

Small Group Bible Study

Jonah Week 3

Theme: Learning to stop running and to cry out to God in surrender

Main Idea: In the belly of the fish Jonah finally stopped running and called out to God. Sometimes it takes hitting the end of ourselves to remember that God is our only hope.

Opening Prayer

Lord, slow us down. Help us see where we have been running from you or trying to control our circumstances. Open our hearts to receive your truth and give us courage to trust you again. Amen.

Icebreaker Question

- What is a moment when you realized you were not in control of a situation? How did you respond in that moment?

Scripture Reading

Read Jonah 2:1 through 10 together

- What stands out to you most from Jonah's prayer?
- Where do you see a shift in Jonah's attitude compared to chapter one?
- Jonah describes sinking, darkness, and entanglement. How does that imagery relate to what running from God can feel like in our lives?
- In verse 7 Jonah says he remembered the Lord. What do you think it means to return to God with your heart, not just your words?
- Jonah recognizes that salvation comes from the Lord. Why do you think it often takes reaching the bottom before we admit that?
- What do you notice about God's response to Jonah? What does that reveal about God's character?

Read Matthew 5:3 and Psalm 34:17 - 18

- What do you think it means to be "poor in spirit"?
- How does being at the end of yourself create an opening for God to work?
- Jonah was helpless, yet that became the place of surrender. Can you recall a moment when hitting bottom pushed you back toward God?
- Why is dependency on God so uncomfortable for us, yet deeply necessary?
- What might it look like to live with a posture of humility and dependence, not just in crisis but in daily life?

Teaching Reflection

Jonah ran hard. He resisted God's call and chose his own way. But running brought him to a place of exhaustion, darkness, and helplessness. It was only when Jonah stopped fighting and cried out to God that he experienced rescue.

Many of us know this place. We know the cold and dark feeling of relying on ourselves or resisting what God is asking.

Jonah's story teaches us that **the way out is surrender**. Not striving. Not performing. Not proving. Surrender.

Sermon Recap Questions

- Where in your life have you been running instead of following?
- What might your own "belly of the fish" moment look like right now?
- How have you tried to control an area of your life instead of submitting it to God?
- Where might God be inviting you to cry out to him honestly?

Application Questions

- What would it look like this week to follow God as if your life depended on it?
- What would it look like to submit to God as if your life depended on it?
- What would it look like to love God as if your life depended on it?

Pick one of the three and write one practical step for the next seven days.

Closing Prayer

Lord, teach us to stop running. Teach us to trust you. Remind us that you rescue us, not because we have everything figured out, but because you are good. Lead us this week to follow, submit, and love you with renewed devotion. Amen.