

WEEK 2 LESSON GUIDE

ANIMATED

BIG IDEA

God loves me even when
I feel ashamed.

BIBLE

Jonah Swallowed by a Fish:
Jonah 1:17-2:10; I Timothy 1:12-17

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome back to our series, *Animated!* Today, we're going to talk about a guy named Jonah. You might know something about his story, but we're going to look at it a little bit differently. Get ready to "dive in" to see what God might have to say to us about our own big feelings.

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, read [this!](#)
 - "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" (Lifetree Kids)
 - "Falling Into You" (Hillsong Young & Free)
 - "Trading My Sorrows" (Capitol Kids!)
 - "Anchored to You" (Elevation Youth)

ACTIVITY | Dory/Nemo

- **Has anyone seen the movie, *Finding Nemo*?** Awesome! Let's watch this clip together.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this](#) clip from the movie, "Finding Nemo." After, invite the kids to play a variation of the game, Marco Polo, called, Dory/Nemo. To play, have one kid be Dory. They wear a blindfold (and a [Dory hat](#), if you'd like!) and call out "Nemo!" Everyone else calls back "Dory!" The goal is for Dory to find a Nemo just by following their voice. Take turns giving several kids the opportunity to be Dory. For younger kids, have them all choose a spot once Dory is blindfolded that they can't move from during the game. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Preteens might sometimes feel like they've outgrown games but they like to have ownership and responsibility. Have them help lead the games each week.

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *If you have kids who are non-verbal, they can use other forms of noise such as clapping, blowing noises, snaps, and other bodily sound effects. Additionally, you can use materials within your environment such as tambourines, shakers, and noisemakers.*

- In this video, Nemo and his dad found each other by calling their names. They couldn't see each other, but they could hear each other!
- Let's play a game I like to call Dory/Nemo!

ACTIVITY | Frozen Fish

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *In this variation of the game, Freeze Dance, kids will dance to the music until it stops. When the music stops, call out the name of a sea creature and kids will have to animate themselves like said creature of the deep. Some examples might be octopus, shark, dolphin, jellyfish, starfish, manatee, and whale.*

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Pair a visual with the calling out of the creature so everyone can participate.*

- Today's Bible story features a large sea creature like the ones you just acted out. The Bible just describes this animal as a "big fish." **What do you think it was?**

QUESTION | Have you ever felt badly about a decision you made?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Provide preteens with a paper bag or a sock. Give them basic craft supplies and two minutes to create a puppet. Encourage them to present a puppet show sharing their emotions. Alternately, provide photo booth props with emojis for preteens to hold as they share their feeling.*

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Provide preteens with a paper bag or a sock. Give them basic craft supplies and two minutes to create a puppet. Present a puppet show sharing their emotions. Alternately, provide photobooth props with emojis for preteens to hold as they share their feelings.*

- We all make mistakes sometimes — it's part of being human.
- **Have you ever felt badly about a decision you made?**
- Sometimes, we don't spend enough time thinking beforehand about what the consequences will be or who our choices could hurt.
- Then, after the fact, we see that something we said or did caused pain. Maybe you felt it or someone else did, but either way, it can make you feel some things.
- **What do you feel when you do something that turns out to be trouble?**
- **Why do you think you feel this way?**

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Jonah 1:17–2:10 (Jonah Swallowed by a Fish)

- **What's your favorite thing about animated movies or cartoons?** My favorite thing is how exaggerated everything is. When someone is sad, they don't just cry — they gush out a fountain of water! When someone is in love, their heart literally pops out of their chest! It makes us feel the feelings in a major way. For example, tell me how you feel after watching this clip.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show [this clip](#) from "Despicable Me." For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Invite some of your preteens to sketch images from each part of the story on a dry erase board or large piece of paper as you narrate. Then, select other preteens to retell the story using images as a guide. Here's a [video](#) to help with sketch noting.*

