

Children's Church Parent's Guide

For May 29, 2005

Passage Background

Key Passage: Nahum 2

Nahum 2 picks up where Nahum 1 leaves off. The entire 3 chapter book of Nahum reveals God's punishment against the city of Nineveh and the Assyrian empire as a whole. Chapter 2 reveals some of how God brought destruction to this supposedly impenetrable city.

God revealed this oracle to Nahum to show His justification for punishing the city. Approximately 100 to 150 years before, God had sent Jonah to redeem the city and the empire. Jonah eventually did go and after he began preaching, many in the city converted. However, over the span of time people went back to their old ways. As a result, God decided to deliver punishment to the Assyrians.

Talking about the destruction of a nation certainly isn't something that younger kids can handle. What you might concentrate on instead is how God's punishment is always justified. God is slow to anger, yet almighty in power. Tie this into a parent taking care of his or her child when the child is misbehaving.

Monday: Reinforcement

Theme: God's punishment is always justified.

Key Passage: Nahum 2

Bible Memory Verse: Psalm 2:11 - *Serve and honor the LORD; be glad and tremble.* (CEV)

The entire book of Nahum is a condemnation against Nineveh and the kingdom of Assyria. In chapter 2, God lays out how Nineveh will fall and describes some of the scenes as the city is taken. Nineveh was destroyed because of the evil of its people. Even though Nineveh had been saved some 100-150 years before its destruction, its people did what was evil in God's eyes.

Collect a few objects around the house representing various colors and shapes. Ask your child what color or shape each object is. Then when your child gives the correct answer, ask if it's a different color or shape. Play along with your child as he or she attempts to correct you.

Transition that into a discussion of right versus wrong. Talk about how certain things are always right where others are always wrong. Discuss a bit about how the Bible helps us identify right from wrong and it's a guidebook for us to follow. Then take a minute or two to talk about how our God is slow to anger but when He does act, He is fully justified. Close by talking about how when we sin against God we open ourselves up for his judgment and punishment on the issue (and others where we've been sinful).

Review the Bible memory verse with your child and help him or her repeat it several times.

Tuesday: The Real World

Theme: We all make mistakes. Are we willing to do better next time?

Key Passage: Luke 22:54-60

If your child doesn't know a whole lot about Peter, take a few minutes to talk about the kind of man Peter was. He was certainly the leader of Jesus' disciples, as is clear several times in Scripture. However, Peter was the type of man to say or do something without first thinking about it. He was extremely impulsive. Cover how Peter identified himself as a courageous and "manly" man and how this led to the claim that he would stand firm beside Jesus even if everyone else ran off.

Then paraphrase the verses for your child. Have your child count each time Peter does the opposite of what he promised. After you're done reciting the passage, talk about how Peter made a couple of mistakes: he made a promise he couldn't honor, and he didn't stand up and identify himself with Jesus. Spend a few moments reflecting on how Peter was much like the rest of us, fully capable of making mistakes. Then talk about how Peter changed and spoke boldly on the day of Pentecost and became the leader Christ envisioned all along. Explain that Peter overcame his mistakes because he wanted to serve God with all of his heart. Close by talking about how it's normal to make mistakes but we should try to do better each time. God doesn't expect perfection from us. If we were perfect, there would have been no need for Jesus.

Review the Bible verse with your child.

Wednesday: Missions Focus

Theme: We must show others God's ways.

Key Passage: Matthew 28:16-20

Paraphrase this passage to your child. Explain how Jesus is giving a charge to his disciples to go and spread the Gospel message. Explain how in the days of Jesus there were no telephones or televisions, or even radio. Take a moment to talk about how people had to carry messages from one town to another in order to communicate and share news. Discuss how this was the situation the early church found itself in.

Then talk about how the example of the apostles (including Paul) served to spread the Gospel far and wide. Re-read the passage to your child. Take some time to discuss how the apostles honored this command. Then close on the fact that this command to go and make disciples is still for us today.

Review the Bible verse. Your child should be able to say it with no more than one or two prompts from you as your child recites the verse.

Thursday: Personal Application

Theme: I must try and live a life worthy of Jesus.

Key Passage: Psalm 139

Read parts of this psalm to your child, revealing how God sees all of our actions and knows of all of what we're thinking. After you read each portion, ask your child what this tells us about God and how that impacts each one of us.

Then read the last two verses. Talk about how each Christian should want to be “audited by God” just as the psalmist asks for here. Explain how we look to God to keep us on track but that we still bear our own responsibility to do what is right. However, sometimes we lose sight of right and wrong and we need God to put us back on track. We can only do this if we're willing to let Him examine us and reveal to us where we're having issues. Close on how we make our choice on how to live life. We can choose to turn against God and risk forsaking everything He had intended for us, or we can choose to follow God and live a life worthy of Him.

Review the Bible verse. Your child should be able to say it without prompting from an adult.

Friday: Family Time

Theme: Families should study the Bible together.

Key Passage: 2 Timothy 1:3-7

Read or paraphrase the passage to your child. Explain that Timothy was a relatively young man, one who had traveled much with Paul, yet Paul had entrusted him with the care of a church. Look at Paul's own words about how greatly Timothy's mother and grandmother influence Timothy's spiritual growth.

Take some time to look over how you're doing as a family with studying the Bible both individually and together. If you're dissatisfied with either of these areas, discuss how as a family you might be able to improve. Then close in prayer, asking God to help you as a family stay together and study the Scriptures.

Have your child recite the memory verse. Provide prompts if necessary. When your child finishes reciting the verse, take the time to celebrate your child's hard work this week.