

HANDOUT

Session 1: Jonah 1:1-3

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

As you listened to Eric Mason, what made an impression on you? What stood out?

What did Eric key in on as the main focus of this passage, and as the running theme for the book of Jonah?

What did you learn about Israel and Nineveh at the time of Jonah's life? How did Eric describe each nation?

According to verse 2, what purpose did God have for sending Jonah to Nineveh? What does this tell us about God?

How does Jonah respond to God's call?

What does Jonah's response reveal about the character of his heart?

Who are the "unlovables" in our lives?

What do we reveal about ourselves when we fail to love the "unlovables" in our lives the way God has loved us?

What are some of the personal beliefs that can govern our theology if we are not careful?

As you think about the life of Jesus, what are some examples of His compassion that come to mind?

What keeps you from seeing the lost like Jesus?

Who is God calling you to show compassion toward today? What is behind your theology that keeps it from becoming faithful obedience?

HANDOUT

Session 1: Jonah 1:1-3

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: Before you start each day this week, stop and ask God to give you the boldness to love those who feel unlovable in your life.

Encouragement: Identify someone struggling with an area of life where God has called him or her to challenging obedience. Be intentional about making time to speak words of hope and comfort to them to build them up in bold obedience.

Confession: If you find yourself in a similar season of running from God like Jonah, seek out a believer you trust and talk to them about your struggles. Do so anticipating the kindness and mercy of God extended to you in Jesus Christ.

Journaling: Each evening this week, take a few moments to reflect on your day and write out three ways you responded to circumstances that stood out to you, good or bad.

Worship: Think back on your life and list out some of the significant times God has called you out of comfort and into fruitful obedience. As you go about your week, make time to intentionally thank Him through song, prayer, and praise.

HANDOUT

Session 2: Jonah 1:4-6

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

What stood out to you from this session? Did Eric say anything that specifically struck you?

How do Jonah's actions demonstrate what Eric called a "demotion" as the prophet ran from God?

How have you seen the connection between the physical and spiritual illustrated in your own life or that of others?

What does God's willingness to intervene in our idolatry teach us about His character?

What are some examples of things that compete with God's call for our attention?

What has God broken up in your life to draw you back to Himself? What might He be breaking up today for your good?

How does one "wake up" spiritually?

What does ignoring God's wake up call lead to?

How does the idea of God breaking up the things we place our confidence in sit with you?

What storms are you facing? What is God breaking apart to wake you spiritually?

How does the example of Jesus contrast with that of Jonah?

How should Jesus' model of perseverance encourage us to remain faithful in the storms we face today?

HANDOUT

Session 2: Jonah 1:4-6

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: Whether or not God is confronting self-centeredness in your life, ask Him to shape your heart to see His interruptions as blessings.

Listen: Identify two or three mature Christians and ask to spend time connecting with them. Ask about the ways God has interrupted their lives for spiritual maturity and let their testimonies encourage you onward.

Perspective: As you go about your week, pay attention to the interruptions to your routine. Make a conscious effort to view them as God-given opportunities to grow in your faith.

Draw: What comes to mind when you think of the words “asleep” and “awake”? Create a visual image that best represents your understanding of how God has woken you from spiritual slumber.

Memorize: Commit Ephesians 5:14 to memory with the prayer that God would awaken you spiritually wherever needed.

HANDOUT

Session 3: Jonah 1:7–16

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

How has God been using the book of Jonah in your life over these last two weeks? Where are you feeling convicted to grow? In what ways have you felt encouraged to live differently?

What are some of the ways Jonah 1:7–16 contrasts Jonah's character with that of the sailors?

What does the scene with the sailors casting lots teach you about God? How does it reveal His sovereignty?

Why is it important that our lives actively reflect what we believe?

How have you worked to make the connection between belief and action in your own life? Where could you improve?

What are the consequences for failing to make that connection? How does Jonah's story teach us the ways in which our disobedience affects others?

What are some adjectives you would use to describe Jonah's inner life according to 1:10–16?

In contrast to Jonah, how do the sailors respond?

What does this passage teach us about the importance of repentance?

What does this passage teach us about the character of God?

How have you seen God interrupt your life to draw you to Him?

HANDOUT

Session 3: Jonah 1:7–16

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: Invite God to bring to the surface those areas of your heart where you are resisting His desires for your life. Make that the central theme of your prayer throughout the coming week.

List: Review Jonah 1:7–16 and list out the contrasting character traits covered in the session. Over the next few days, look over your notes and consider which characteristics best resemble your life, all for the sake of identifying where you have the potential to grow in your walk with Jesus Christ.

Connect: Because of our limitations, we cannot always see the ways we resist God's call. Think about a mature believer in your life and invite him or her to speak in honest love about where they see you spiritually. More importantly, invite him or her to point out any ways they see you resisting God's call in your life.