- The woman in this clip was trying to make the girls feel ashamed when they really didn't need to feel that way at all. She was hoping that shame would make the girls sell more cookies.
- Even though Margot, Edith, and Agnes had no reason to feel ashamed, there are times in our lives when we do, right? Feeling ashamed is pretty normal, especially when we know we did something very wrong. But the good news is, we don't have to hide our face in shame — or go in a shame box — because God doesn't want us to!
- That reminds me of a story from the Bible about a guy named Jonah.
- Jonah had some very animated feelings. Remember, that means he had some really ginormous feelings! Jonah was a prophet, but he wasn't thrilled about something God told him to do.
 - God told Jonah to go to a place called Nineveh — the people there were doing bad stuff and God wanted Jonah to tell them to stop and turn to God instead.
 - But Jonah didn't want to do it. He didn't think they were very nice people and a part of him didn't think they deserved a second chance.
 - So, Jonah ran the other way. He boarded a boat hoping to get away from God. Like that's possible!
- But then, while Jonah was on the boat, the boat got hit by a big storm. Everyone on the boat wondered why this was happening, but Jonah knew.
 - He knew it was because he disobeyed God. Jonah realized that trying to run from God was a really bad idea and he felt ashamed for the choices he made.
 - Jonah told everyone on the boat what he did and that the storm was his fault. Then, he told everyone on the boat to throw him overboard into the stormy sea!
 - They wouldn't do it, but the storm got worse and worse. So, even though they didn't want to throw Jonah overboard, it was the only thing left to try. And the moment they threw Jonah into the water, the storm stopped!
- But God wasn't done with Jonah. God sent a big fish to swallow Jonah. And there, inside this big, stinky fish and full of shame, Jonah prayed. And this is what he said . . .
 - *[Read Jonah 1:17–2:09.]*
 - In his prayer, Jonah said thank you to God for saving him and promised he would tell others about how good God was.
 - Jonah wanted another chance and he got one. And when God gave the signal, the big fish spat Jonah up on a beach.
- Instead of just sitting there covered in fish spit and shame, Jonah got up and headed to Nineveh, where he unashamedly told the people about their mistakes and how God would forgive them if they prayed and changed their ways. And the people of Nineveh did just that . . . all because of Jonah's message!

BIG IDEA | God loves me even when I feel ashamed.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Go to app.animaker.com and create another short and easy animation to reveal this week's Big Idea. Alternatively, you can create two speech balloons with poster board and write, "God loves me" on one and "even when I feel ashamed" on the other. Invite two volunteers to hold up each speech balloon and freeze in a funny, cartoon pose. Have the volunteers unfreeze and say what's in their respective balloons when the kids yell, "Animate!"
- Let's all say the Big Idea together: **God loves me even when I feel ashamed.**

VIDEO | Animated, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

STORY | Once Upon a Slime

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell a story about a time when you felt ashamed of a decision you made, and how God took away that shame. As you tell your story, mix homemade slime with your hands using a recipe like [this](#) one. For added texture, include crushed Goldfish crackers or another snack food. At the end, clean the goop off your hands.
- Just like Jonah must have been relieved to get all that fish-gut goop off him and start fresh, I'm so glad **God loves me even when I feel ashamed.**

OBJECT LESSON | Sea Ya Later, Shame

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a small, shallow container with sand in it and a glass of water. Have them write or draw something in the sand that represents something they've felt shame about. If they can't think of anything or don't want to write or draw it, they can just write the word "shame." Then, have them pour the glass of water over the sand and move the container back and forth like waves. The word or image should wash away.
- Remember how Jonah washed up on the shore after being spit out by the big fish? The water probably washed away a lot of the nastiness that was on him, but it was also a chance for him to start over and leave his shame behind.
- Any guilt Jonah had from making a mistake was washed away when he told God he was sorry then made the decision to do what God told him to do, without shame.
- Jonah must've been so thankful to know **God loves me even when I feel ashamed.**

SCRIPTURE | 1 Timothy 1:12–17

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read 1 Timothy 1:12–17.
- **Do any words or phrases stick out to you?**
- Paul, who wrote this, called himself the "worst of sinners," which seems like a statement full of shame. But then, in the very next verse, Paul said that it was for that very reason he was shown mercy.
 - Paul had good reasons to feel ashamed. Before he knew Jesus, Paul would hunt down and capture people who believed in Jesus. But after he came to know God himself, Paul turned his life around and started doing the very thing he used to arrest people for.
 - Paul understood that feeling shame about his mistakes — which were huge, by the way — would be missing the point. The point is God still loved him and sent Jesus for him and for everyone. God forgave the things Paul did in the past and gave him the chance to do things for God. That's mercy!
- **What are some things we can do when we feel shame to help us feel unashamed? Who is someone you can think of you can go to when you feel shame?** [Give kids time to think about these questions. If they're having a hard time coming up with ideas, suggest talking to a parent, friend, or small group leader.]
- That's a great list of people you can each go to! And remember, you can always go to God!

