

The Big One

Supplies

Obtain and Prepare Before Class

- ♦ Tackle Box
- ♦ Fishing gear for Red Herring
- ♦ ¼ piece of paper for each child
- ♦ Pen or pencil for each child
- ♦ Ironing board or surfboard
- ♦ Bright color pieces of material or beach towel
- ♦ Rope similar to clothes line

Provided in the Kit

- ♦ Small tackle box
- ♦ Large wooden hook
- ♦ Plastic worm
- ♦ Cross
- ♦ Plastic minnow
- ♦ Piece of string
- ♦ Worm ball
- ♦ Inflatable shark

Bible Point

Tell your fish story.

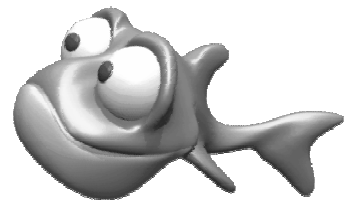
Bible Verse:

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Romans 10:14 (NLT)

Bible Passage

Stephen
Acts 6:8-15, 7:54-60



Overview

Sharing the Gospel with friends and family is not always easy. Today's lesson gives children tangible tools to use in telling others the salvation story.



Red Herring

(pp)

Supplies

- ♦ Fishing gear
- ♦ Life jacket

(Red comes in out of breath. He is extremely excited, talking wildly, waving arms as if telling a big story.)

You wouldn't believe what just happened to me. You aren't going to believe it. This, this (show the life jacket). . . unbelievable. Who would have thought it would happen to me? I was in the right place. I, I just don't know how it all happened. I still can't believe it happened.

(Takes a deep breath.) Ok, I need to slow down. You obviously don't know what I am talking about. Remember me? Red Herring, future world-class fisherman?

Today I was out in my boat fishing. I had gone to the bait store and found just the right bait I needed for the kind of fish I was fishing for. I researched the lake and found the right place to find fish. Everything was perfect. I even was thinking like a fish. I knew that it was hot so the fish would be in the cooler, shady spots. I threw my line in. I was sitting quietly, waiting for a bite at any moment.

Suddenly, I heard a yell. I couldn't see anybody. I figured I must have imagined the sound. So I went back to fishing. But then I heard it again. This time I was sure it was really a yell. Still as I looked around I didn't see anyone. I started up the motor on my boat and headed the direction of the yell. That is when I saw it. A man was out in the middle of the lake. His boat had tipped over. He didn't have a life jacket on. He was yelling, "Help me, somebody help me, I can't swim." This guy was about to drown! I got over to him as fast as I could and threw him an extra life jacket from my boat. Then I pulled the boat

over next to him and grabbed him. I fished him right out of the lake. What a catch! I saved his life.

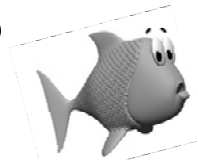
And then it occurred to me. When we tell people about Jesus and how He died on the cross for their sins we are throwing them a life jacket. We are giving them a chance to have life eternally. My dream has always been to be a world-class fisherman. But after thinking about it, I think I don't want to just fish for fish. I want to fish for men.



(pp)

Puppet Song

"John 3:16" from Scripture Rock by Brentwood Kids, 1997.



(pp)

Fish Story

Supplies

- ♦ ¼ piece of paper for each child
- ♦ Pen or pencil for each child

The Gospel Story
Acts 6:8-15, 7: 54-60

Stephen was a follower of Jesus. The bible describes him as "full of faith and power." He did great things among the people because of his faith. He truly loved Jesus. Because of this love for Jesus, He wanted others to know about Him. He wanted them to turn from their evil ways and follow God.

Stephen made enemies because of his desire to tell others about Jesus. They wanted him stopped. And they were willing to do evil things to stop him. These men secretly got other men to speak lies about Stephen. They accused him of things that he had not done. They seized him and brought him to the council. When the lies were spoken before the council, the men on the council looked at

Stephen and saw his face as the face of an angel.

Stephen began to speak. He talked of the history of Israel and how the people had been stubborn and how they had turned their backs on God. At the end of this long speech, he compared the men to the stubborn people of old.

This made the men very angry. The Bible tells us that they were cut to the heart and they gnashed at him with their teeth. They threw him out of the city. And then they picked up stones and threw them at him until he died.

Stephen was the first of Jesus' followers to die for his faith. Did you know that there are still many people today that die because they tell other people about Jesus? Those people live in countries that have laws that say you can not talk about Jesus with others. However, those of you here can talk freely about Jesus without worrying about being put to death.

You still may worry about stones being thrown at you. I am not talking about actual stones, but word stones. Or stones made up of hurtful actions of others. For instance, you may worry that if you tell others about Jesus that they will laugh at you. Or perhaps you worry that someone will no longer be your friend. What are some other things that people worry about when sharing their faith? (People will think they are strange, people will not believe, they will not have the right words to say, they will be asked questions they do not know.)