Resolve: If you reached the end of this lesson certain of your resistance of God's call, reflect on the kindness of God to Jonah. Even more, reflect on the kindness of God to you in Jesus Christ. Lay down your fears and resolve to live in obedience in light of His love.

Volunteer: If you reached the end of this session without identifying clear resistance in your life, thank God for that gift. Look for opportunities to pour yourself out even more—volunteer this week for a duty in your church that others often avoid.

HANDOUT

Session 4: Jonah 1:17-2:10

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

What does the fact that God “appointed” the great fish tell us about His character?

How has God demonstrated His compassion in your life?

How does God’s patience with Jonah encourage you in your walk with Him?

In what ways has Jonah’s story changed your thinking about the way God pursues us?

How does this story give us a glimpse of the gospel?

When you think about the way God interacts with Jonah, what would you say it reveals about His utmost concern with His people?

How would you define repentance?

How does Jonah’s prayer demonstrate counterfeit repentance? How would Jonah have responded if he were truly repentant?

What are some ways we fake repentance today?

How have we used good things (small groups, church, community, etc.) to ignore the areas God wants to change in our lives?

How does a defensive attitude about our failures reflect a lack of repentance?

What are some of the temporal circumstances that distract us today?

Why is an eternal focus an important part of true repentance?

What is keeping you from true repentance today? In what ways can you identify with Jonah’s counterfeit attempts?

How does the good news of God’s patient love encourage you today?

HANDOUT

Session 4: Jonah 1:17–2:10

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: Read Jonah 2 followed by 1 John 1:8–9 at least four days this week. After doing so, ask God to reveal to you any false repentance in your life for the sake of healing.

Confession: The act of confession is one of agreeing with God's Word as truth. As He brings to light false repentance in your life, confess it to Him and another trusted believer. Then believe in His promise to cleanse you of all unrighteousness.

Forgive: Has someone sinned against you? Have they refused to own the pain they caused? Or falsely repented? By faith, forgive them today and seek to love them with patient kindness, like God did with Jonah.

Write: List the top three worldly distractions that shift your perspective from an eternal perspective. Place the list somewhere you will see it on a daily basis and ask God to help you view them differently.

Community: Pick one or two trusted believers in your life and ask them to identify any false repentance they see in your life.

HANDOUT

Session 5: Jonah 3:1-5

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

How does the structure of 3:1–3 parallel 1:1–3? What are the similarities? What are the differences?

What does it tell us about Jonah at this point in the story?

How are these verses reflected in the way God responds to the Ninevites?

When have you experienced God graciously offer you a second chance?

What did it teach you about His character?

How should this example from the life of Jonah encourage us in obedience?

How do Jonah's actions show that he still lacks a disposition of obedience to God?

How did the Ninevites respond to Jonah's preaching?

What does their response tell us about their spiritual disposition?

What does Jonah's message reveal about his heart toward the Ninevites?

Why is heartless obedience so dangerous?

Who do you struggle to have compassion for in your life? How might hearing their story change the way you think about them?

How is obedience to God testing your desire for comfort today?

Where is God calling you to step out in obedience? How have you responded to His call?

HANDOUT

Session 5: Jonah 3:1-5

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: Ask God for the ability to hear His Word like the Ninevites. Pray that He would further soften your heart to His gospel to anchor your life in His truth.

Proclaim: As believers, God has called us into the joy of disciple making (Matt. 28:18–20). Think of those in your life who do not believe in Jesus Christ. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with them and be bold in grace and truth when God opens the door to do so.

Surrender: Through Jesus, God has given us all a second chance despite our rebellion. As you think on this truth, come up with three ways you can surrender your preferences to serve someone else this week.

Praise: Reflect on your relationship with Christ. How has God given you a second chance? What has He forgiven? How has He changed you? As you meditate on God's faithfulness, worship Him through prayer and praise for what He has done.

Second Chance: Despite his disobedience, God offered Jonah a second chance. How can you do the same for someone in your midst? Consider the resources God has blessed you with and list out three ways you can use them to help provide a second chance for someone.

HANDOUT

Session 6: Jonah 3:6-10

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

How did the “king of Nineveh” respond to Jonah’s message?

Why do you think the Ninevites responded this way? What did they recognize about themselves?

In what ways did your recognition of sin resemble that of the Ninevites?

In what ways did you cry out to God for help “with strength”?

How might a response like the Ninevites’ look in a more modern context?

What are some fundamentally good things God has called you to let go of in order to walk in deeper fellowship with Him (relationships, career, money, etc.)?

What might He be calling you to let go of today?

What does soul reflection look like in your life?

How do the Ninevites model being “soul reflective” for us?

