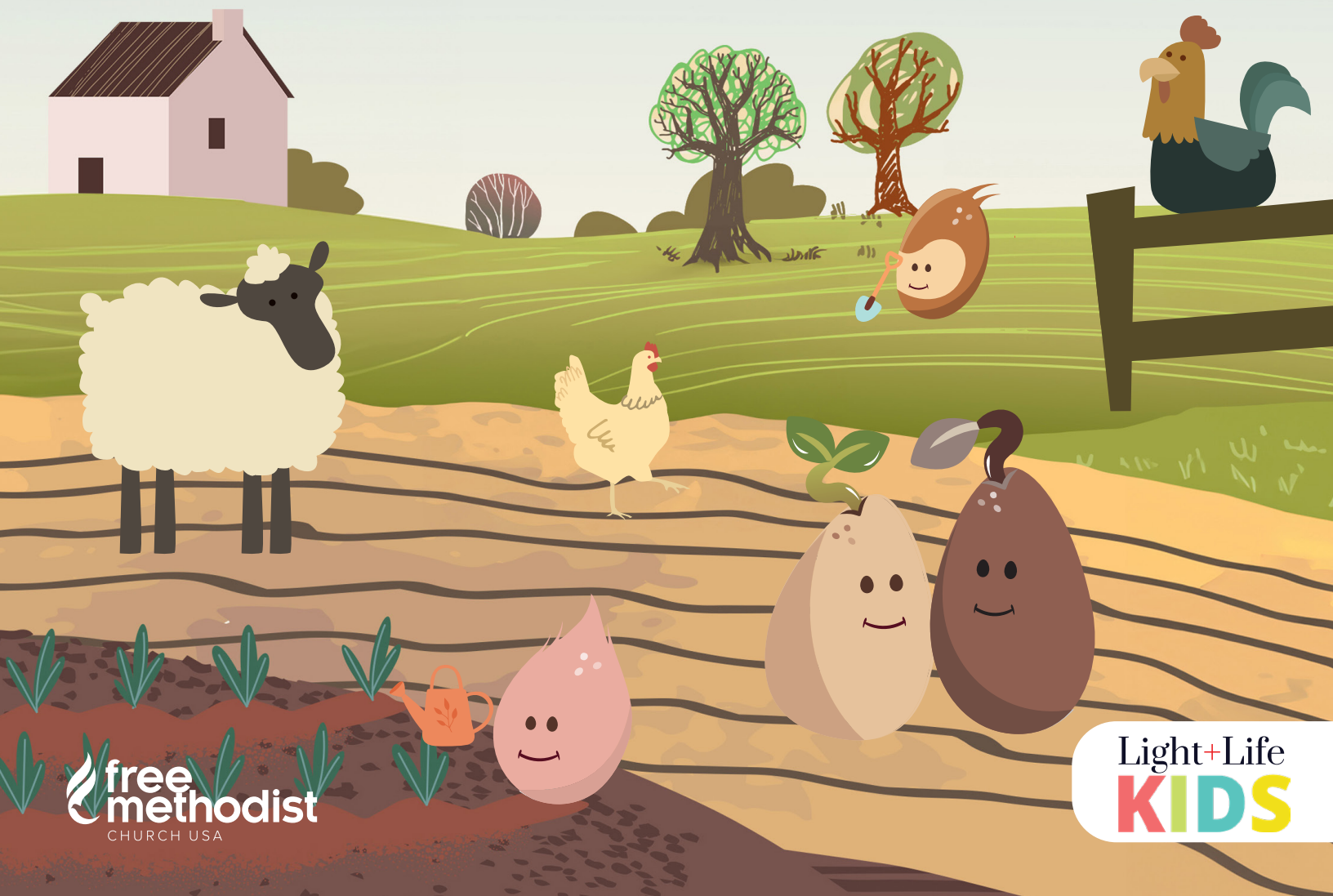


Seeds

11 Foundations of the Christian Faith

by HOPE OWSLEY





SEEDS, 11 Lessons on the Foundations of the Christian Faith

By Hope Owsley

Edited by Brett Heintzman

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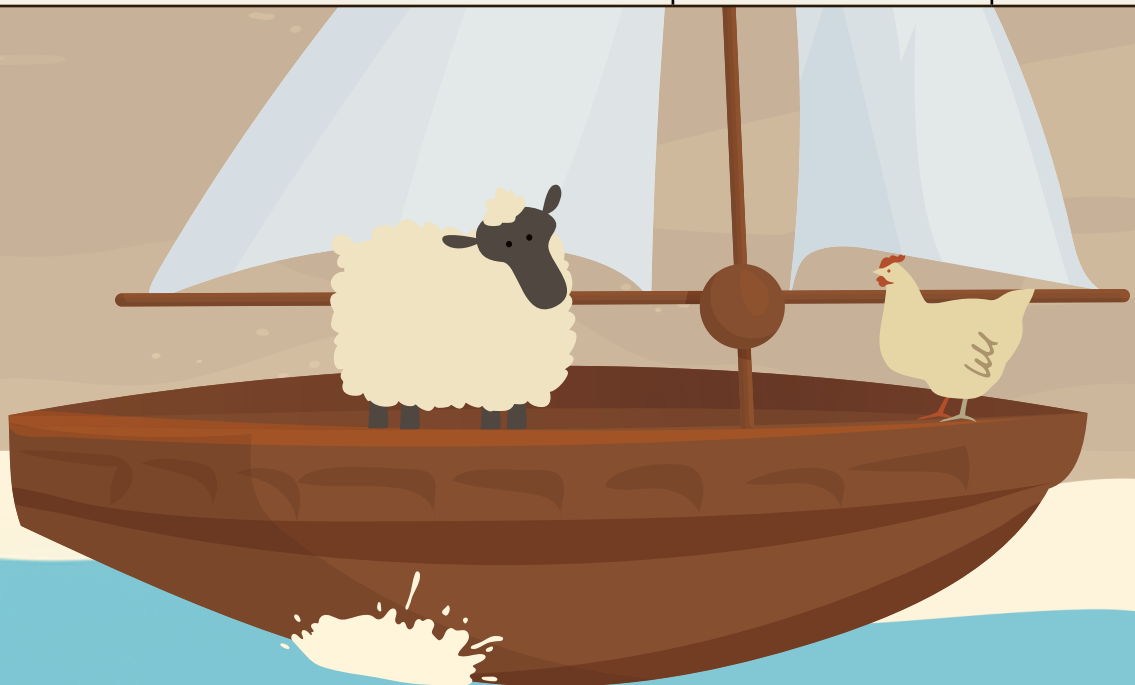
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Lesson 2

God is Love

Schedule	Time	Page
Seeds Countdown Video	5 minutes	-
Introduction	6 minutes	20
Hook: Measuring game	10 minutes	21
Sermon: God Loves All People/Jonah	10 minutes	23
Activity: God's Love Game	5 minutes	26
Review Questions	5 minutes	27
Teacher-Guided Prayer	3 minutes	27





Notes for teachers

Materials you'll need:

- [Seeds Graphics Slide Presentation – Lesson 2: God is Love](#)
- Measuring Tape
- A Cardboard Box
- Home Connection – Photocopy page 28 or print [PDF Graphic 2.9](#), one per child.
- Memory Verse Coloring Page – Photocopy page 29 or print [PDF Graphic 2.10](#), one per child.

Videos you'll need:

- [Seeds Countdown Video](#)
- [Praise Song “1 John 4:7-8”](#)

(Please note that Light + Life does not own the rights, and video links may change without notice.)

Bible verses for the sermon

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

EPHESIANS 3:16-19, NIV

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

ROMANS 5:8, NIV

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

1 JOHN 4:7-8, NIV

Bible verses for the sermon

“The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: ² “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.” ³ But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.⁴ Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up.⁵ All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep.⁶ The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.” ⁷ Then the sailors said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.⁸ So they asked him, “Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?” ⁹ He answered, “I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” ¹⁰ This terrified them and they asked, “What have you done?” They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so. ¹¹ The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?” ¹² “Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will be-

come calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.” ¹³ Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before.¹⁴ Then they cried out to the LORD, “Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased.” ¹⁵ Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. ¹⁶ At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him. ¹⁷ Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2:1 From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. ² He said: “In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. ³ You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. ⁴ I said, ‘I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ ⁵ The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head.⁶ To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit. ⁷ “When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.

⁸ “Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God's love for them. ⁹ But I,

Bible verses for the sermon (Continued)

with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, 'Salvation comes from the LORD.'¹⁰ And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

3:1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: ²"Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." ³Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. ⁴Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." ⁵The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. ⁶When Jonah's warning reached the king

of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. ⁷This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. ⁸But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. ⁹Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." ¹⁰When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened."

Jonah 1:1-3:10, NIV

Memory Verse

"But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."

Psalm 86:15, NIV

Introduction

6 minutes

This week, to get started we're going to watch a video and sing along with a Bible verse, 1 John 4:7-8.

