



JONAH

WEEK 1 - GOD'S PLANS ARE WRECKING MINE

ICEBREAKER (Start Talking)

Think of a time when you needed directions but tried to go without. How did that experience go?

SUMMARY

We often want to hear from God and know His will, but sometimes we don't want to do what He says. Through Jonah's story, we will see that obedience to God isn't always easy, but disobedience always has consequences.

READ (Start Sharing)

Jonah 1:3 says that “Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish.”

God had a calling for Jonah that did not match up with Jonah's expectations for his own life. **Why do you think Jonah chose to run from God? Has there been a time that you "ran" from God's instructions? How did that turn out? In what ways are your plans and God's plans often different?**

READ (Start Sharing)

In *Jonah 1:4-5*, it speaks about a “violent storm” that threatened to break apart the very ship that Jonah tried to flee on. Disobedience often initiates a chain reaction of negative consequences, affecting our spiritual, emotional, and sometimes physical well-being. However, God's grace is powerful enough to reach us even at our lowest points. “Storms” in our lives can serve as wake-up calls, drawing our attention back to God and His will. His love pursues us relentlessly, offering hope and restoration when we turn back to Him. **Share a time when your disobedience led to consequences in your life. Or share how you've observed this in someone else's life, but do not share their names. How did God's grace help turn things around?**

READ (Start Sharing)

Procrastination in “listening to God” can slow down our growth and stop God from working through us as well as He could. When we obey God right away, it shows we trust His wisdom and timing. Obeying God immediately helps us grow spiritually and allows God to use us more effectively. Remember, “Delayed obedience is disobedience.” **What area of your life might God be calling you to immediate obedience? How can we better cultivate a spirit of “quick response” to God's voice?** (Examples: Read the Bible often, listen carefully when we pray, spend time with other believers who encourage us to obey God)

READ (Start Sharing)

In *Jonah 1:15-16*, the men throw Jonah off of the boat, and are in awe of God’s power to calm a tremendous storm, in an instant.

God's power goes beyond controlling nature - it can make a real difference in our everyday lives. When we're dealing with worry, arguments, or uncertainty, God has the ability to bring calm to these stormy situations. When we share the stories of God overcoming or getting us through the storms of life, we're building a community where people can be amazed by God together. It's comforting to know that we have such a powerful God who is always there to support us when things get tough. **How has God demonstrated His power in your life, turning chaos into calm? How can we grow in our awe and worship of such a mighty God?**

(Examples: Think about the amazing things God’s done, read about His powerful acts in the Bible, share our experiences with others, etc.)

WHAT WILL YOU DO (Start Doing)

- Find one way to stop rationalizing sin and running from God. **Be ready to talk about it with your Small Group next week.**
- Consider how you could show God’s love to others by volunteering on a Sunday, or with one of our Ministry partner organizations!

CLOSE IN PRAYER (Start Praying)

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your grace toward us and always giving us a second chance. Please show us what You want us to do and give us the courage and boldness to do it. In Jesus’ name, amen.



JONAH

WEEK 2 - WHEN YOU'RE WAITING ON GOD

ICEBREAKER (Start Talking)

What are your initial thoughts or feelings about prayer?

SUMMARY

Sometimes what we call a problem, God calls provision. God's provision often comes in unexpected forms. Jonah fled God's calling, went onto a ship, into a storm, thrown overboard the ship, to be swallowed by a fish! What we perceive as problems might actually be God's way of guiding us back to His path. This perspective shift can transform our approach to life's challenges. **Can you think of a time when something that seemed like a problem turned out to be God's way of helping you? How did this change your perspective on challenges?**

READ (Start Sharing)

While Jonah was in the "fish" there was almost nothing he could do to escape the situation. Just because Jonah was helpless didn't mean he was hopeless. Feeling helpless doesn't mean we're without hope. In our darkest moments, when we can't see a way out, God is still there, ready to listen and respond to our prayers. *James 5:13* reminds us that prayer and praise should be our first response in times of trouble. **When have you felt helpless but found hope in God? Talk about any ways you're currently waiting on God. In this waiting, what might God be trying to show you, and how can you respond with prayer and praise?**

READ (Start Sharing)

God's Word is a powerful tool in our prayer life. When we're at a loss for words, praying Scripture can help us express our hearts and align our thoughts with God's truth. Reading and praying God's Word daily can deepen our connection with God and strengthen our faith.

In his most dire situation, Jonah prayed using words from the Psalms (*Jonah 2:3-9*). **How can praying God's Word help us when we're not sure what to say? Can you share a Bible verse that has been meaningful in your prayer life?**

READ (Start Sharing)

While you're waiting, God's still working. God's timing is perfect, even when it doesn't align with our expectations. During periods of waiting, it's crucial to remember that God is actively working behind the scenes. This understanding can help us maintain faith and patience in challenging times. **What are some ways we stay hopeful and keep trusting God even when we don't see immediate answers to our prayers?**

(Examples: Reacting to setbacks or obstacles with hope and faith that God will turn things around.)

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- From Week 1: Share an area where you stopped running from God and started running to Him.
- It's time to pray! This week, find one way to make prayer a more regular part of your routine. Share with your group!
- Consider how you could show God's love to others by volunteering on a Sunday, or for Easter weekend!

CLOSE IN PRAYER (Start Praying)

Lord, thank You for Your faithful love and for Your presence. If there is anything You want to reveal to us, or somewhere we need to change direction, please make it clear. Please help us to trust You, and to believe that You're working even in our waiting. In Jesus' name, amen.



