

# TOP 50



REPRODUCIBLE!  
Ages  
5-10

BIBLE LESSONS  
ORDINARY PEOPLE  
ABOUT  
in  
GOD'S  
EXTRAORDINARY  
— PLAN —

AMBER PIKE

ROSEKIDZ

## ***The Top 50 Bible Lessons about Ordinary People in God's Extraordinary Plan***

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# Preface

## A Note to Children's Ministry Leaders & Parents

One of the top questions I hear from kids is "How can I hear God speak?" We teach kids that God still speaks to believers today. We teach them that God has a plan for their lives and that he wants to use them for his good and his glory. But they don't always get how. In their walk with Christ, as a child, it's hard to hear God speaking.

Don't just teach boys and girls Bible stories. Teach them **God's extraordinary plan**. Show them that God's Word is alive and that he's still speaking today. Through the stories of the men and women in the Bible, invite boys and girls to see how God was able to use these ordinary people—people just like them! Challenge kids to open up their hearts to allow God to speak to them as well.

"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God" (Romans 8:14).

As you pour into the kids God has brought into your life and make God's Word come alive for them, remember that you are not just teaching stories. You are teaching about **God's extraordinary plan** and how your kids are a part of that plan.

~Amber Pike

# Introduction

Another great title in RoseKidz's best-selling Top 50 series, *Top 50 Bible Lessons about Ordinary People in God's Extraordinary Plan* is an interactive, activity-based lesson book for elementary-aged children. This fun book features strong, Bible-based teachings, interactive activities (that address a variety of learning styles), small-group discussions, and life-application questions and activities.

Children will be learning more about the men and women of the Bible. They'll learn that these Bible people were ordinary people like us! They were not perfect and sometimes really messed up—just like us.

Despite their imperfections, God's love for them never changed and he was able to use them as part of his extraordinary plan. That's true for us, too. If we are listening to God and in relationship with him, we can be used by him to do extraordinary things.

**We are a part of God's extraordinary plan.**

## How to Use This Book

The lessons include:

- **Memory Verse** to help kids get God's Word forever in their hearts and minds.
- **Overview** will give you some history and prepare you for teaching the lesson.
- The **Bible Story** opens God's Word and begins the learning. There is both scripted conversation and passages to be read. You can read the passages aloud, or ask volunteers to read the Scriptures. Use bookmarks or sticky notes to mark passages in Bibles ahead of time.
- Each lesson includes a **Big Idea** Bible truth to guide all the activities kids will be engaged in. The Big Idea helps you keep children focused on the main truth being taught from the Bible. It also helps kids see how they fit into God's plan.
- Children love the **Opening Activity**. This engaging activity introduces kids to the Bible person, the Big Idea, or something connected to the Bible story.
- An **Object Lesson** helps them see Bible truths through the use of common everyday items.
- **Optional Activities** allow children with different learning styles to get more time with the Bible truth. And they allow you to tailor the lesson to the time you have in your schedule.
- **Materials** gives you a list of everything you need to complete each activity.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions** tell you what to do.
- **Guided Conversation** and **Life-Application Questions** help you know what to say. All the scripted conversation is set in **SEMI-BOLD** type.
- Also included are a variety of **Reproducible Pages**: crafts, games, word searches, crosswords, codes, mazes, coloring pages, etc. Use them as part of your teaching time, as time-fillers, or as take-home papers.

# Chapter 1: David

## 2 Samuel 11

*I will exalt you, my God and King, and praise your name forever and ever. I will praise you every day; yes, I will praise you forever. PSALM 145:1–2*

### Overview

**Say:** Everyone who has ever lived is going to disobey God. Scripture tells us this in Romans 3:23. Sin is when we disobey God; we break his laws and commands. God doesn't want us to sin. He wants us to obey him.

Even though we sin, God still loves us, and he still uses us to do his will. Today, we are going to learn about a man who loved God very much. Although this man loved God, he didn't always follow God. But God still used him to do big things, even when he disobeyed. We will learn today that **God can use us even when we sin!**

God can use  
us even when  
we sin!



### Opening Activity

#### Worship with Instruments

**Preparation:** Photocopy  
Clues #1–3 and cut out.

**Say:** God is all-powerful. He can do anything! Because he can do anything, he doesn't really need us, but he chooses us anyway!

For the next several weeks, we're going to learn about some of the ordinary people God chose to serve him.

