



## Noah

(Genesis 6:9-9:17)

Lately, we have had a lot of extra time at home and away from our friends. We have been limited in what we have been able to do, who we've been able to go see, and where we've been able to go. You have probably not gone out shopping as much or gone to the grocery store or even sat in a restaurant in awhile. Life is looking a little different than what it used to be and I hope that you have been getting used to it and finding new ways to have fun and enjoy life, whether it be alone with just your family or out in public where you see a lot of people wearing masks. You might be more familiar with what it means to be lonely these days.

We see throughout God's Word that there were many who had to spend time alone, separated from friends, sometimes even from family.

Today, we start in Genesis 6:5-8 when we see the evil of man was common and constant, so much so that God was so sorry that He had ever made them. But that's not the end of the story! We see that there was one man, Noah, that found favor in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord was happy when He saw how good Noah was. He was a righteous man and he was blameless. He walked with God.

God told Noah that He was going to destroy the world with water and He told Noah to be prepared by building an ark and He gave him a lot of specific instructions. Noah heard what God said and he listened to every word. He built the ark even after hearing the hard news of the world being destroyed and he did it just the way that God told him to. This wasn't a small project for Noah! It took him *years* of hard work to accomplish this task.

We have a hard time spending time doing the right things, especially when they take a really long time to finish, don't we? Sometimes it takes a really

long time to clean our rooms because well..we bring out ALL the toys right? How long did it take Noah to finish building this ark? 100 years!

Noah spent a lot of time alone and away from others throughout this mission. It was just him and his family and this really big project. This must have been very tiring and maybe a little lonely at times! God wants us to stick with His Plan, and the cool thing is that God's plan is a life long plan that is for our good.

We can learn from Noah that we need to be faithful, stay strong and keep doing what God tells us to even when the rest of the world is not. We see that Noah stood out from the rest of the world, that he was a good and righteous man. We should stick out in this world as well. People should be able to tell that you are different. Do you stand out for God? What can you do to show others God's Love?

The coolest thing is when we follow God and keep His commandments, we get to go to Heaven. Just like Noah was kept safe from the Flood, we will be safe for all of eternity.

### **Lessons from Noah**

- He followed God's Word even after hearing the hard news that the world was going to be destroyed.
- He kept working and did exactly what God told him to even when it took years to accomplish
- He let God take care of him and his family alone on the ark for a year.
- He was faithful to God and trusted Him when everyone else around him was not. He was rewarded with being put on the ark with his family and being saved from the flood.

Compare the lessons we learn from Noah with you and how you are being faithful to God. When God sees you standing out from the rest as a good and righteous Christian, He will reward you with eternity in heaven with Him.



# Jonah

(Jonah 1-4)

Have you ever tried to run away from home? Most of us have at least had the thought to try and run away from home at least once growing up. If you haven't done it yet, I'm not suggesting that you do so. You might get swallowed- anyways... Here in Jonah's story, we see how he tried to run away from God. But, you can't run away from God though can you? He knows and sees everything about you. He knows how many hairs are on your head. God is always there for us, but when we decide to walk away from Him, it's not always a pretty experience.

Now, I don't think that one of those not-so-pretty experiences for us will be staying in the Whale Motel, but we can get the point of how much worse our life can be if we decided to take that path. Remember how Jonah thought that he got away with it when he ran away? He ended up putting other people in harm's way because he decided to not follow God's Word.

Jonah at one point in the story, realized that he needed to change, and he prayed to God. Sometimes we realize that we have gone down the wrong path and went away from God instead of toward God. We need these times in our lives to see how important God is in our lives and to turn back to him when we have fallen away. God will always hear our prayers, but we have to actually spend time in prayer. What do you need to pray to God about?

Why did Jonah not want to go to Ninevah to begin with? What was so bad about going and preaching the Word of God to those people? Jonah was scared to tell Nineveh about God because he knew how evil the people were and he did not think it would work out well if he told them about God. He was scared of how they would react.

Guys, sometimes we have to tell people what God wants for their lives, even when they don't want to hear it. Many times it works out much better doing it God's way and not being shy about telling others about Him than letting

fear hold us back from letting others know about God's Word. The really cool part of the story of Jonah (well, other than him being kept alive inside a fish..) is that we got to see that all of Nineveh, even their king, decided to turn back to God.

