



Week 1  
Discipleship Study  
Questions



# Jonah

Jonah isn't just a prophet on the run — he's a faithful insider whose vision of God is too small. He loves grace when it benefits him, but resists grace when it reaches those he believes deserve judgment. In a culture marked by tribalism, fear, and moral superiority, Jonah confronts the church with a searching question: do we love God's mercy, or only the version of God that supports our identity and comfort?

This series invites the church to examine:

- How we define who deserves grace
- How we respond when God forgives those we resent
- How our theology of justice, mercy, and mission shapes our hearts
- Whether our faith reflects God's compassion or our own boundaries

Jonah confronts a faith that loves grace when it saves us, but resists grace when it saves others. God's unanswered question still echoes today: **“Should I not care about that great city?”**

## Read the Scripture:

*Individual:* Read the passage from two or three different translations.

*Group:* Have two different group members read the passage using different Bible translations.

## Speak the Scripture:

*Individual:* Recite the story aloud from memory (as best you can) or tell it to a friend or family member. The goal here is to get the essence of the passage in your heart.

*Group:* Have someone volunteer to recite the passage aloud in their own words, as best they can.

## Understand the Scripture:

*Individual or Group:* Use the Discovery Questions to help ensure you understand the passage.

## Dig Deeper into the Scripture:

*Individual:* Work through the Digging Deeper questions and pray about what God reveals to you through His word. Discuss with a Christian friend or family member if you choose.

*Group:* Work through the Digging Deeper questions as a group, celebrating the work God is already doing in each person's life, and encouraging each other to trust Him in the places that need growth.

# Small Group Guidelines

## **This is a Safe Group**

Confidentiality is key—what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware of how you are affecting the environment with your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

## **No Crosstalk**

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, phone time, texting etc.

## **Listen**

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

## **No Rescuing or Fixing**

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

## **Use "I" Statements**

It's easy to talk about the issues of others, or respond with "we," "us," or "the church," but for us to grow as disciples and build relationships, we want to use "I" statements.

## **Don't Over-Talk**

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

## **Fight for Relationship**

It's not if conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but when. We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to the person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

## Week 1

**Background:** The book of Jonah begins with a familiar pattern: God speaks, and a prophet responds—but not in the way we expect. Instead of obedience, Jonah runs. This chapter sets the stage for a story that challenges our assumptions about obedience, mercy, and what it means to truly follow the Lord.

**Read:** *Jonah 1*

### **Discovery Questions:**

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What do we learn about what it means to be a follower of Christ in this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit might be teaching you personally through this passage?

Is there anything God is leading you to do after reading this passage?

### **Digging Deeper:**

What is God's command to Jonah, and how does Jonah respond? What details in the text emphasize the direction Jonah chooses to go?

When Jonah finally speaks in verses 9–10, how does he describe himself and God? What is true about his confession?

By the end of chapter 1, who appears to be responding rightly to God—and how does that challenge our expectations?

Jonah is clearly running from God's command. According to the text, what does "running from the Lord" actually look like in practice?

What does this chapter teach us about God's character, especially in how He deals with Jonah?

### **End this time with a prayer.**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for your patience and pursuit of us, even when we run from you. Show us the places where we are resistant to you – maybe not openly, but in our own hearts,*

*the places we avoid or disengage. Give us the courage to name those places and not to run away from them, but to face them. Replace the bitterness in our hearts with Your mercy and give us the eyes to see those around us as You see them – especially those who are so, so different from us. In Jesus' name, Amen.*