The story of each of these people comes from the Bible. Let's see if you can figure out who the person is that we are talking about today. (Show kids CLUE #1—WORSHIP. Children guess who the person might be. Neither confirm nor deny the guesses.)

If you're not sure, don't worry. There are a couple more clues to come. I'll explain how all the clues reveal our mystery person after you see the final clue.

**Do:** Play some upbeat children's worship music while kids sing along and play rhythm instruments.

#### Materials

- Clue #1: Worship (p. 11)
- Scissors
- Children's worship music and player
- Rhythm instruments (shakers, tambourines, drums, etc.)



# Bible Story

## David and Bathsheba

**Read:** Psalm 145

### Materials

- Clues #2 and #3: Heart and King (p. 11)

**Say:** We just worshiped God with music and read a psalm about worshiping God. A *psalm* is a sacred song, or a song about God. There is a whole book of psalms in the Bible. Guess the name of the book. (*Children respond.*) That's right! The book of Psalms!

Does reading a psalm give you a hint as to who our lesson is about? (*Children respond.*) Here's our next clue. (*Show kids CLUE #2—HEART. Children guess.*)

In the time of the Old Testament, God's people cried out to him, asking for a king. They wanted to be ruled by a king, just like everyone else.

Through the prophet Samuel, God warned the people what would happen if they had a human king—their possessions, their sons, and daughters would be taken. God warned that the people would cry out asking to not have a king ruling over them. But the people still wanted a king to rule over them.

God answered their cries and selected Saul as the first king of Israel. At first, Saul followed the Lord, but then he started to disobey God. Through the prophet Samuel, God sent King Saul a message.

*"How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you. Had you kept it, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart. The LORD has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command"* (1 Samuel 13:13–14).

"A man after God's own heart." That's another clue. Do you know who we are talking about yet? We have one final clue. (*Show kids CLUE #3—KING. Children guess.*)

Did you guess that we are talking about King David? David loved the Lord! As a boy, he defeated the Philistine giant, Goliath, and gave God the glory! He wrote many psalms to God and through them taught us what worship looks like.

But God also used David in another really big way. Does anyone know how else God used him and who was in his family? (*Children respond.*)



**Read:** 2 Samuel 7:11–16

**Say:** God promised David that someone from his family would sit on the throne forever. Who was God talking about? (*Children respond.*) Jesus! Jesus comes through the line of David!

Wow! Those are amazing things that the Bible tells us about David. David must have been perfect, right? Or pretty close? Wouldn't he have to be for God to choose him to be the great-great-(count fourteen greats on your fingers.)-grandfather of Jesus? Right?

Uh . . . NO! David, though he was a man after God's heart and was used by God in many big ways, was still an ordinary person. David still messed up sometimes.



In 2 Samuel 11, we read that David stole a man's wife, and then had that man killed. Do you think that was the end of David following the Lord? *(Children respond.)*

Never! David sinned. Romans 3:23 tells us that we ALL sin. Yes, David, who was known as "a man after God's own heart," and the man that God picked to lead his people had sinned. But David still loved God, even though he sinned. And God still used David to accomplish his extraordinary plan, even though David sinned!

When David realized what he had done, and that he was sinning against the Lord, he cried out to God asking for forgiveness. Do you think God forgave David? Murder is a pretty big sin. *(Children respond.)* Absolutely, God forgave him! Scripture tells us that God will always forgive our sins (1 John 1:9).

Did God still love David and want to use him to do big things, even though he messed up? *(Children respond.)* You betcha!

We all are going to sin and mess up, but God is faithful and just to forgive our sins. And, he will always love us! But like David, when we realize that we have sinned against God, we need to confess our sins, asking God for forgiveness, and to restore our relationship with him once again!

**Pray:** Give children time to pray silently, asking God to forgive their sins. Close prayer, asking God to use each of them for his extraordinary plan.

## Object Lesson

### Erasing Sin

**Preparation:** Write the word *SIN* on the dry-erase board or mirror with permanent marker.

**Say:** Scripture tells us that, like David, we all sin. We need Jesus to forgive our sins; we can't get rid of sin on our own! *(Try to rub the word SIN off with a dry-erase eraser. It won't come off.)*

*(While you read the following, color over the permanent marker with red dry-erase marker.)* But when we confess our sins to God and ask for forgiveness, Jesus removes our sins! It's because Jesus was willing to die on a cross to pay the punishment for our sins. It's Jesus' blood that removes the stain of sin from our lives. *(Erase the word SIN with dry-erase eraser.)*

**Optional:** Children use the dry-erase board or mirror and markers from the object lessons, writing and then erasing sins kids their age might do.

