

Ask the children to cite other **examples** of bad people who repented and turned to God, even if no expert teacher was there to explain all about repentance.



Sea Weed

Memorize Ezekiel 14:6: "Thus says the Lord God, Repent and turn away from your idols and turn your faces away from all your abominations."

Poem. Let four children each recite one of the verses from Jonah 2:2, 3, 5 and 6.

Let older children write a poem or song about repenting and receiving God's forgiveness.

Prayer: "Lord, you love all the people of the earth, even those who hate us. We pray for them, that you will send messengers to tell them the news about Jesus. Help us to love people who are different from us and to take your message to them."

A Teacher Who Did Not Want to Teach

Prayer. "Dear Lord, please help the children to understand your love for people of all lands, even for bad people, and why you send workers to help them change."

Choose any of these children's learning **activities** that fit their ages and needs.

Let an older child or teacher **read or tell** by memory the story of Jonah from **Jonah** chapter 1, chapter 2 verses 1 & 10, and chapter 3.

Explain that God sent Jonah as a teacher to another country to convince bad people to change. God loved those people even though the teacher did not.

Ask these **questions** [*The answers appear after each question.*]

- Why did God send a storm? [*See Jonah 1:3-4*]
- What did Jonah tell the sailors to do about the storm? [*Jonah 1:12*]



- Why did Jonah not drown in the sea when the sailors threw him in? [*Jonah 1:17*]

- What did the king of Nineveh do when he heard Jonah’s message?
[Jonah 3:6-8. He repented and told his people to repent.]

Explain that to repent means to turn away from sin and to obey God. His Holy Spirit helps people to do so.

- What did God do when the people of Nineveh repented?
[Jonah 3: 10]

Dramatize parts of the story of Jonah. Arrange with the worship leader for the children to present this brief drama. Use your teaching time with the children to prepare the drama. Let older children help the younger ones prepare.

- If there are not enough children for all of the parts, the Narrator can mention whose part it is, and read it.
- Let **older children** or adults play the parts of **Voice of God, Jonah** and **Narrator**.
- Let **younger children** play the parts of **Sailors, Whale** and **King** of Nineveh.

Narrator: Tell the first part of the story from Jonah 1. Then say, “Hear what God says.”

Voice of God: “Jonah, go tell Nineveh’s people that they must stop doing bad things.”

Jonah: “I hate those people. I will go on a ship that sails another way.” (Climb into the imaginary boat and lie down.)

Sailors: Sway as if you were on a ship. Shout things like: “This is a bad storm.” “The wind is sinking the boat!” “The waves will drown us!”

Jonah: Pretend to wake up from sleeping. Shout, “God is angry with me. Throw me into the sea, then the storm will calm down.”

Whale: Pretend to swim over to Jonah. Say, “This is a funny looking fish, but I am hungry, so I will eat him.” (Pretend to swallow him.)
Say, “Oh, what a stomach ache I have. I will have to vomit him back out!”

Narrator: Tell the second part of the story (Jonah 2:1-10 & chapter 3). Then say, “Hear what God says.”

Voice of God: Shout, “Jonah, go to Nineveh!”

Jonah: Walk, staggering, to the People of Nineveh. Shout angrily, “Repent or God will destroy your city!”

King: Pretend to rip your clothes. Sit on the ground and say, “We repent. All of us!”

Voice of God: “I am glad that you repented. I love you. I did not want to destroy you.”

Narrator or older child: Thank everyone who helped with the drama.

Questions: If the children dramatize this story for the adults, let them also ask the adults the questions listed above.

Let the children **draw a picture** of a large fish. Let them show the pictures to the adults during worship and explain that this illustrates how God loves people of other lands, even if we do not. He sends us to talk to them and tell them to repent and believe in Jesus.

