

See Jonah...See Jonah Run

NOWHERE TO RUN

Jonah 1:1-17

GROWN UP LESSONS FROM A CHILDREN'S STORY:

Jonah 1:1-17, Psalms 139:7-12, Matthew 12:39-40, Luke 11:29-32, 2 Timothy 3:16

- ▶ God's Word is **just as clear** to us as it was to Jonah.
- ▶ A **wide open door** may not be from **God**.
- ▶ It's hard to **call out** to a God you're **running from**.
- ▶ Our **disobedience** can affect everyone in the **boat**.
- ▶ When obedience is a **last resort**, we tend to **lose our cargo**.
- ▶ **Surrender** comes before **salvation**.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 10, 2009

QUICK REVIEW – Take a look back over your sermon notes and reflect on the story of Jonah. Was there a particular point or passage of Scripture that challenged, confused or caught your attention?

MY STORY

1. This week Chris gave us a front row seat to watch Jonah running from God and what God was asking him to do. What are some of the reasons people run from God and His plan today?

Can you think of a time when you ran from or resisted God?

2. Having compassion means we are sympathetic and willing to step in and help others in the midst of their pain or struggles. Jonah didn't have much compassion for the Ninevites and he probably had a list of reasons why. Can you identify any influences from your past or present that have either grown or diminished your compassion for others?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. When you think of the life of Moses you might remember him as a phenomenal leader, but when you read about his first steps with God, they look a little like Jonah's. Although he didn't run from God, he sure did try to talk himself out of following God's direction. Read the following passages and in your own words, list each of Moses' excuses along with God's response to each one.

Exodus 3:11-12

But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

[12] And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain." [NIV]

Exodus 4:1-5

Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you'?"

[2] Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?"

"A staff," he replied.

[3] The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground."

Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. [4] Then the Lord said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. [5] "This," said the Lord, "is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has appeared to you." [NIV]

Exodus 4:10-11

Moses said to the Lord, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

[11] The Lord said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? [NIV]

Exodus 4:13-16

But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it."

[14] Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. [15] You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. [16] He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. [NIV]

Jesus gave each one of us the mission of following Him and being "salt & light" to the world around us. In response to that calling, can you relate with any of Moses' excuses?

Do any of God's responses to Moses give you hope or courage in your calling?

2. Many of us can understand where Jonah was coming from in his dislike for the Ninevites. Jesus knew we would struggle with enemies too, and some of the toughest teaching in the Bible is directed at our response to people we just don't like. What does Colossians 3:12-14 have to say about our attitude and behavior toward those who rub us the wrong way?

Colossians 3:12-14

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. [13] Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. [14] And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. [NIV]

Which one of the actions or attitudes that Paul listed in this passage would you want a friend to remind you about when you are struggling with loving your enemies?

3. Surrendering is something we often try to avoid because it typically follows close on the heels of weakness, loss or failure. Chris showed us a new perspective this weekend and taught us that surrender is essential to a healthy relationship with God. Read the following verses and jot down how you see strength being displayed in the midst of weakness and surrender.

(John 13:12-15, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Luke 22:39-42)

John 13:12-15

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. [13] "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. [14] Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. [15] I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. [NIV]

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. [10] That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. [NIV]

Luke 22:39-42

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. [40] On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." [41] He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, [42] "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." [NIV]

Can you think of any modern-day examples where a weakness can become an opportunity for God to show His strength?

TAKING IT HOME

Sometimes it's hard for us to understand how Jonah could run from God's clear instructions. God has been clear with us as well. We have full access to His Word and the promise that He would help us understand it (John 14:26). Can you think of a command that you are running from or an instruction that you need to run towards?

Prayer Requests

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