Blotches – Week two

Jonah 1-2

**Opening Activity**: Play a game of hide the thimble. Following the game talk about how the kids determined who had the thimble. Possible answers may be: someone started to smile, I saw them fidgeting, or someone looked at the person with the thimble. Through the discussion point out that even though they tried to hide the thimble, it eventually became apparent who had it.

**Story**:

Quickly review last week’s lesson on the origin of sin and God’s promise to send a King/Savior to take all sin.

Start off by telling a story about a time that you hide from a punishment or tell my story.

My story: As I was growing up, I was the type of kid that was often in trouble for fighting with my siblings. On this particular day I can not tell you what I had done to get in trouble but I can tell you about my ridiculous efforts to keep from getting punished. We lived basically in a 3 story house. The bottom floor was the church and school where my father was one of the pastors. The top floor was where my bedroom was along with my parent’s room, a bathroom, and an office. Like I said I don’t remember what I had done, but I know that I had disobeyed and that my father had sent me upstairs to my room to wait to receive my punishment. I don’t exactly know why my father did not follow me right up the stairs but seemed to take a long time in coming. That is when I came up with my ridiculous plan. As I sat waiting for my dreaded punishment I had already began to cry because I knew what was coming. I would not only get a good scolding, but also a real hard spanking. Just the anticipation of that moment was punishment enough. I was dreading it to the point that I decided to hide from my father! I figured if he didn’t see me in my room when he came upstairs maybe he would forget and the punishment would not be given. That is when I found myself gathering up the dirty clothes that were spread around my room, going to the closet, scrunching down, piling the clothes on top of me , and waiting, quietly for my father to come to my room. Needless to say, my actions did not cause my father to forget why he was there, nor did he forget my punishment. In fact, my actions made my punishment worse. To this day, I still can’t believe I was that dumb. Who did I think I was fooling??

Today we are going to talk about someone who tried to hide from God!

Jonah was a prophet of God, meaning that God used Jonah to tell people that they needed to repent of their sin or ask God to forgive them and then change their ways. God had given Jonah an assignment or job to do for a very evil or disobedient city called Nineveh. You see God was so upset by Nineveh’s sin that God was sending Jonah to tell them to either change their ways and follow God or be destroyed and separated from God forever.

When Jonah heard what God wanted him to do, Jonah thought, no way! Why should I warn them? They are too big of sinners.

Now, I have a question. When God tells you to do something, what should you do? If you don’t what is that called? To God is one sin worse than another? What is the punishment for one sin? (separation from God or death) What is the punishment for tons of sin? (the same thing-separation from God).

Back to Jonah. He thought no way! Why should I warn them? That is when he made a ridiculous decision to run from his Father God and hide.

Jonah decided that he was going to go the opposite way that God had said. Jonah got on a boat headed to Tarshish. His plan was to flee (or run) from the Lord (Jonah 1:3). As Jonah was on the ship God sent a violent storm. The storm was so fierce that the boat had the potential to fall apart. The sailors on the ship were afraid and were praying to their gods, throwing cargo overboard, doing everything they could out of fear of ending in the sea.

The men/sailors realized that this storm was not a normal storm but that a god must be angry with one of them. So they decided to cast lots to figure out who it was. Casting lots is like when you determine who will be it in a game of tag. Maybe you would draw straws and the short one is it, or maybe you do eeney meaney miney mo. The thing about casting lots is that you trust that god will cause the guilty party to be it! In this case, Jonah was IT!

The men asked Jonah lots of questions like where did he come from? What kind of job he did? What did he do to make God angry?

Jonah answered their questions saying he was a Hebrew, that he worshipped the God who made heaven and earth, and that he had run from God.

The storm was even more violent and the men were terrified. I can feel the tension as they asked one more question. What should we do with you?

Jonah had run from God. He was hiding in the ship. He had fallen a sleep thinking he was safe and that God would not know where he was, that God would forget all about him and the people of Ninevah. Who was Jonah fooling?

But God had not forgot. God knew where Jonah was. God made Jonah’s sin known by the sailors. Jonah had disobeyed God. He could not hide. Jonah knew that he was found. Jonah’s response to the men was “throw me overboard”!

The men hesitated not wanting to be guilty of causing Jonah to die in the sea. They tried to row to shore. They cried out to Jonah’s God. When all had failed, they picked Jonah up and threw him into the deep. I am sure Jonah thought this is it I am going to die.

God was not done with Jonah. God still wanted him to go to Ninevah. As Jonah fell down into the sea, God had a giant fish scoop Jonah up into his mouth and swallow him. For three days Jonah sat in the darkness of the fish’s belly. I am sure that as he sat he thought about his actions. He thought about how he had sinned by disobeying God. He thought about the consequence. I am sure he thought he would die in the belly of that fish all because he didn’t do what God wanted. I would imagine that Jonah felt guilt and shame. I am sure that Jonah didn’t want to die. Jonah 2:1-10, tells us a prayer that Jonah prayed. Jonah knew he had sinned. We know that Jonah knew that God was not pleased. Jonah knew that when he asked God to forgive him that God would forgive him.

God was not finished with Jonah. God showed that He forgave Jonah. God had the great fish vomit Jonah on the shore. God gave Jonah a second chance to obey. God again sent him to Ninevah.

You and I are really no different than Jonah. We try to hide from God our sin. We think you know if I pretend everything is okay, maybe God will forget. The Bible says in Numbers 32:23b “Be sure your sin will find you out”. What this verse is saying is that eventually God will bring the sin we are trying to hide out. God already knows our sin. He chooses to love us despite our sin. He still promised to send a King to take our sin. At some point we need to admit to God what we have done and trust God to forgive.

**Verse:** Numbers 32:23b

**Small Group questions**:

Where was your favorite place to hide when playing hide and seek?

What kind of things do people try to hide from each other? (mistakes they make, sometimes surprises, things they don’t like about themselves, things that embarrass them, the last piece of their favorite food)

What is sin?

Why do we try to hide our sin from God, other people and even ourselves? ( we are ashamed, embarrassed, feel guilty, we don’t want people to think bad about us, we don’t like to admit what we did, etc.,)

Even though we try to hide our sin from God, do we really? Why not?

Numbers 32:23b says, “Be sure your sin will find you out”. Have you ever done something you tried to hide, only to have it be found out?

How do we repent or make things right with God? Explain that to repent means to turn away from. Share how in life we can be headed towards something that is not right for us, but to repent means to turn away from that and start moving towards what is good for us.

**Activity**:

Build a word search using a free service like:

[www.puzzle-**make**r.com/WS/](http://www.puzzle-maker.com/WS/)

Sin Revealed Object lesson at kidssundayschool.com