### Materials

- Dry-erase board or mirror
- Black permanent marker
- Red dry-erase marker
- Dry-erase eraser

## Additional Activity Options

### Pop-Up Praise Game

**Do:** While upbeat praise music plays in the background, children crouch down on the floor and toss around the ball. When they catch the ball, they should pop up and shout a reason to worship God. Player holding the ball when a song ends chooses two or three volunteers to recite the memory verse with them.

**Say:** No matter what was going on in David's life, good or bad, he worshiped the Lord still. We should be doing the same, worshipping God through the good and the bad in our life!

### Materials

- Beach ball or soft ball

### Optional

- Children's worship music and player

## Stand Up If It's True Bible Review

**Say:** Stand up if the answer to the question is true but sit down if it is false. If the answer is false, explain what makes it false.



1. **David wrote psalms to God.** (True)
2. **David was the first king of Israel.** (False)
3. **Samuel anointed Saul as the first king of Israel.** (True)
4. **Saul followed the Lord until he died.** (False)
5. **David was Saul's son.** (False)
6. **David was known as "a man after God's heart."** (True)
7. **David never messed up.** (False)
8. **The woman David stole was named Bathsheba.** (True)
9. **Bathsheba was not married.** (False)
10. **God still loved David, even though he sinned.** (True)

### Discussion Questions

1. What did David do that was wrong? (He stole another man's wife, and then had that man killed.)
2. Stealing a man's wife and then having that man killed seems like a pretty big sin; yet David is known as "a man after God's own heart." How can that be?
3. Does God forgive us, no matter how bad our sins and mistakes are?

### King's Crown Craft

**Say:** David loved God with all of his heart, but he wasn't perfect. He messed up and needed God's forgiveness. To remind us of King David, we are going to make crowns to wear! As we wear our crowns, we can be reminded that God continues to love us, and **God can use us even when we sin!**

**Do:** Children cut out and tape crowns to wear on their heads. Using markers and decorative materials, they decorate the crowns.

**Optional:** Children draw hearts on their crown to remind them that David was a man after God's own heart, and we should be, too!

### Songs of Praise

**Say:** David loved the Lord, through the good and the bad, through the times when he was obedient to God and even when he was not. As a musician, David wrote all kinds of songs praising our great God, from happy songs to songs of sadness, fear, and repentance. What kind of song can you write to praise God?

**Do:** Children, in groups or individually, will write songs of praise to God, just like David!

#### Materials

- Card stock or construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Markers
- Decorative materials (adhesive-backed jewels, stickers, craft-foam shapes)

#### Materials

- Paper
- Markers

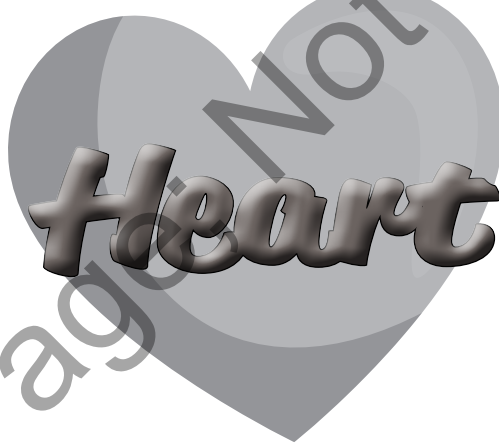
# Bible Story Clues

Clue #1



**Worship**

Clue #2



**Heart**

Clue #3



**King**

# Chapter 2: Paul

## Acts 9:1–9

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. **ACTS 1:8**



God's Spirit changes us!

Big Idea

### Overview

**Say:** Do you think you are really good at noticing changes? If the sky were suddenly green, would you notice? What if I started wearing blue contacts? Would you notice that?

There was a man in the Bible named Paul. Do you remember who Paul is? (*Children respond.*) Well, Paul went through a BIG change in his life. His name even changed! It went from Saul to Paul! (Today's Saul is not King Saul from our lesson about David. It's a different Saul.)

Paul became one of the greatest witnesses for God ever! But he didn't change on his own. In today's Bible lesson, we will learn that just like with Paul, God's Spirit changes us!