Praise Song – "1 John 4:7-8" fmchr.ch/Seeds-L2-Song

Sing through the song a couple of times to give the kids a chance to get the hang of it and participate. Also, please note that Light + Life does not own the rights to the song and video links may change without notice.



“Dear friends, let us love one another,
for love comes from God. Everyone who
loves has been born of God and knows God.
⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God,
because God is love.”

1 John 4:7-8, NIV

Hook 10 minutes

What does it mean to measure something? **(Allow time for responses)** How do we measure things? **(Allow time for responses.)**

That's right to measure something is to determine its size – how long and deep and high it is. To do this we need a tool to measure with – a guide. I happen to have a measuring tape here today. Have you ever used a measuring tape before?

How long is an inch? Can you show me? **(Allow kids to demonstrate.)**

- **How long is a foot?**
- **How long is a yard?**
- **Did you know that a football field is 100 yards long? That's long!**
- **How about a mile? Did you know that a mile is 5,280 feet? That's a long distance.**

We're going to measure a box this morning. How many measurements are there for a box? **(Allow time for responses)**. There are three measurements – width, length, and height. Who wants to measure the length? **(Invite a child to come up and measure the length and write it down. Invite two additional children to measure the width and height.)**

Last week we answered the question, "Who is God?" This week we're going to talk about one of God's attributes – God is love!

Show Graphic 2.1 – God is Love

Did you know that that if we tried to measure God's love, we could never do it? It's too high, too wide, and too deep to measure. No matter how long of a measuring tape you have, it will never be long enough to measure God's love.

In fact, the Bible says this:

Graphic 2.1



Hook (Continued)

“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17b-19, NIV)

God's love is unconditional. That means that God loves us no matter what.

People often believe that love is a warm, exciting feeling. Unfortunately, when that feeling goes away, they think that love has gone away too. But the Bible teaches us about a different kind of love. It teaches us that real love doesn't depend on how you look or how you feel. And we learn about this love when we learn about God because the Bible says, “God is love.” **(1 John 4:8 just as we sang in the song this morning!)**

His love does not depend on how rich or good looking or smart you are. His love doesn't depend on warm, fuzzy feelings. He chooses to love us. The Bible even says He didn't wait for us to love Him first.

Let's say a short prayer and thank God for His love.

Teacher prays.



Prepare:

Open your printed Bible to the book of Jonah to tell Jonah's story. The following narrative is designed to guide you in a way to tell the story, but feel free to adapt to your own voice and way of telling the story. Some of the story is directly quoted from Scripture. The fourth chapter of Jonah is intentionally omitted (his anger with God for forgiving the Ninevites) because the emphasis should be on God's love and not on Jonah's anger. It is also intentional that we skimmed over the subject of sin and repentance since they will be covered more fully in Lesson 5.

Sermon 10 minutes

It's easy to love others when they are nice to you, but what if they are mean to you or do something unkind? Here's the thing about God... God loves everyone, even those who don't love Him back!

Show Graphic 2.2 - Jonah Title Slide

I want to tell you a story that happened almost 3,000 years ago. It is in the book of the Bible called Jonah and tells of God's great love for all the people who lived in a city named Nineveh. The people of Nineveh didn't know God and they were doing lots of bad things. God was angry over their sin (which is when we intentionally act against what God commands). So, because God loved them so much, He wanted to give them a warning about their bad behavior. God sent a man named Jonah to tell them that if they turned from their bad ways, He would forgive them.

Show Graphic 2.3 - Jonah looking over Nineveh

At first, Jonah didn't want to go even though God told him to. Although God loved the Ninevites, Jonah did not! They were enemies of the people of Israel and Jonah was an Israelite. He did not want them to learn about God's forgiveness (Jonah 4:2). He wanted to stay as far away from Nineveh as possible.

Jonah thought he could hide away from God in a boat. Do you think it is possible to hide from God?

Graphic 2.2



Graphic 2.3



Sermon (Continued)

Do you remember last week that we said He is everywhere and sees everything? God knew exactly where Jonah was and sent a great storm out on the sea where Jonah was.

Show Graphic 2.4 – The boat on the stormy sea

It was such a terrible storm that the sailors thought their ship would break into pieces. Do you know where Jonah was all this time? He was sleeping down below deck! The captain came to him and said, *“How can you sleep? Get up and call on your God! Maybe He will take notice of us so that we will not perish.”* (Jonah 1:6) The other people on the boat knew that Jonah was running away from the Lord because he had told them that was what he was doing (1:10) They knew that God was punishing the whole boat for Jonah’s disobedience. *“The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So, they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?” He answered “Pick me up and throw me into the sea, and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.”* (1:11-12) Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm.

