

STUDY NOTES

JONAH

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Sailing in the Storms of Our Sin” on 11/4/18 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: JONAH 1 (READ THROUGHOUT)

RUNNING FROM GOD’S WILL

Read Jonah 1:1-3. Jonah, who was a prophet in Israel, was clearly told by God to go to the Assyrian city of Ninevah. Ninevah was hostile toward Israel, so Jonah didn’t want to go. He thought that God must have gotten it wrong. Jonah decided to deliberately go the opposite direction as to where God called him to go.

- *What has been your experience with running from God?*

We are much like Jonah. When we cannot find a good reason for what God says in his word, we assume there are not any reasons. We run from the purposes of God, especially when they require sacrifice from us, or when we don’t understand why God would call us to difficulty. Just like Jonah, we have God’s will clearly revealed to us.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Fleeing God’s word = Fleeing God’s will

- *God’s word has God’s will for you revealed in it. Why do you view running from God’s word as seriously as Jonah running?*
- *What’s the biggest reason why you run from God’s word?*

SIN AND THE STORM

Read Jonah 1:4-6. Jonah was deliberately disobeying God, so God brought a large storm over the sea. For us today, the point must be made that every sin leads to some difficulty, but NOT every difficulty is a result of sin. Jesus’s own life was filled with difficulty, but He never sinned. Back to Jonah. Even the seasoned mariners were afraid of this storm, but Jonah just slept in the bottom of the boat. Jonah had both an active approach to sin and a passive approach. He ran from God and he slept in his sin.

- *Why is it important to make it clear that not every storm is a result of someone’s sin?*
- *In your experience, how does sin always bring a storm?*
- *What can you do to see where in your life you might be actively sinning or passively sinning?*

WHERE IS YOUR IDENTITY?

Read Jonah 1:7-17. When the mariners asked Jonah who he was, he responded by saying, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” The first thing that Jonah says about his identity is regarding his race and ethnicity—not regarding his identity with God.

If you are a Christian, Jesus must define your identity before race, ethnicity, country, or party.

- *If Jonah defined himself according to his identity with God first, how might this story be different?*
- *In your own ways, where do you need to repent—to turn from one thing to another—for pushing your identity in God down on your list of identities?*
- *Pray with each other to have the strength to repent when you need to repent.*