### Opening Activity

**Say:** Let's play a little game to see how well you can spot changes.

### What's Different?

**Do:** Select a child to be the changer. Everyone else examines the changer closely. After a few seconds, the changer should go out of the room, in a closet, or behind a screen. Changer then subtly changes something about their appearance, such as switching a bracelet to another hand, untucking their shirt, taking out a ponytail, etc.

The rest of the children guess what is different about the person's appearance. Player who guesses correctly becomes the new changer and play continues as time and interest allow.

**Say:** Sometimes it was pretty easy to see the change in someone during our game, wasn't it? If the thing that was changed was a smaller, more subtle change, it might have been harder to see.

Those are just changes in a person's appearance. What about if a person that didn't follow God changes their life and starts following Christ? Would that change be hard or easy to see? If you have been in church since you were born and became a Christian at five years old, people might not be able to see much change in your behavior. You were probably already acting in ways that pleased the Lord.

But what about the actions of a person who HATED God before? Do you think there would be a big change in their behavior after they become a Christian, one that people will notice? (*Children respond.*)

Our Bible person today had one of those BIG CHANGES!



**Younger Child Option:** Instead of using children for this activity, have a flannelgraph board with characters. Hide or switch out one character each round for children to guess. Or have a variety of objects on a tray. Remove a different item for each round.

## Bible Story

### The Road to Damascus

As children read the biblical account of Saul's transformation on the road to Damascus, select five volunteers to act out the story.

**Say:** Part of our story is going to be read directly from the Bible. In the Bible account, Paul is referred to by his first name Saul. So don't be confused. Just remember, Saul and Paul are the same man!

**Read:** Acts 9:1–9

**Say:** (Volunteers return to their seats.) What happened to Saul on his way to Damascus? (Children respond.) God stopped Paul in a pretty drastic way! God asked him why he was persecuting him—why he was hurting believers in Christ.

God also blinded Saul for three whole days in order to get his attention. What kind of a man was Saul that God stopped him like that? Listen to what the Bible tells us about Saul.

*Then they put their hands over their ears and began shouting. They rushed at [a follower of Jesus named Stephen] and dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. His accusers took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man named Saul.*

*As they stoned him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:57–58).*

The people killed Stephen by throwing rocks at him, just for following Jesus. And what role did Saul play? (Children respond.) He held the coats of the people who were stoning Stephen! He was 100-percent OK with killing this man that loved Jesus!

Saul actually loved God, however. He was a Jewish man. He not only knew the Old Testament Scriptures, he also followed them. He loved God in a big way! He just didn't believe that Jesus was God's one and only Son. So he went around killing, beating, or jailing people that believed in Jesus!

That is why God stopped Saul. He was hurting God by hurting these new members of God's family!

So, Paul was stopped by God on his way to Damascus and blinded for how many days? (Children respond.) For three days. Scripture says that he neither ate nor drank during that time.

God sent a man named Ananias to come and restore Paul's sight. Paul didn't just get his sight back, though. He received the Holy Spirit as well!

God didn't just heal Saul; he changed him! Saul was soon baptized and began traveling around, preaching that Jesus was the Son of God! This was when he started going by his Greek name, *Paul*, and that's how we usually refer to him.

That's a pretty big turnaround! When we become members of God's family, we can be changed by the Holy Spirit, too! **God's Spirit Changes Us!**

**Pray:** Pray with the children, thanking God for sending Jesus to die on the cross for us and that the Holy Spirit changes us when we become members of his family.



# Object Lesson

## Blindfolded Feeding

In this activity, children have some messy fun, trying to have a snack while being blindfolded.

**Preparation:** Cover tables with newspapers or plastic tablecloths. Place a similar amount of whipped cream on three to five paper plates.

**Do:** Choose the same number of volunteers as plates you prepared. Blindfold volunteers and hand each a plastic spoon. Volunteers try to eat all their whipped cream without making a mess!

**Say:** Some of our volunteers did a pretty good job! Imagine how hard it would be if, like Paul in today's Bible story, all of the sudden you were blind. Things we take for granted like brushing our teeth, eating soup, or even fixing our hair would instantly become difficult. You might make a mess or look ridiculous.

Do you think that's why Paul didn't eat or drink for three days? Just so he wouldn't make a mess on his clothes? (*Children respond.*)

Scripture doesn't tell us what Paul did during those three days that he was blind. What would you be doing if God came to you and told you that you had been hurting him and he also took away your sight? (*Children respond.*) A lot of us would be praying and asking God not only for healing, but for forgiveness.