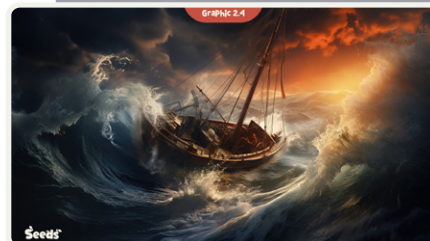
Show Graphic 2.5 – Jonah and the Big Fish

You would think that Jonah would drown, *but God sent a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.* (vs. 17) Jonah did not die. He waited inside the fish to see what would happen next. You can be sure that he had lots of time to think about what he had done. He realized that just as God had been merciful in saving him from drowning, He was merciful in wanting to save the Ninevites from “drowning” in their sins. Jonah told God he would obey Him and go to Nineveh. *And the Lord commanded the fish, and it (coughed up) Jonah onto dry land.* (2:10)

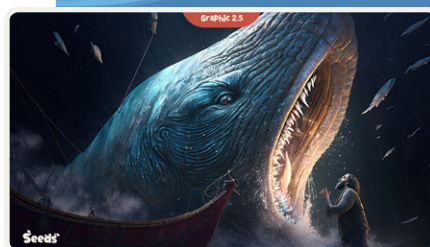
Show Graphic 2.6 – Jonah coughed up on dry land

When Jonah finally arrived in Nineveh, he began to walk around the streets saying, “In forty days God will punish you for your sins. Your city will be destroyed.” You would think that the people would be angry at a stranger saying such things, but they heard his words and believed them. The Bible says that

Graphic 2.4



Graphic 2.5



Graphic 2.6



Sermon (Continued)

everyone fasted and put on sackcloth (3:5). By not eating and by wearing old clothes, they were trying to show God that they were sorry for the bad things they had done. Even the king took off his fancy robes and put on old clothes and sat in the dirt. The king told the people to cry out to God, to give up their evil ways and their violence (3:8). If we change our ways, said the king, maybe God will forgive us and not destroy us. *When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, He relented and did not bring on them the destruction He had threatened.* (3:10)

Show Graphic 2.7 – Reaching for God’s love

What a story! God loved the people of Nineveh even before they were sorry for the bad things they had done. He loved them so much that He sent someone to tell them that they needed to change.

That’s the whole point of this story is that God loved Nineveh. He loved them before they knew Him and He loved them in spite of the bad things they had done. He loved them enough to send someone to tell them to turn from their bad ways and He loved them enough to forgive their sin.

Show Graphic 2.8 – Memory Verse: Psalm 86:15, NIV

Let’s learn another verse this week from memory. Here it is on the screen for you to see and learn.

**“But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.”
(Psalm 86:15, NIV)**

Let’s say it together a few times. Could you remember it if we took it off the screen? Let’s see and have some fun with it.

Remove the graphic from the screen and see how the children do.

As we close our Bible lesson, let’s pray.

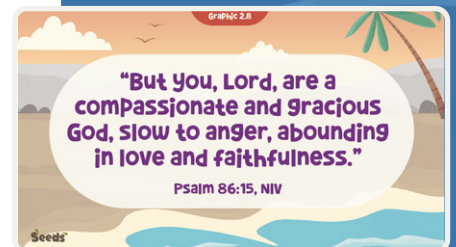
Teacher prays and thanks God for His great love for the children as part of the prayer.



Graphic 2.7



Graphic 2.8



God's Love Game

5 minutes

Tell the children to stand up if any of the statements apply to them.

Say, "God loves everyone with brown hair."

