

## YOU CAN RUN BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE

### Jonah's Fishy Story

Jonah 1-3/ 2 Kings 14:25/ Matthew 12:39/ Nahum 1-3 / Deuteronomy 29:29

- (1) If we fixate on the **fish**, we'll miss the **elephant**.
- (2) This is a story about disobeying God's **clear** instructions.

### What To Expect When We Say, "NO" To God's Clear Instructions

- (1) Expect a **storm**.  
Jonah 1:4/ 1 Peter 4:17-18/ Hebrews 12:5-11/ Proverbs 3:11-12
- (2) Expect to put others in **danger**.  
Jonah 1:5-15/ Joshua 7:1-12/ 2 Samuel 12:7-10/ 1 Chronicles 21:1-19
- (3) Expect a **fish**.  
Jonah 1:15-17
- (4) Expect the **same assignment**.  
Jonah 2:9-10, 3:1-2/ Romans 11:29

# **Growth Group Homework**

For the week of April 1, 2012

---

## **Welcome to the Spring Quarter of Growth Groups!**

This week we kick off our Spring Growth Group quarter. Your first meeting will most likely include a potluck dinner, time to get acquainted with any new members, as well as time to discuss the Growth Group Covenant. The homework has been shortened this week to allow ample time to accomplish each of these.

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great first meeting as you come together to connect and encourage one another to grow and to see God change our lives from the inside out!

---

## **MY STORY**

1. If you could choose one food to have zero calories (which means you could eat all the time), what would you choose?

2. This week we had a front row seat to watch Jonah running from God and the assignment he had for him. Can you think of any reasons why people run from God and his plan today?

Can you think of a time when you ran from God or resisted one of his clear instructions? If so, what happened?

3. Looking back at your notes from “*You Can Run But You Can’t Hide*,” was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. Jonah had good reasons for not liking the Ninevites. We also encounter people who we have good reasons not to like, but just like Jonah, God wants us to show them compassion and seek out their good. What does Luke 6:27-36 have to say about our attitude and behavior toward our “enemies” or those we don’t like?

### **Luke 6:27-36**

"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, [28] bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. [29] If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. [30] Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. [31] Do to others as you would have them do to you.

[32] "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. [33] And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. [34] And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. [35] But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. [36] Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. [NIV]

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

2. Larry said this weekend that God has called all of his followers to the often challenging assignment of obeying him. Joshua received the challenging assignment of taking over for Moses in leading the Israelites into the Promised Land. What words of encouragement do Moses and God give to Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:7-8 and Joshua 1:6-9 that you think could also help others deal with their fears of doing what God wants them to do?

### **Deuteronomy 31:7-8**

Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their forefathers to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. [8] The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." [NIV]

### **Joshua 1:6-9**

"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. [7] Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. [8] Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. [9] Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." [NIV]

Jesus tells us that he will be with us always in Matthew 28:19-20. How could the ongoing knowledge of God's constant presence make a difference in our attitude or actions toward obedience?

### **Matthew 28:19-20**

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [NIV]

### **TAKING IT HOME**

1. 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. Can you think of a command that you are running from or an instruction that you need to run toward?

2. As we begin a new Growth Group quarter, what are one or two things you're looking forward to?

## **THE PURPOSE OF GROWTH GROUPS**

Growth Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here's how it will happen:

### **SHARE**

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as we feel more comfortable.

### **STUDY**

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

### **SUPPORT**

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

### **SERVE**

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve and make a difference in God's Kingdom.