When we do wrong things, God is ready to forgive us. When we become members of God's family, we receive his gift of the Holy Spirit. And **God's Spirit changes us!**

## Additional Activity Options

### Blindfold Tag

**Do:** Select one child to be "It." Place a blindfold securely on "It." "It" tags other children, relying on their sense of hearing, while keeping their blindfold on. Once tagged, players assist "It" by giving instructions where to move. After two or three players have been tagged, "It" and tagged players recite the memory verse, a new "It" is chosen, and play continues.

**Say:** Why was tag harder to play wearing a blindfold? How do you think Paul felt being blinded for three days? Even though Paul had to lose his sight for a few days, I'm thankful that God changed him, and made Paul a man he could use in his extraordinary plan. **God's Spirit changes us!**

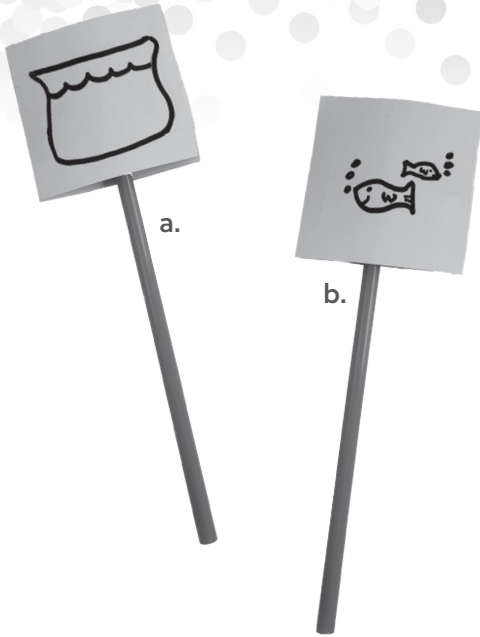
### Materials

- Newspapers or tablecloths
- Paper plates
- Whipped cream
- Plastic spoons
- Blindfolds
- Premoistened wipes or paper towels

### Materials

- Blindfolds

## Optical Illusion Spinner



**Preparation:** Children cut card stock into two 3-inch squares. In the center of one square, children draw an object something else might go in or on (image a): fish bowl, bird cage, chair, etc. On the other square, children draw something that would go in that object (image b): fish, bird, sitting person, etc.

**Hint:** Try to place the second image in the center of your sheet so it will look like it's in the center of the first image.

Children tape a straw to the back of one of the squares, and then sandwich the straw with the other square, taping the two squares securely together. Children spin the spinner between their palms, creating a fun optical illusion.

**Say:** When you added a second image to your craft, the whole thing changed! Do you think Paul looked different after God changed him on the road to Damascus? (*Children respond.*) When the Holy Spirit comes into our life, **God's Spirit changes us!**

### Materials

- White card stock
- Rulers
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Markers
- Plastic straws
- Tape

## Fact Face-Off Bible Review

**Do:** Form two teams. Team members face off against each other, one at a time, answering the questions and earning points for their team.

1. Did Paul follow the Old Testament or the New Testament? (Old Testament)
2. What did he do to Christians? (Killed them)
3. Where was Paul headed to? (Damascus)
4. What happened to Paul on the way there? (He was blinded.)
5. What did God ask him? (Why he was persecuting him)
6. How long was Paul blinded? (Three days)
7. Did Paul eat or drink during those three days? (No)
8. Was Paul Jewish or Greek? (Jewish)
9. Did Paul get his sight back? (Yes)
10. After God restored Paul's sight, what did Paul do? (Became a Christian and told others about Jesus)

### Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit change Paul?
2. How can the Holy Spirit change us today?
3. What are ways that people could tell that you are a follower of God?

## Burning Bush Snack

**Do:** Children decorate cupcakes with candy corn "flames," and then eat and enjoy their snack.

**Say:** Our cupcakes with their pretend flames remind us of the burning bush from our story and that **God's Spirit changes us!**

### Materials

- Frosted cupcakes
- Candy corn

**Changing People Crossword:** Photocopy the puzzle on page 16, making one copy for each child plus extras. Kids complete in class or take home.

# Changing People Crossword

Paul killed Christians, but God still came to him and changed him. Could the bad things we've done keep God from wanting us as members of his family?

Some people think that they aren't good enough for God to forgive them and love them. They think that they have done too many wrong things and that they need to act better before Jesus can forgive them. Does this sound right? No way!

