



MIDDLE SCHOOL RESOURCE

The Thread of Atonement: Session 8

The Sign of Jonah

Key Statement: Jonah's story points to 1) Jonah's disobedience to God, 2) Jesus' obedience to God, and 3) justification through Jesus' resurrection.

::CONNECT::

Option 1: Pictionary/Charades: Jonah or Jesus?

Prior to the lesson, prepare a list of Jesus' actions and Jonah's actions. Each action should be on its own note card. Your lists might include:

Jesus:

- Resurrected from dead
- Walked on water
- Preached to unreceptive people

Jonah:

- Fled from God
- Preached to receptive people
- Swallowed by fish for three days and nights

When students arrive, split them into teams and play pictionary or charades, using the notecards with characteristics of Jonah and Jesus. Guide a student to take a note card, and lead them to either draw or act out the action. The rest of their team has to figure out what is going on and whether Jonah or Jesus is being described.

At the end of the game, guide students to look for commonalities among Jonah's actions and commonalities among Jesus' actions. Point out that all of Jesus' actions were obedient, whereas most of Jonah's actions were disobedient. Connect this disobedience of Jonah and obedience of Jesus to the first two points of your lesson.

Option 2: Being Jonah or Jesus?

Brainstorm with students about opportunities a person might have to share Jesus with someone. Write these opportunities down. E.g.:

- Someone you sit next to on the bus
- A friend from soccer
- A good friend who is dealing with grief

Split students into groups, and assign each group one of the opportunities you came up with. Now, they are to make two skits out of that opportunity. In one skit, they are to be Jonah. Jonah initially disobeyed the call to share God's love. In the other skit, they are to be Jesus. Jesus constantly shared God's love with people.

Afterward, debrief the sessions. Which skit was easier to make? Why? Which skits sounded sincere? Which sounded like a salesman?

Because we are justified by Jesus' resurrection, we are joined to His mission to spread His name to all people. Point out that even though the Pharisees rejected the sign of Jesus' resurrection, Peter went on to preach it. We also need to follow Peter's heed and be like him, not Jonah.

::CONVEY::

If you are pressed for time this week, consider spending the majority of your Convey time by focusing on points one and two of the lesson (keeping in mind that the second option deals exclusively with the third point of the lesson). Customize the lesson to meet your group's specific needs.

Remember, this is merely a suggested outline adaptation for a middle school group. If you decide to incorporate one or more option into your group time, you will likely have to be very selective on the material you decide to teach through. Keep in mind that each class is different, and as the leader guide suggests, personalize the lesson content for your class by determining what elements are most applicable. Don't feel pressured to teach through all of the content in a single meeting, but instead help middle school students to see the main overall point and big picture the lesson is conveying.

::COLLIDE::

See Leader Guide