I am going to give each one of you a piece of paper and a pencil. I want you to write down on your paper what worries you about sharing the gospel of Christ with other people. Take your time doing this. If you do not know how to write the words, you may draw a picture. When you are finished, sit

quietly and think about what you have written.

Now, I want you to take your papers and crumple them up so that they look like a stone. I am going to pray and while I pray, you pray about the stone in your hand. Give this fear to God. Ask him to help you not worry about the stone.

(pp)



Prayer Time

Give the children time to pray about their stone. Ask God to give them the strength to overcome their fear.

If you are willing to give your fear to God, I want you to take your stone and throw it away. Throw it as far away from you as you can.

(You might want to designate a spot in the room to throw the stones toward.)

When you are tempted to pick up the stone and worry about it, ask God to help you leave it alone. He will give you the power to overcome your worry if you ask Him.

(pp)



Tackle Box

Supplies

- ♦ Tackle box
- ♦ Small tackle box
- ♦ Large wooden hook
- ♦ Plastic worm
- ♦ Cross
- ♦ Plastic minnow
- ♦ String

Preparation: Place the hook, worm, cross, minnow and fish line in the small tackle box.

Put the small tackle box in the larger one. If it will not fit, hide it behind the bigger tackle box.

Our Bible verse today says,

(pp) “But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?” Romans 10:14

We want people to be saved. But someone has to tell them about Jesus. Today, I am going to give you a tool to help you know what to say. We need to be ready when God gives us an opportunity to share His story with others.

Open up the tackle box and take out the smaller tackle box.

(pp) Hold up the hook. God created you and He loves you. He wants to hook you. However, you have to be willing to bite the hook. You have to make the decision to come to Him. He will not force you. Revelation 3:20 tells us “I stand at the door and knock.” Jesus knocks at the door of our heart.

(pp) Hold up the worm. Something stands in the way of us coming to Him. We have all sinned. Romans 3:23 says “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” We are all worms in that we have all sinned. The problem is that God cannot tolerate sin. Sin separates us from Him.

(pp) Hold up the cross. God made a way for us to be forgiven for our sin. John 3: 16 says “God so loved the world, that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life.” God sent his son Jesus into the world to take away our sin. Jesus, who was sinless, died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. Not only did Jesus die for your sins, but three days later he rose from the dead. He is alive today.

(pp) Hold up the minnow. **If I put a minnow on a hook it will not be long before a fish will come along and bite it.** (Hold up the hook like a J.) **When Jesus takes our sin, it is like putting a minnow on the hook. Before long a new creature is on the hook. That is exactly what happens. We become a new creation in Christ. He changes us. I John 1:9 says “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” His blood on the cross washes away all the sin in our hearts and we become pure, white as snow.**

(pp) Hold up the fishing string. **Once we are hooked to Jesus, He starts pulling us closer to God. Just like a fisherman pulls the fish in using the line, God is beckoning us to come closer. 2 Peter 3:18 tells us to “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” We need to do things like read our Bibles, pray, go to church and worship Him so that we will get closer to Him. We stay connected to Him by doing these things.**

Have the children make their own tackle boxes. There are directions in the craft time stretchers for making a tackle box if you do not want to buy them.



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Catch of the Day

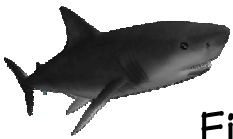
Supplies

♦ Worm ball

Form a circle (if you have a large group, you may want to form many circles). Throw the worm ball back and forth across the circle. When someone drops the worm ball, they sit down. Continue this until only one person is left standing. You can change the rules as you go: catch it with one hand, stand on one foot, but cannot hold it longer than three seconds, etc.

How did the worm ball feel? It was a little gooey feeling for some of you. Especially if you thought about worms really attached to this ball.

When you talk to people about Jesus, sometimes you have to talk to people that are not easy to talk to. It makes you feel like you did when you held the worm ball. But remember, that Jesus loves these people just as much as He loves you. And He wants them to go to heaven with Him just like He wants you there. If you are having particular trouble with someone, pray and ask God to bless that person. Take time each day to pray for him/her. Before long, you will find that you do not have as much trouble with the person.



Extreme Fishing Adventure

(PP) Supplies

- ♦ Inflatable shark
- ♦ Ironing board or surfboard
- ♦ Bright colored pieces of material or beach towel(s)
- ♦ Rope similar to clothes line

Preparation: Cover the ironing board with the material or beach towel. Set it on the floor flat, fix the rope so that it has a loop on the end big enough to go around the head of the shark

Did you know that there are people that fish for sharks on a surfboard?

Today, you get to try surfboard fishing. You will stand on the surfboard and try to lasso the shark with the rope.

Let the children take turns. If you are short on time, put them in teams and pick a couple of kids from each team to try it.