How does God respond to the repentance of the Ninevites (3:10)?

What does His response teach us about His character?

How does God’s response to the Ninevites encourage you today? Does it correct a wrong view of Him that has kept you from repentance? Why or why not?

What did Eric point to as the “fruit” of repentance?

Where is God calling you into repentance today? What, if anything, is holding you back?

HANDOUT

Session 6: Jonah 3:6-10

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: We often lack seriousness toward the sin that remains in us. Ask God to increase your sensitivity to your sin for the purpose of walking forward with Jesus Christ in purity and healing.

Confession: If you reached the end of this session having clearly identified personal sin you are harboring, seek out a mature Christian friend or pastor and confess to him or her. Trust in the forgiveness extended to you in Jesus.

Soul Reflection: Set aside time this week to evaluate your spiritual life, much like you would in any other performance evaluation. What are you doing well? Where are you struggling?

Accountability: As you pursue freedom from sin, ask a trusted believer to reach out to you periodically for encouragement and help.

Encouragement: Do you know someone feeling crushed by his or her sin? If so, reach out to them this week with a word of hope. Spend time helping them to remember the love of God for them in Christ and make yourself available to walk with them in whatever way they need for pursuing freedom.

HANDOUT

Session 7: Jonah 4:1-4

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

How does Jonah's response (4:1) to the Ninevites' repentance differ from God's response (3:10)?

What does the difference tell us about Jonah's disposition?

According to 4:2, why did Jonah flee to Tarshish (1:3)?

When have you experienced God's compassion extended to those you do not like?

How does bitterness cause us to misunderstand God's compassion for all people?

What circumstances has God used in your life to reveal your true view of His character? How has He graciously intervened to surface the disconnect between what you claim to believe and what your actions communicate?

What does Jonah ask of God in response to the Ninevites' repentance (4:3)?

How does God answer Jonah's request (4:4)?

What does His answer tell us about the heart of God?

How should God's kindness cause us to view the sin in our lives?

In what ways do we tend to live like Jonah?

What does our behavior reveal about our view of God's character?

What is keeping you from full submission to God's call today? How will you begin to ask Him to do surgery on your heart?

HANDOUT

Session 7: Jonah 4:1-4

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: Start at least four days out of the next week by asking God to shed light on any misplaced anger in your life. As He does, pursue forgiveness and reconciliation in response.

Memorize: Commit to memory James 1:19–20. Strive to apply it to your day-to-day interactions with others. Practice being quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.

Settle Anger: Before finishing your days this week, do whatever necessary to rid yourself of anger. If you are in conflict, apologize, seek forgiveness, and share openly to make peace in submission to God's Word.

Spread Compassion: Think of someone in your life you struggle to love. After doing so, write down three ways you can serve them compassionately this week. Make a point to follow through on at least one by next week.

Consider Speech: How do you speak to and about others? In your family? At work? At church? Think deeply about the influence of your words. Intentionally make changes that will make your speech an encouragement to those around you.

HANDOUT

Session 8: Jonah 4:5–11

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Discuss

Judging by his actions, how does Jonah answer God's question from 4:4?

What are some of the ways Jonah had experienced God's grace up to this point?

As you reflect on your life, how have you experienced God's grace and mercy?

How could those experiences change the way you view others—especially those who do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ?

In what ways is God calling you to grow in compassion for the lost today?

What is God trying to teach Jonah by appointing the plant, the worm, and the scorching wind?

How does this scene reveal the inconsistency of Jonah's faith?

How does the model of Jesus contrast with Jonah?

What obstacles keep you from loving others the way God has loved you?

Where is God calling you to show compassion, to forgive, to love selflessly?

What about your life needs to change to walk in greater obedience to God?

HANDOUT

Session 8: Jonah 4:5-11

THE BOOK OF JONAH

■ Live it Out

Prayer: : Rather than leave you to judgment without hope, God sent His Son to give His life for you, His enemy. Start each day this week on your knees, asking God to keep your heart fixed on that truth.

Reflect: How has God clearly shown His grace to you in the past? Write the five instances that most stand out to you and put the note somewhere you will see it on a daily basis as a reminder of His grace.

Show Grace: When we receive grace, we receive something we do not deserve. Think of someone in your life who does not deserve grace and be intentional about showing him or her grace over the coming week (family, work, neighbor, fellow believer, etc.).

List: Make two columns on a piece of paper. In one, think back on the book of Jonah and write down all of his ungodly characteristics. In the other, write out the perfect characteristics of Jesus in contrast to Jonah. After doing so, see where your life lines up and ask God to lead you into greater Christ-likeness.

Worship: Walk into church this week with anticipatory joy. Gather with fellow believers and praise God in worship and truth, remembering the grace He has shown to you and thanking Him for the grace He will sustain you with going forward.