People need to see how we are living for God. Don't let what you think they will say or how they will react get in the way because more times than you think, it won't go as badly as you think it will. You plant the seed of the Word of God and let *God* take it from there. What can you do in order to be a shining light to those around you? How can you help your friends get to know God?

Every person that you know or see throughout your day is a person made by God and in His image. We should love and show care and concern for someone that's made by God right? Jonah got his priorities a little mixed up when he was complaining about the plant that was giving him shade...but he wasn't too concerned about 120,000 people... So where are your priorities? What are you putting first in your life? Is it things that you want to do, or things that God really wants us to do? We should keep our priorities on God first. And then you will see the wonderful things that God can do.

### Lessons to learn from Jonah

- DON'T run away from God.
- Realize that bad things happen when you run away from God and don't follow His commands.
- When Jonah finally did what God asked him to do, the people *listened*. A lot of good came from him preaching to Nineveh.
- Don't get so angry when things don't go your way. God makes all things work together for His good. It's not always convenient for you, but stay strong and be content.
- Where are your priorities? Love and care for the people in your life.
- God hears our prayers just like He heard Jonah's prayers. And He *always* answers them (even if the answer is no).



# Daniel in the Lions Den

(Daniel 6)

The story of Daniel is a big example of God using someone in ways that we never would think He would be able to. Daniel was taken to be a servant and ended up being put into a position that others thought that he did not deserve and he certainly didn't belong there! We see this throughout the Bible and even today, people in the right place at the right time. If we put our faith in God and use the opportunities that are put in front of us like Daniel did, he can use us to do more than we ever thought possible.

There will be many people in your life, sometimes your friends, people at school or in the neighborhood that will tell you to do things that are against what God stands for. God has told us that He wants us to follow His Word even when people of the world go against God. You are going to see more and more of this as you grow and that is why it is so important that you study God's Word and learn what God's will is for you.

That's exactly what Daniel did. He saw that the law went against God's Law, he knew that loving and serving God was more important so he continued to follow God's Law instead. Even when he was before the king, he didn't change his mind or back down. He trusted that God was taking care of him.

His faith was strong and he knew what he was supposed to be doing. He continued even when he was the only one following God's laws. How can we do the same today? How can we continue to show our faith in today's world when it's not the common or cool?

## Lessons to learn from Daniel:

- Don't be so surprised when God uses YOU to do something big.
- The world tells us a lot of rules that we should live by, but they don't always line up with what God says is right. We should be careful to heed God's laws first.
- Even when things are scary, God is still with you and He is still taking care of you.
- Doing what God says is *good* for us.
- Daniel was put in a position of leadership and taken care of because he was seen as a good man. This doesn't mean everything will always work out but more often than not, people respect a Christian for their values and integrity.



## Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness

(Matthew 4:1-11)

Jesus took time to prepare himself for the work that He was sent here to do. He fasted and prayed for a *long* time. And the Devil sought to tempt Him (just like he tempts us every day). What do we need to do in order to prepare ourselves? Do we read our bibles everyday? Do we pray everyday? If you start young doing those two things right now, then it will make the rest of your journey in life much better. The Devil is after us, just like he was after Jesus.

The devil is going to trick us into doing things that we know that we should not do. We saw him try and trick Jesus when He was at His weakest point. Satan will try and do that to us as well. When we don't feel good, when we are weak, when we are tired... The great news is that we can overcome the devil too! The better we know Gods Word and carry it out by living Christ's example every day, the better we will be at fighting off the devils attacks.

One of the really cool things about knowing God's Word is that it is never too early to start preparing ourselves and God's Word is never out of date, it will *always* give you the advice you need to run this race.

### Lessons we can learn from this story of Jesus being tempted:

- We have to prepare ourselves.
- We CAN overcome the Devil.
- We can always use Gods Word for our answers.
- It is never too young to learn and know Gods Word.
- The importance of prayer.
- Jesus was the only man to ever be perfect and that's why he was able to die on the cross for our sins.
- Jesus faced all the same problems that we do even though He was the Son of God.