

Summer Children's Church
H2Oh! God Keeps His Promises
H2Oh! Ride: Jonah – Jonah 1-3 – God forgives me and works through me

Bible Words:

Today you will hear how God asked another helper to be a fisher of men. God told this helper to go tell people far away about Him. But the helper said no. So, God sent a big fish to catch this helper!

The Bible says: "For You, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love." God has steadfast love for us. That means He has a great big love for us. God loves us all the time, no matter what. He never quits loving us.

God showed how much He loves us when He sent Jesus to be our Savior. What did Jesus do for us? Yes, Jesus died on the cross and rose again to save us from our sins. That is how much God loves us! He forgives us for Jesus' sake and makes us His children. He works through us to tell others of His great big love.

Faith words:

Forgive: to not be angry with someone for something he or she did to you; to pardon or excuse

Prophet: someone that is chosen to be an inspired teacher of the will of God; someone who speaks for God

Fisher of Men: someone has to tell others of Jesus and Jesus wants us to tell others about him, not really be a fisherman to catch fish. To go out into the "sea" of people and catch them and tell them the Good News.

Key Point: God forgives me and works through me.

God Speaks:

Our Bible story is from the Book of Jonah in the Bible. It is about on of God's helpers named Jonah. Jonah was God's prophet. His job was to tell people what God said.

One day, God said, 'Jonah, I want you to go to a big city called Nineveh. The people who live there are very bad. They don't love and obey Me. Tell them to stop doing bad things or I will punish them.'

But Jonah did not want to obey God. He thought, "Why should I go to Nineveh and tell the people about God? They do not deserve God's love. They hurt others. They say mean things. They do not love God." So, instead of doing what God said, Jonah ran away. He got on a big boat that was going in the opposite direction from Nineveh!"

Do you think Jonah was able to run away from God? No, God knew where Jonah was. He knew that Jonah was on the big boat. So, God sent a storm. The wind blew the boat up and down and back and forth. Swish! Splash! Swoosh! Went the waves.

Jonah knew that he had disobeyed God. He told the sailors, "Throw me into the water. Then God will stop the wind and waves from rocking the boat."

So, the sailors threw Jonah into the water. Right away, the storm stopped. Soon a big fish swam near Jonah. God had planned for this fish to save Jonah so he would not drown in the water. What do you think happened next? The big fish opened its huge mouth and swallowed Jonah!

For 3 days and three nights, Jonah was inside the fish. Jonah was sorry he had disobeyed God. He prayed, "Dear God, I'm sorry I didn't obey You. Please help me." God heard Jonah's prayer. He caused the big fish to swim near the land and spit Jonah out onto the sand.

Once again, God told Jonah, "Jonah, go to the big city of Nineveh and tell the people that I love them. Tell them to stop doing bad things, or I will have to punish them."

This time Jonah obeyed God. Jonah said, "I will tell of all Your wonders." Then Jonah went to the big city of Nineveh. He told the people, "God has seen all the things that you have been doing. He loves you and wants you to worship only Him. But He is angry that you disobey His laws. Be sorry and stop doing these bad things, or God will punish you."

For one day, two days, three days, Jonah walked back and forth, up and down the city. He told everyone he met – men, women, children, even the king – that God loved them and wanted them to be His children.

The people of Nineveh listened to Jonah. They believed His message from God. They told God they were sorry and asked Him to forgive them. God loved the people very much. He said, "I will not punish you. I forgive you."

God loves all the people in the world. He wants all of them to hear about Jesus and be sorry for their sins. God forgave Jonah and worked through him so the people would hear of God's love.

God forgives us and works through us too! We can share His wonderful love with others. We can tell others about our Savior, Jesus, and how God, our heavenly Father, keeps all His promises!

Review the Story:

What do you think of when you see a cross? (The cross reminds us of God's promise to forgive us for Jesus' sake)

God forgave Jonah for disobeying. He sent Jonah to tell the people of Nineveh about His wonderful love and forgiveness.

What did God want Jonah to do? (go to Nineveh and tell the people about God.)

What happened when Jonah tried to run away and hid from God? (There was a big storm. Jonah was thrown into the sea, but God protected him by sending a big fish to swallow him).

What did Jonah do in the fish? (he prayed to God and said he was sorry for not obeying God.)

Did God forgive Jonah? (yes)

What happened to the people of Nineveh? (Jonah went to tell them what God said. They were sorry for being bad, and God forgave them too.)

Jonah went into the big fish for 3 days, full of sin because he did not listen to God. He prayed to God and asked for forgiveness for not obeying God and doing what was asked of him. Then the big fish went to land and spit him out. God had forgiven him. He was made clean and made new. He did what God asked him to do. This is like Jesus...he went on the cross carrying all our sins, for 3 days he was in the tomb, and rose again new and clean of our sins, our forgiveness of sin.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for loving us

and Thank you for sending Jesus to die for our sins and forgiving us.

