEST: I don't wanna do it! Aunt Rosaline runs marathons!

SKIT

SIMMONS: God gives us second chances when we mess up, Ernest! Let's see how you do with your second chance!

Ernest exits, sadly.

ERNEST: When will this series ever be over??

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

An unassembled piece of furniture. (Something from IKEA)

Lay out all the pieces of the furniture item on stage. Bring a group of kids on stage, and ask them to assemble it. Do not give them the directions. Give them a few minutes to try.

There's a reason furniture like this comes with instructions for assembly. How in the world are we supposed to know how to assemble this without it? Every piece is labeled and numbered, but we need the directions to know where each size screw and each panel goes. If we stray from those directions and don't catch it early on, we can end up backing up several steps to make things right.

That's what happens when we move away from God's plans. Sometimes we have to undo a bunch of things and start over. We have to apologize to people we've hurt. We have to start over earning other people's trust. We have to back up and start from the beginning.

Repenting means to turn away from. It means we admit we were wrong, we go back to the start, and we do things God's way. It's not easy. But it's worth it! We can repent knowing God always gives us second chances. He is always willing to help us start over when we have the desire to do things right!

LARGE GROUP GAME

BACKWARDS OBSTACLE COURSE

ITEMS NEEDED:

Varies depending on your resources

INSTRUCTIONS:

Set up an obstacle course around your room with 5-6 different elements. Use materials you have on hand to create these obstacles like a limbo bar, cones to weave through, hopscotch, etc.

Choose several kids to run the obstacle course. Explain to them the course from beginning to end. Then after explaining, tell them they must run backwards and do the course backwards, in the reverse order you just explained!

VARIATION:

If possible, let every kid in the room run the course at least once.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

When we move away from God, we end up in trouble.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

When we run away from God, we always run into trouble.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that moving away from God is never a good decision.

KEY PASSAGE:

Jonah 1-2, Jonah Flees From God

INTRO:

Obstacle courses are endless fun. Even if you lose, you can't be too upset because the real fun is watching people go through the many obstacles. Obstacle courses are great at making every player on the course an equal. Size, speed, and strength do not matter. What matters is doing each obstacle right, as quickly as you can, to help your team win.

The one trick to obstacle courses is making sure you not only do everything right, but that you do everything, and in the right order. You can't skip an element or else you'll set your whole team back. You have to back up, do the obstacle that you missed, and continue on from there.

It's always frustrating when we realize we've forgotten something and have to go back. It doesn't just happen on obstacle courses either. It happens in real life too. I'm sure some of you know the frustration of working on a school project and realizing, just when you think you're done, you've forgotten something. Your presentation looks great. Your speech is ready to give. Oops! You forgot to type up your bibliography. Or worse, something you typed and glued onto the presentation has to be redone because you forgot to proofread and discovered you have a typo. You can leave it as is, and end up with a lower grade, or you can start over and do it right.

How many of you have ever helped a parent with assembling furniture out of the box? Any of your parents IKEA fans? Let me tell you something. There is nothing more frustrating than being twenty steps in to assembling a new table and realizing you used the wrong part on step three. You can leave it as is and hope to rig the furniture up so that it still looks okay, or you can back up seventeen steps, undo what you've done, and re-do everything to make it right.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

No one likes to admit they are wrong or that they messed up, but when we fail to pay attention to direction, that's how we get back on track. It's the same way with God, as we read in the book of Jonah. Jonah was a prophet who was given a very important message. Jonah didn't want to deliver the message, and he ran away. God went after Jonah to not only stop him in his tracks, but to give him a second chance.

READ JONAH 1-2

MAIN POINT:

Jonah ran away from God's directions and found nothing but trouble. First came the storm. Then came the blame from others when the sailors realized the storm was all because of Jonah. Finally, Jonah ended up in the belly of a fish. Jonah thought his assignment was a stinky one, but it was nothing compared to living inside a smelly fish!