JONAH

WEEK 3 - GOD'S NOT DONE WITH YOU

ICEBREAKER (Start Talking)

Have you ever given an activity or food a second chance, after first disliking it? How did it go?

SUMMARY

We have all messed up and disobeyed God, but the good news is that God gives us a second chance. He calls us to repent, turn away from our sins, and turn toward Him.

READ (Start Sharing)

In *Jonah 3:1* it says “*Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time...*”

Even after Jonah disobeyed, God still gave him a chance to make things right. God's grace is boundless, offering us fresh starts no matter how far we've strayed. This truth is woven throughout Scripture, reminding us that our mistakes don't define us in God's eyes. Embracing God's forgiveness allows us to move forward with renewed purpose and hope. The Bible is full of stories about second chances. **What is God trying to show you? Is there a sin He wants to save you from, or an opportunity He's calling you to explore?**

READ (Start Sharing)

In *Jonah 3:3*, “*Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh...*” Every chance from God demands a choice from you. God continually presents us with opportunities to align our lives with His will. These moments of choice are invitations to grow in faith and obedience. Recognizing and responding to these divine nudges can lead to true transformation. **What are some ways we can be more aware of the chances God gives us and make good choices in response?**

(Examples: When you get multiple promptings from the Spirit to share your faith with a certain person, or to bless someone randomly.)

READ (Start Sharing)

Isaiah 30:18 says, "Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion." Believing in God's existence is different from trusting in His character and promises. True faith goes beyond mere acknowledgment to a deep reliance on God's goodness and faithfulness. *Isaiah 30:18* reveals God's eagerness to show us grace, inviting us into a relationship of trust and dependence.

In your heart and mind, have you made the shift to trusting in God rather than just believing in Him? What does this look like on a day-to-day basis?

READ (Start Sharing)

Jonah's message was short and simple, but it made a lot of people change their ways. "*Forty more days and Nineveh will be destroyed.*" (*Jonah 3:4*)

God's message can sometimes push us to do things that make us uncomfortable, like sharing His truth with others. Even when we feel scared or not good enough, God can use our obedience to make big changes happen. We see this in Jonah's story when he went to Nineveh, even though he didn't want to. **Can you think of a time when you did something small for God, but it ended up having a bigger effect than you thought it would? What is one way you can boldly share God's love and truth this week?**

READ (Start Sharing)

Read *Philippians 4:6-7*. The Bible encourages us to bring our worries to God in prayer, promising that when we do, we'll experience a peace that goes beyond human understanding. **Have you ever felt this kind of peace during tough times? How can we practice bringing our worries to God more often?**

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- Think about someone in your life who could use a "second chance" in life. Pray for them, and consider inviting them to church!
- Will you keep meeting as a group for the next Series? Discuss with your Small Group your plans.

CLOSE IN PRAYER (Start Praying)

God, thank You for Your patience and mercy toward us. Help us to see the second chances You've given us. Please help us to see what our next steps are and give us the boldness to take them. In Jesus' name, amen.



JONAH

WEEK 4 - WHEN YOUR EMOTIONS ARE OUT OF CONTROL

ICEBREAKER (Start Talking)

What is one of your pet peeves—a small thing that makes you mad?

SUMMARY

It's easy to celebrate God's blessings when they happen on your terms. But what about when He doesn't respond the way you think He should? When we have a bad attitude, it damages our relationships with God and the people in our lives.

READ (Start Sharing)

In *Jonah 4:5*, says “*Jonah sat down east of the city, symbolizing turning away from God.*”

Turning away from God often happens when we're disappointed or frustrated. However, God remains constant even when we struggle with our faith. By staying connected to God through prayer and God's Word, we can maintain our relationship with Him even in difficult times. **Have you ever felt like turning your back on God when things didn't go your way? How can we commit to “facing God” even in difficult times?**

READ (Start Sharing)

Some of us might look at Jonah and say, "How can he be so stubborn?" If God asked you to be loving towards someone who doesn't share the same views as you, would you obey? God desires not just our obedience, but also our heart alignment with His will, especially when we need to surrender our own views. It's easy to go through the motions without truly embracing God's purpose. Our actions become more meaningful and impactful when we align our hearts with God's. **Have you ever found yourself doing the right thing but with the wrong attitude? How can we align our hearts with God's when we're obeying Him?**

READ (Start Sharing)

Jonah seemed to have “mood swings,” from obeying God to being angry with Him. Our relationship with God can be complex, involving a range of emotions. It's normal to experience ups and downs in our faith journey. God welcomes our honesty and wants us to bring all our feelings to Him, even when they're difficult or confusing.

How do you typically deal with difficult emotions? Do you first turn to God, or to others first? Is it easy for you to be candid and honest with God when you pray?

READ (Start Sharing)

Jonah knew that *"Our God is a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love."* (Jonah 4:2)

Understanding God's character provides a solid foundation for our faith, especially during challenging times. His consistent love and compassion can inspire us to extend the same grace to others, even when it's difficult. **How does knowing God's character help us when we're struggling or feeling far from Him? How can we show this kind of love to others?**

WHAT WILL YOU DO (Start Doing)

- God often highlights a certain area in our life where we need to “turn our hearts” towards Him and surrender to His perfect plan even if we can't see the full picture yet. Is there any area God is calling you to do this? Share with the group and commit to confidentially pray for one another.
- Pay attention to where God is giving you second chances this week. Talk about some of the biggest lessons learned with your group.

CLOSE IN PRAYER (Start Praying)

Lord, thank You for always giving us second chances. We trust Your will and Your plan, even when it's different from what we want. Please help us to keep our emotions under control so that we can love You and others well. In Jesus' name, amen.