Help us to learn more about your promises

so that we can tell others about You and Your forgiveness of sins and your love.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen

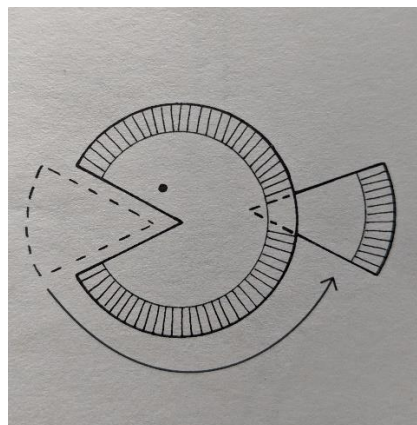
Craft:

God forgave Jonah for disobeying him and used Jonah to tell others about Him. God forgives us and works through us too, just like Jonah. He helps us show love for others.

Jonah and the fish

You will need paper plates, markers, scissors, yarn, and a piece of paper to draw Jonah

Cut a triangle-shaped mouth out of a paper plate. You can draw an eye on the plate and tape the triangle to the back of the fish for a fin. Draw Jonah (or print and cut out and color). Attach him with a string to the fish plate. Use the craft to retell the story to someone you know and share about God's love in Jesus.



Craft 2 of Jonah and the fish

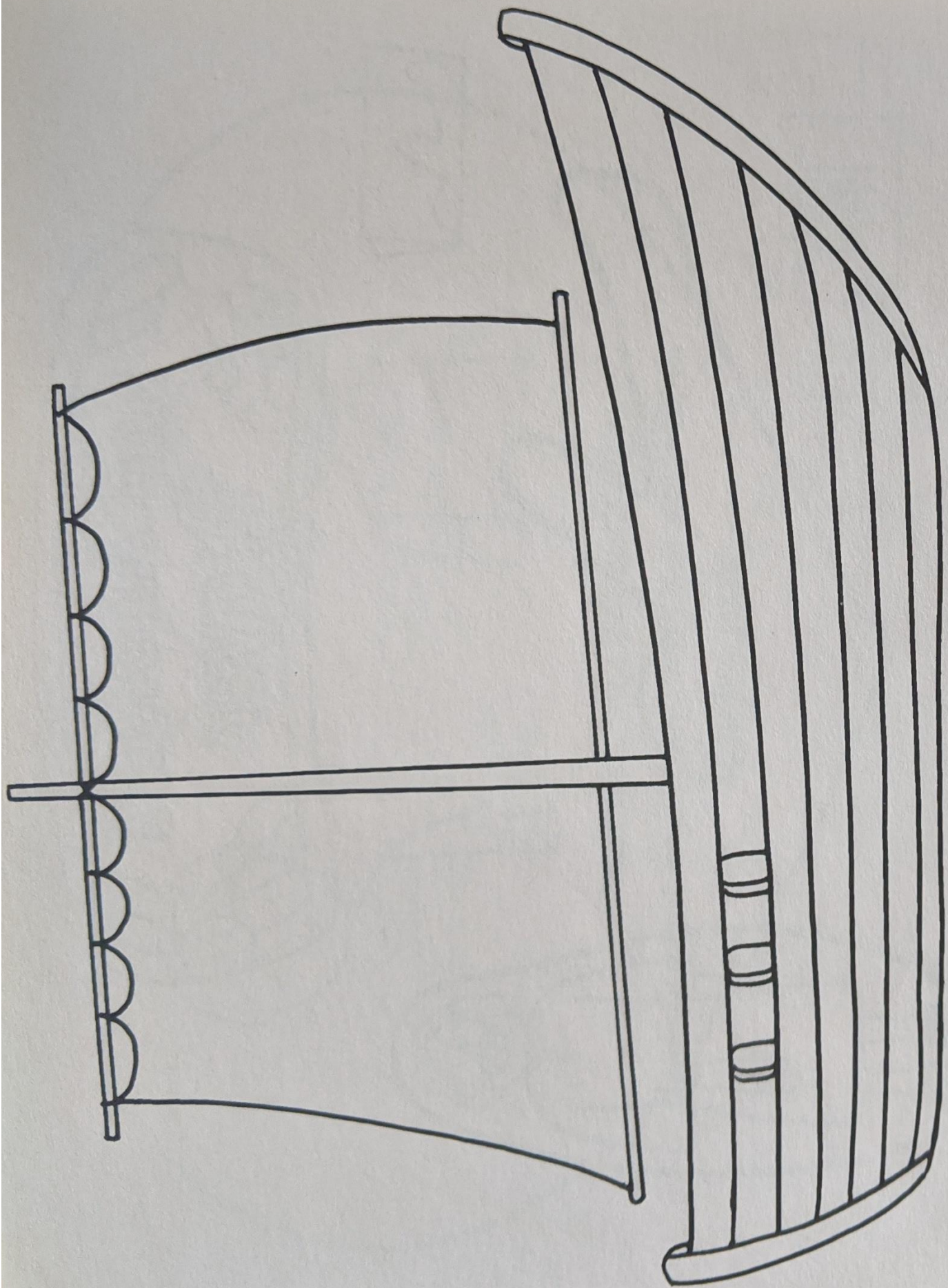
Copy (or draw your own) the figures of Jonah, the whale, the boat, and group of people