But what happens after Jonah admits he was wrong? God gives him a second chance. God allows Jonah to start from the beginning and do his job right. God could have left Jonah to rot in the fish and found another prophet, but he used Jonah's life as an example for us. Yes, going off course leads to trouble. Not following the Bible can get us in a lot of trouble. But God will always forgive us and allow us to start over.

DRIVE IT HOME:

You know what's so funny about what happened to Jonah? The message Jonah was supposed to deliver to Ninevah is the same lesson God taught him in the fish. The people of Ninevah had turned away from God, just like Jonah did. They were sinful people, and God wanted them to come back to Him and start over. God was warning Ninevah, you have one last chance to start over and do things right. God gave Jonah that same chance when He sent the giant fish to swallow him up. God gave Jonah a second chance when he asked for it, and God gave Ninevah a second chance when they asked for it.

There's a word for turning around and doing things right. The word is repent. Repent means to turn away from. When we repent, we stop going the wrong way, we turn around, and we go back so we can do things right. Just as Jonah repented in the belly of a fish, Ninevah repented of their sins, and a city was saved!

I'm guessing there are some of you here today who feel a bit like Jonah. You gave your heart to Jesus at one time, and your life didn't change all that much. You still say words you shouldn't. You fight with your parents and siblings all the time. You wanted to change your life. You wanted to do things right and live for Jesus. But all it seems you've done is make a mess of things.

Maybe you've made a mess of a friendship. You let someone down, or you hurt their feelings. You could start over if you said you were sorry, but it's just too hard.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

If Jonah was here he would tell you, you can start over. You can repent. You can say you're sorry to God, to your family, and to your friends. It won't be easy, but it will be a first step to getting back on track. Don't let your pride or your fear become an obstacle. Let's get back on track and start over. Let's ask God for that second chance. He will be more than happy to give it to you.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Forgive us for when we stray away from You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

What other games or sports can you think of that would be fun to try backwards?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Proverbs 3:5-6

Give each kid one word or a few words of the verse on a notecard. See if they can arrange the cards and get the verse right. Then read the verse aloud with the kids.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of musical chairs, but have the kids march around the chairs backwards instead of forwards.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Jonah 1-2

Who was Jonah?

What did God tell Jonah to do?

What did Jonah do instead?

How did God stop Jonah from running away?

Why shouldn't we try to run from God?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to stay close to you so we will not go astray.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

What other games or sports can you think of that would be fun to try backwards?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Proverbs 3:5-6

Give each kid one word or a few words of the verse on a notecard. See if they can arrange the cards and get the verse right. Then read the verse aloud with the kids.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of musical chairs, but have the kids march around the chairs backwards instead of forwards.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Jonah 1-2

What did God tell Jonah to do?

Why did Jonah run away?

What does Jonah teach us about moving away from God?

How can moving away from God get us into trouble?

What should we do if we realize we have wandered away from God?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to stay close to you so we will not go astray.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

TRUE OR FALSE

Today, mark a dividing line in the room. One side will be true, and one side will be false. When you ask the questions, have the kids move to the side they think is the correct answer - true or false.

Jonah was a prophet of God.

TRUE

God asked Jonah to warn the people of Israel.

FALSE

Jonah obeyed God right away.

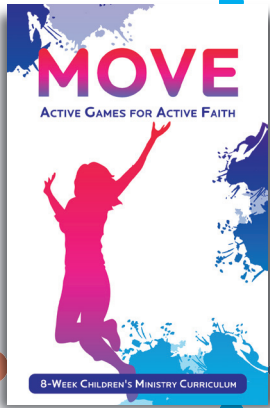
FALSE

God sent a great fish to swallow Jonah.

TRUE

If we move away from God, God can never forgive us again.