Complete this crossword by finding people God will forgive. Remember that **God's Spirit changes us!** And when people are forgiven by God and become members of his family, the Holy Spirit changes them.

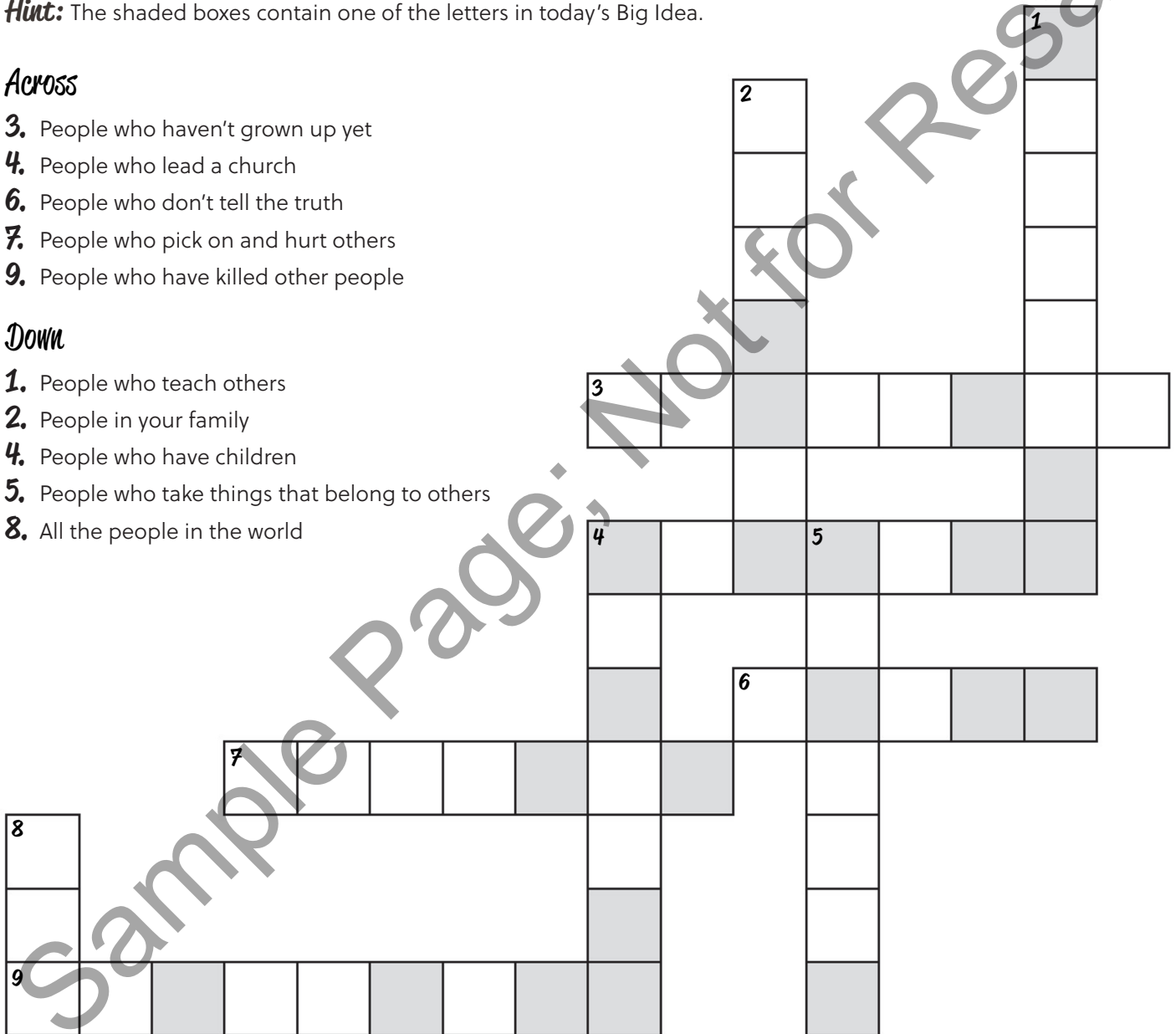
**Hint:** The shaded boxes contain one of the letters in today's Big Idea.