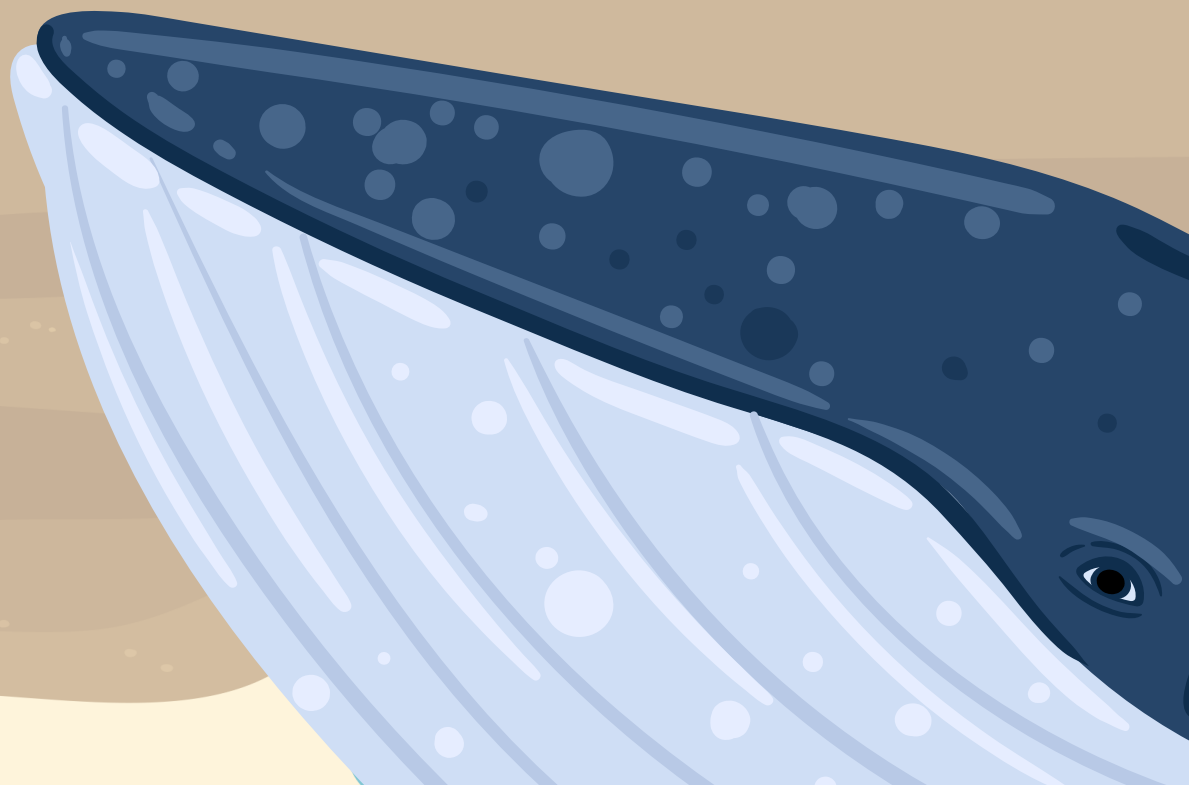
They will sit down till the next characteristic is given.

Continue listing characteristics of every child in the room such as:

- everyone who has a sister,
- everyone who is wearing sandals,
- everyone who goes to school,
- everyone who has a pet,
- everyone who has short hair, long hair,
- everyone who is a girl, etc.

Do this until everyone has stood up at least once.

Conclude by emphasizing "God loves everyone!"



Review Questions 5-10 minutes

1. Who was the prophet in this story?
2. Where did God want to send him?
3. How did he respond and why?
4. Was he able to get away (hide) from God?
5. What happened to the boat that Jonah was on?
6. How did God rescue Jonah?
7. What did Jonah do next?
8. How did the people of Nineveh respond?
9. Can you recite our memory verse?

Guided Prayer 1 minute

At this point the teacher should close the lesson in prayer. Focus on the great love of God and that God's love is given to every child in the room, as well as their families and friends.



Home Connection

God is Love

Today we learned that God is Love - Did you know that God loves everyone, even those who don't love Him back? Today we studied the story of Jonah in the Bible. God told Jonah to go to a city called Nineveh to tell the people that God was going to punish them for their sins. God wasn't doing this to be mean. He knew that sin separates us from Him. Because He loved the people too much to be separated from them, he sent Jonah to tell them to turn from their wicked ways.

When the people heard Jonah's warning, they cried out to God for mercy. Even the king took off his fancy robes and put on old clothes and sat in the dirt to show his sorrow over their sins. **"If we change our ways,"** said the king, **"maybe God will forgive us and not destroy us."** When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, He forgave them.

What a story! God loved the people of Nineveh even before they were sorry for the bad things they had done. He loved them so much that He sent someone to tell them that they needed to change.

That's the whole point of this story is the God loved Nineveh. He loved them before they knew Him, and He loved them in spite of the bad things they had done. He loved them enough to send someone to tell them to turn from the bad ways and He loved them enough to forgive their sin.

Memory Verse:

"But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." (Psalm 86:15, NIV)

Take some time to learn the verse together at home.



Seeds at Home

We sang a song that you can sing along at home. Here's the link to First John 4, 7 and 8.

Song video
fmchr.ch/Seeds-L2-Song

Engage the coloring page sent home with your child or children to reinforce the memory verse.





“But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”

Psalm 86:15, NIV