FALSE



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Move Lesson 5

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: BACKWARDS OBSTACLE COURSE



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

God had a special mission for Jonah. But when God told Jonah to "Move!" Jonah went the other way. When we ran the obstacle course backwards today, it showed us that when we don't go God's way, we find nothing but trouble. Jonah 1-2, Jonah Flees From God



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

When we stray from God's path, we get into trouble. The same happens when we stray from the instructions for assembling furniture, or LEGOs, or recipes. Work with the kids on a project this week that requires following directions, and discuss how many ways you could get into trouble if you didn't follow the directions exactly.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- Why did Jonah run away from God?
- How did God get Jonah back on track?
- Why do we get into trouble when we move away from God?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)



PARENT TIME:

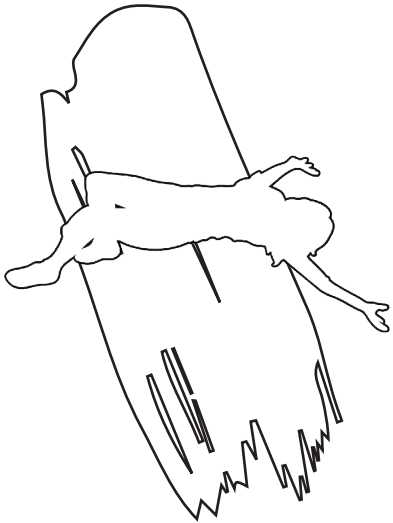
What you need to know:

When we stick to God, He will direct our path. When we move away from God, we often run into trouble. Encourage your kids to put God first every day. Pray with them, and ask for God to lead them. Remind them that when they mess up, God still forgives!

CRAFT ACTIVITY

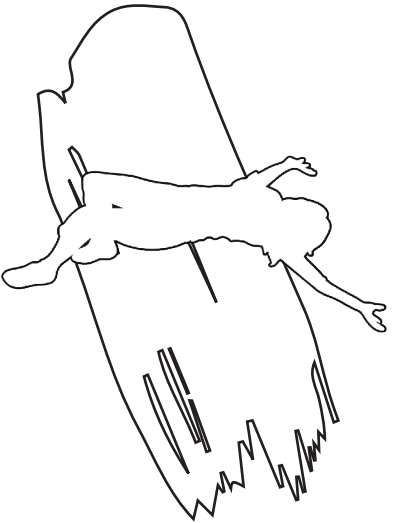
Have the kids make a Jonah craft. Create a template so they can trace and cut out a fish or whale's head. (Think the movie poster from Jaws.) After cutting out the whale head, have them also draw and cut out a figure of Jonah. Glue Jonah onto another piece of paper. Center the whale's head over Jonah so he is visible in the whale's mouth and glue the whale's mouth onto the paper.

Alternative: Blow up a blue balloon and place a teddy graham inside each for each child. Then let the kids decorate them by cutting out fins to create their fish. Then they will have Jonah in the belly of the whale.



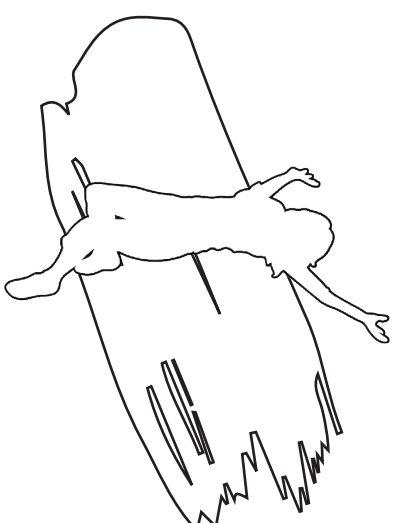
“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

- Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)



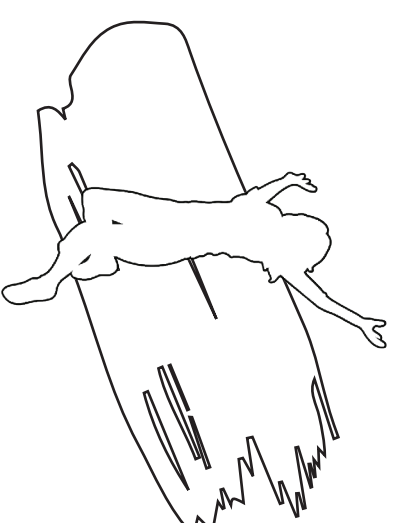
“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

- Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)



“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

- Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)



“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

- Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)