## Across

3. People who haven't grown up yet
4. People who lead a church
6. People who don't tell the truth
7. People who pick on and hurt others
9. People who have killed other people

## Down

1. People who teach others
2. People in your family
4. People who have children
5. People who take things that belong to others
8. All the people in the world





# Chapter 3: Jonah

## Jonah 1–3

*If you love me, obey my commandments. JOHN 14:15*

### Overview

**Say:** When mom tells you to clean your room, what are you supposed to do? (*Children respond.*) Clean your room, of course! When your teacher tells you which math problems to do for homework, which math problems should you answer? (*Children respond.*) The ones your teacher assigned! Moms and dads and teachers all want you to obey their instructions. There are laws and rules throughout life that you are supposed to obey as well!

But people don't always obey. At some point, all of us have disobeyed a parent. Most adults have broken the law by speeding. When you disobey a parent, you get punished. If you speed, you might get a ticket. There are consequences for disobeying and breaking the rules.

What about disobeying God? The Bible is full of instructions for how we are supposed to live and walk in relationship with God. It's also full of stories and examples of men and women who followed God . . . and some that did not. God's way is the best way, so we should obey his commands and laws. But we don't always do that. The people in the Bible didn't always obey, either. Sometimes God had to punish them, just as he punishes us when we disobey.

As we read about Jonah, and his decision to disobey God, we will see just how much **God wants us to obey!**



### Opening Activity

#### Now Hear This

**Do:** Use the mystery box or shield to conceal the items from the children. Make each sound one at a time, as children guess what it is.

**Alternate Idea:** Play this game with two blindfolded contestants, playing for points.

**Say:** How well did you listen? Did you guess each sound correctly? (*Children respond.*) Maybe you were a good listener in our game, but are you a good listener in life? Not just listening to sounds, but are you a good listener to God? (*Pause, allowing children to reflect.*)

#### Materials

- Mystery box and/or shield
- 6–10 objects that make noise (jingle bell, bike horn, squeaky dog toy, buzzer, cowbell, etc.)

**Younger Child Option:** Start out quietly making an animal sound. Once children hear the sound and identify the animal, they should begin moving like that animal.

# Bible Story

## Jonah Disobeys

**Say:** In Old Testament times, God spoke to prophets. These were men chosen by God to deliver his messages to people: men like Samuel, Elijah, and Isaiah. Sometimes God would have a good message for his people, like the messages Isaiah told about the Messiah that would one day come. Other times, the prophets would be delivering messages of judgment or warning.

God spoke to the prophet Jonah.

The Lord gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai: "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are."

Jonah heard exactly what God said. He just didn't like it.

The people of Nineveh were not nice people and Jonah did not want to go there. So instead of obeying God and going to Nineveh like God commanded, Jonah boarded a ship and sailed off towards Tarsus—the opposite direction.

How do you think God felt about Jonah disobeying him? *Children respond.* Remember, God wants us to obey! And he had given Jonah a job to do, a command that Jonah disobeyed. So . . . God punished Jonah.

**Read:** Jonah 1:7–17

**Bible Story Enrichment:** While reading (or telling) the account of Jonah, children pretend to be in the boat. As the storm rages, children rock around. You can also use a spray bottle of water and storm sound effects for extra fun!

**Say:** Because of Jonah's disobedience, God sent a storm as punishment. It was a big storm! It was so big that the men on the boat thought that they were going to die. Jonah realized that the storm was his fault and was a punishment for his disobedience.

He told the men to throw him into the sea so the storm would stop. When Jonah was thrown into the sea, God sent something to get him. What did God send? (*Children respond.*) A great, big fish swam and swallowed Jonah, whole!

Inside the fish, Jonah was safe. It might have been smelly, and it was probably scary, but Jonah realized that he had disobeyed God. For three days and nights, Jonah prayed to God. He asked God for forgiveness, and he praised God for who he is!

After being inside the fish for three days and nights, Jonah chapter 3 verse 10 tells us that God commanded the fish to spit Jonah up on dry land!

Jonah was safe, and he was forgiven. When God spoke to Jonah a second time, again telling him to go to Nineveh, Jonah obeyed. **God wants us to obey him, too!**

**Pray:** Spend some time in silent prayer, encouraging children to listen and allow God to speak to them.

## Did You Know?

The Bible doesn't say that a whale swallowed Jonah. And although it sounds like a whale of a tale, there are actually several animals that would have been capable of swallowing Jonah, allowing him to survive inside for several days.

- Blue Whale
- Sperm Whale
- Great White Shark
- Whale Shark
- Or even an extinct sea creature!