Do you think it would be hard to be on a real surfboard in the ocean? What about actually trying to fish off of it knowing there are sharks nearby? Is it a scary thought? Do you need to be well prepared before surfboard fishing? You have to pay close attention to your surroundings. You have to be skilled at staying on the surfboard. It is not something you would try without training.

In the same way, we should be prepared to tell the story of salvation. We should practice telling it so that we are ready. We should learn verses that help us tell the story so that we can tell them from memory. We should also know where these verses are in the Bible so we can look them up for people when we are telling them about salvation.

Make sure you are prepared!



Time Stretchers



Craft

Tackle Box

Supplies

- ♦ Empty egg carton
- ♦ Piece of poster board
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ Paint and paintbrush
- ♦ Glue gun
- ♦ Tackle: large wooden hook, plastic worm, cross, plastic minnow, string
- ♦ Copy of Scripture cards (page 8)

Cut out a handle from the poster board. Glue it to the top of the egg carton. Paint the egg carton (you may want to do this beforehand).

Put a piece of “tackle” in each slot. Use the Scripture card to help explain each piece of tackle.



Memory Verse

Supplies

- ♦ None

“But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?”

Romans 10:14 (NLT)

In small groups have the children make up motions to go with each phrase of the memory verse. After they practice their verse in their group, have them present it to everyone.



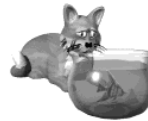
Game

Telling the Story

Supplies

- ♦ Tackle boxes the children created in the Tackle Box portion of the lesson

Instead of a game today, divide the kids into small groups. Have them take turns practicing telling the gospel story to the other kids. If you made tackle boxes, have the kids use these as they tell their stories.



Snack

Supplies

- ♦ Lifesavers®

As the kids eat the Lifesavers®, remind them of Red Herring’s story of the life jacket. Compare the lifesavers to a life preserver. When we tell people about Jesus, we are throwing them a life preserver.

Red Herring

(Red comes in out of breath. He is extremely excited, talking wildly, waving arms as if telling a big story.)

You wouldn't believe what just happened to me. You aren't going to believe it. This, this (show the life jacket). . . unbelievable. Who would have thought it would happen to me? I was in the right place. I, I just don't know how it all happened. I still can't believe it happened.

(Takes a deep breath.) Ok, I need to slow down. You obviously don't know what I am talking about. Remember me? Red Herring, future world-class fisherman?

Today, I was out in my boat fishing. I had gone to the bait store and found just the right bait I needed for the kind of fish I was fishing for. I researched the lake and found the right place to find fish. Everything was perfect. I even was thinking like a fish. I knew that it was hot so the fish would be in the cooler, shady spots. I threw my line in. I was sitting quietly, waiting for a bite at any moment.

Suddenly, I heard a yell. I couldn't see anybody. I figured I must have imagined the sound. So I went back to fishing. But then I heard it again. This time I was sure it was really a yell. Still as I looked around I didn't see anyone. I started up the motor on my boat and headed the direction of the yell. That is when I saw it. A man was out in the middle of the lake. His boat had tipped over. He didn't have a life jacket on. He was yelling, "Help me, somebody help me, I can't swim." This guy was about to drown! I got over to him as fast as I could and threw him an extra life jacket from my boat. Then I pulled the boat over next to him and grabbed him. I fished him right out of the lake. What a catch! I saved his life.

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Tackle Box Scripture Cards

"But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?" Romans 10:14

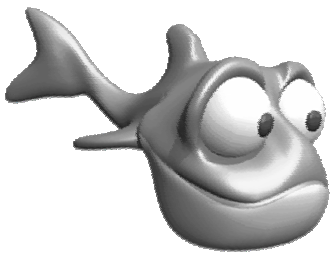
"I stand at the door and knock."
Revelation 3:20

"For all have sinned and fall short
of the glory of God."
Romans 3:23

"God so loved the world, that he
gave his only son that whoever
believes in him will not perish but
have everlasting life."
John 3: 16

"If we confess our sins, he is
faithful and just and will forgive us
our sins and purify us from all
unrighteousness."
I John 1:9

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of
our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
2 Peter 3:18



Together Time

Bible Point

Tell your fish story.

Bible Verse

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?
Romans 10:14 (NLT)

Bible Story

Stephen
Acts 6:8-15, 7: 54-60



Family Discussion

- ⚓ Practice telling each other about Jesus using the tackle box.

Family Fun

- ⚓ Go fishing! If weather doesn't permit, find a place that sells fish and have a fish fry.



Sharing the Gospel with friends and family is not always easy. Giving children objects to help them remember parts of the salvation message will make it easier. Today we talked about sharing the Gospel message. We used: a (wooden) hook because God loves us but we have to "bite the hook", a worm because we are all sinners, a cross because God made a way for us to come to him, a minnow because we put a minnow on a hook and before long a new creature is on the hook, when we accept Christ we become a new creation, and fish line because God draws us closer and closer to him by reading our Bible, prayer, going to church etc.