

Large Group



I Wonder...

LESSON 4: LARGE-GROUP

What is sin and what does it do?

MAIN IDEA

Sin—even a little bit of sin—ties us in knots and makes us unclean with God. God invites us to have our sins washed away through faith in Jesus.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Proverbs 5:22, Hebrews 12:1b
- The Book of Jonah
- Romans 6:23, James 2:10
- 1 John 1:9, suggested Bible verse (Optional)

BIBLE VERSE

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

1 John 1:9, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10 – 15 minutes)



Play large-group games.
(25 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week? Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are any changes and additions needed for the Large-Group Lesson?
- Is there anything specific you need to communicate to the small-group leaders?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- Roll of duct tape
- Printouts 1-2

Large Group



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10 – 15 minutes)

REVIEW

Quickly review last week's lesson and Bible verses:

- The Bible is extremely reliable because God is the author.
- God has given us instructions about how to live our lives in the Bible.
- Review 2 Peter 1:20-21.

WHAT IS SIN?

Ask the students to raise their hands if they have ever done anything that was wrong. Have they ever lied? Or cheated? Or been unkind? Or taken something that was not theirs?

Explain, **These things (and many others) go against what God has written in the Bible. The Bible calls these things sin. Sin is doing what God says not to do or not doing what God says to do.**

Give an example of each type of sin (both doing something wrong and not doing something right). Remind the students that they looked at some of the consequences of sin (suffering, isolation and nastiness) two weeks ago.

Read Proverbs 5:22 and Hebrews 12:1b. Explain, **The Bible teaches that even things that seem like small sins to us can get us all tangled up and make a mess of our lives.**

OBJECT LESSON: DUCT TAPE

The point of this object lesson is that we cannot undo the effects of sin in our lives. Even a "small sin" affects us permanently.

Take a piece of duct tape, and wad it up into a ball. Give each student a ball of duct tape, and ask each one to undo the ball to make the tape flat and straight again. Tell them it must look exactly the same as when it started out.

Some students will have more success at this than others, but even if a student manages to undo the duct tape and make it completely flat again, it will be a sticky mess.

Explain that this is how sin is. Take another piece of tape, and each time you mention a sin, fold the tape in on itself. Say, **Sin traps us and gets us all tangled up. Perhaps you tell a lie, and you think, "It's just a little lie." But it has a consequence in your life.** (Fold the tape.) **Or maybe you shoved your little sister. You think that she deserved it, but God says it is wrong.** (Fold the tape.) **Maybe your parents ask you to help out with the dishes, and you make an excuse and don't help.** (Fold the tape.)

Explain that no matter how small the sin seems, it is another fold in the tape. Even if we are able to apologize and set things right with the other person, we are still covered in stickiness—we are still unclean before God who is totally perfect.

STORY OF JONAH

Tell students the story of Jonah. Allow one student to be Jonah and act out the story as a leader narrates it. Allow one or more students to be the sailors on the boat (give them paper marked "Boat to Tarshish"). Also consider having one to two students play the fish. Have the rest of the students pretend to be the people of Nineveh. Pause briefly after each paragraph to allow students to act out the story.

God instructs Jonah, a prophet of Israel, to go to the city of Nineveh and deliver a message of repentance (turn away from your wrong ways). **Nineveh was a powerful and wicked city, and God sought to warn its inhabitants of coming judgment.**

Instead of obeying God's command, Jonah attempts to flee in the opposite direction, boarding a ship bound for Tarshish. He hopes to escape the responsibility given to him by God.

God sends a great storm upon the sea in response to Jonah's disobedience. The sailors on the ship, realizing that the storm is a divine punishment, cast lots (similar to flipping a coin) **to identify the source of the trouble, and Jonah is revealed as the guilty party.**

In an effort to appease (calm) **the angry God, Jonah instructs the sailors to throw him overboard. Reluctantly, they comply, and the sea immediately calms.**

Instead of drowning, Jonah is swallowed by a large fish sent by God. Inside the belly of the fish, Jonah spends three days and three nights in prayer and reflection.

Recognizing the error of his ways, Jonah prays for forgiveness and expresses his commitment to fulfill God's original command. In response, God commands the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land.

Now obedient, Jonah goes to Nineveh and delivers God's message of coming judgment. Surprisingly, the people of Nineveh respond with genuine repentance, fasting, and seeking God's mercy.

Seeing the sincerity of Nineveh's repentance, God stops his plan to destroy Nineveh.

God demonstrated his compassion and mercy.

God teaches us a lesson about compassion and forgiveness. Through this story, God emphasizes his concern for all people and the importance of mercy.

Have students take a seat.

WRAP IT UP

Tell the students: **Our sin is a very big deal to God.**

The story of Jonah serves as a powerful illustration of God’s full control, mercy, and the call to obedience, as well as a reminder that God’s compassion extends to all, regardless of nationality or wrongdoing.

Explain, **Jonah had good reasons to be afraid and to run away from God. God pursued Jonah and gave him a second chance. That is one of the most amazing things about God—he gives us a chance to be forgiven and to start over. God can untangle our knots and make us clean even though we cannot.**

Note: If you spend more time in depth on Jonah in a large-group, then the small group will be shorter and vice versa.

Share 1 John 1:9 (today’s optional Bible verse). Explain what it means to confess our sins.

When we realize we have made a mess of our lives, we need to go to God and confess our sins with sorrow and ask for his forgiveness through Jesus.

(Optional) You may wish to play some Bible verse games to help the students remember the verse, if time allows.

Pray with the students, and dismiss them into small groups.