# Object Lesson

## Up and Away!

**Do:** Give each child a mesh tube spring and a Ping-Pong ball. Show them how to press the spring down on the table, using two fingers, while placing the Ping-Pong ball on top.

When you let go of the spring, the Ping-Pong ball will fly up into the air, reminding us of how God commanded the fish to spit Jonah up on dry land.

### Materials

- Ping-Pong ball
- Mesh tube spring, one for each child (available online)

**Say:** What did Jonah do when God told him to go to Ninevah? (He ran away.) When Jonah disobeyed God, God took some extreme steps to get Jonah to change his mind and obey. What happened to change Jonah's mind? (God sent a storm and Jonah was thrown out of the boat. A big fish swallowed Jonah.) God doesn't want to send storms and big fish after us! God wants us to obey. Do you love God? Our memory verse, John 14:15, says that if we love God, we will obey him.

## Additional Activity Options

### Pick-a-Side Bible Review

**Preparation:** Use masking tape, rope, or clothesline to make a line down the center of the playing area.

**Do:** Play begins with children standing along the rope or clothesline.

### Materials

- Masking tape, rope, or clothesline

**Say:** Choose one of two ways to complete the following statements, A or B. If you choose A, jump to the right side of the line. If you choose B, jump to the left side.

1. Jonah was A—a prophet or B—a priest. (A—Prophet)
2. God told Jonah to go to A—Tarsus or B—Nineveh. (B—Nineveh)
3. Jonah went the wrong way because he was A—confused or B—didn't want to go. (B—Didn't want to go)
4. God sent a A—storm or B—star. (A—Storm)
5. Jonah was swallowed by a A—whale or B—Big fish. (B—Big fish)
6. In the fish, Jonah A—laughed or B—prayed. (B—Prayed)
7. God A—did or B—did not give Jonah a second chance to obey. (A—Did)
8. The next time God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, he A—obeyed or B—did not obey again. (A—Obeyed)
9. God A—does or B—doesn't want us to disobey him. (A—Does)
10. We should obey God because A—we don't want to get punished or because B—we love him. (B—We love him.)

### Discussion Questions

1. Is there ever a good reason for disobeying God?
2. Have you ever disobeyed God? What happened?
3. How do you know what God wants you to do? How does he speak to people today?

## Bible Bookmarks

**Preparation:** On card stock, photocopy Big Fish Bookmarks, making one copy for every two children plus extras.

**Do:** Children cut out and decorate bookmarks to use while reading their Bibles.

**Say:** God doesn't speak to us today in the same way he spoke to Old Testament prophets, but he does still speak to us. When we read our Bibles, we are reading God's message to us! Spending time reading his Word helps us know how to obey him.

**Extra Fun:** Children put today's memory verse on their bookmarks as a reminder that **God wants us to obey.**

### Materials

- Big Fish Bookmark (p. 21)
- Card stock
- Decorating supplies (Crayons or markers, gel pens, stickers, adhesive gems, etc.)

## Go or No Game

**Do:** Start the game by telling children to begin walking around the room. After a few moments, give a command. The children do the opposite of the spoken command. Give commands faster and faster to see who can keep up until the end!

- Walk = Stop walking
- Turn right = Turn left
- Crouch down = Jump up

And the opposite of each of the above! Make up your own actions, too.

**Say:** When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, Jonah said no! It was important for Jonah to go to Nineveh so that the people there would follow the Lord. It is important for us to obey God, too. God speaks to us through prayer and through the Bible, giving us not just a bunch of rules to follow, but instructions on how to live life in relationship with him. And **God wants us to obey!**

## Who Is Speaking

**Do:** Blindfold one child. One at a time, other children take turns to disguise their voices with different tones or silly accents. Blindfolded child guesses who is talking. If the blindfolded player guesses correctly, they choose one or two volunteers to recite the memory verse with them. The child identified becomes the new blindfolded listener. If player doesn't guess correctly, another child takes a turn to disguise their voice. Continue play until each child has a turn or as time and interest allow.

### Materials

- Blindfold

**Say:** God isn't a silent God! He still speaks to us today. He speaks through his Word and through prayer. But we have to be listening for him, giving him room to speak. How does God speak to us? (Children respond.)





# Big Fish Bookmarks



B I G F I S H

***Jonah 1–3***

God wants  
us to obey!



B I G F I S H

***Jonah 1–3***

God wants  
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