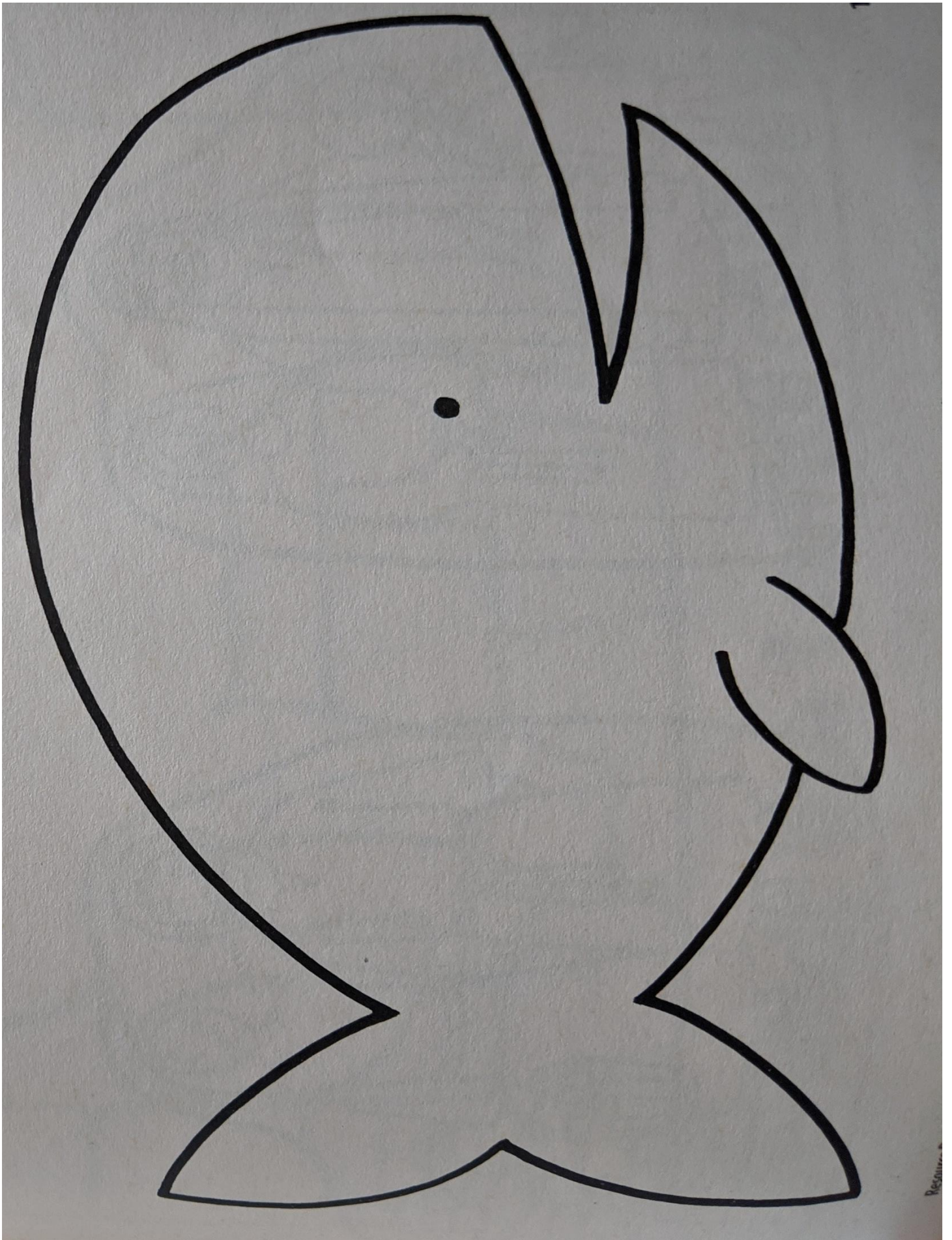
Color the figures and attach to a craft stick (or straw) to the back

You can now retell the story and share the Good News with others.



Jonah





God Works through People

God uses people to tell others about His forgiveness and love. Help these people find someone they can tell about Jesus. Draw your face on the empty circle.