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | Shame and Sorries

- We all feel shame sometimes — even Paul felt shame — because shame isn't a completely useless emotion.
- Feeling distress or pain when we did something wrong helps us to not make the same mistakes again. We learn from that experience and it helps us grow.

- The feeling of shame can even help us think about the people we may have hurt. That’s why we probably feel ashamed in the first place – because someone felt disappointed or upset as a result of our actions.
- **Who is someone you might need to reach out to and let them know you’re sorry?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Pass out index cards and something to write with to the kids and encourage them to write a simple apology note. You don’t have to collect these but the practice of writing these should help kids form words when the situation calls for it. For younger kids, give them a simple prompt they can use to fill out their cards, such as “Dear _____, I’m sorry for _____. I hope you accept my apology.”*
- Instead of sitting with shame, we can allow that experience to teach us something and help us make better choices in the future, especially when it comes to how our choices affect others.
- And just like these people will no doubt forgive you and still love you, you should feel even better knowing God will always love you.
- Let’s say this truth together: **God loves me even when I feel ashamed.**

ACTIVITY | FlipBook Feelings

- Who can remind me what the Big Idea is today? **God loves me even when I feel ashamed.**
- **How do you feel knowing God frees you from feeling ashamed?**
- It makes me feel happy and thankful. However it makes you feel, we’re going to draw a picture of that in animation!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Pass out a flipbook to each kid. Show them how a flipbook works by drawing a piece of the picture on each page. (It’s easier to start on the last page with the final drawing and then work backward.) After you’ve shown them, have each kid draw their own pictures. Use only pencils, and have erasers on hand. If kids aren’t sure what to draw, suggest a smiley face. Check out more helpful tips [here](#).*
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Print or draw out some line drawing versions of animated expressions (like [these](#)). Make copies for each kid and help them cut them out and glue them in the order they want on another piece of paper. Encourage them to tell you a story about why these emotions are being expressed in this order.*

MEMORY VERSE | Romans 15:13a (NIV)

- **“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him.”**
- This month, we’ve been talking all about our feelings and how we express our emotions. These days, even our words are animated through emojis.
- Let’s think of our own emojis to help us remember this month’s memory verse.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Provide each kid with a memory verse printable. Have them draw their own emoji to represent the word in each box. (Don’t forget to also check out the memory verse signs – a combination of SEE and ASL – available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Romans15-13a.)*

PRAYER

- God, we thank you for removing our shame. Please help us remember we’re forgiven and that you love us even when we feel ashamed. Help us go, without shame, and tell others about how awesome you are. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What mistake did Jonah make?**
- **What did Jonah do when he was inside the big fish?**

- What did he do after the fish spit him out on the beach?
- Read 1 Timothy 1:12–17. What did the writer say about himself, and what did the writer say is the reason he was shown mercy?
- What's something that might make you feel ashamed? You don't have to share this aloud if you don't want to.
- You know how when you have a big burp, it clears out space for more food? Imagine releasing shame is like a big burp in your soul. What might you be able to put there instead?
- What can you tell someone who's feeling ashamed because of who they are or something they did?

ACTIVITY | Stop Motion Series

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ahead of time, download the app, [Stop Motion Studio](#). Divide kids into groups of four or five and provide letter cutouts (or have kids make their own). Tell them to work together to make a creative display of the Big Idea. Check out a video like [this](#) for inspiration. Alternatively, divide the kids into groups and have them create their own actions to the Big Idea. Remind them to make the motions big and fast. You can film them in slow-mo with your phone and show it back to them.
- This will be a lasting reminder of the Big Idea: **God loves me even when I feel ashamed.**