

# JONAH: LIFE. LESSONS.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HIT ROCK BOTTOM - JONAH 1:1-17



## SERMON NOTES:

### BIG IDEA:

When we hit rock \_\_\_\_\_, we need to reach \_\_\_\_\_ for God's help!

### NEXT STEPS:

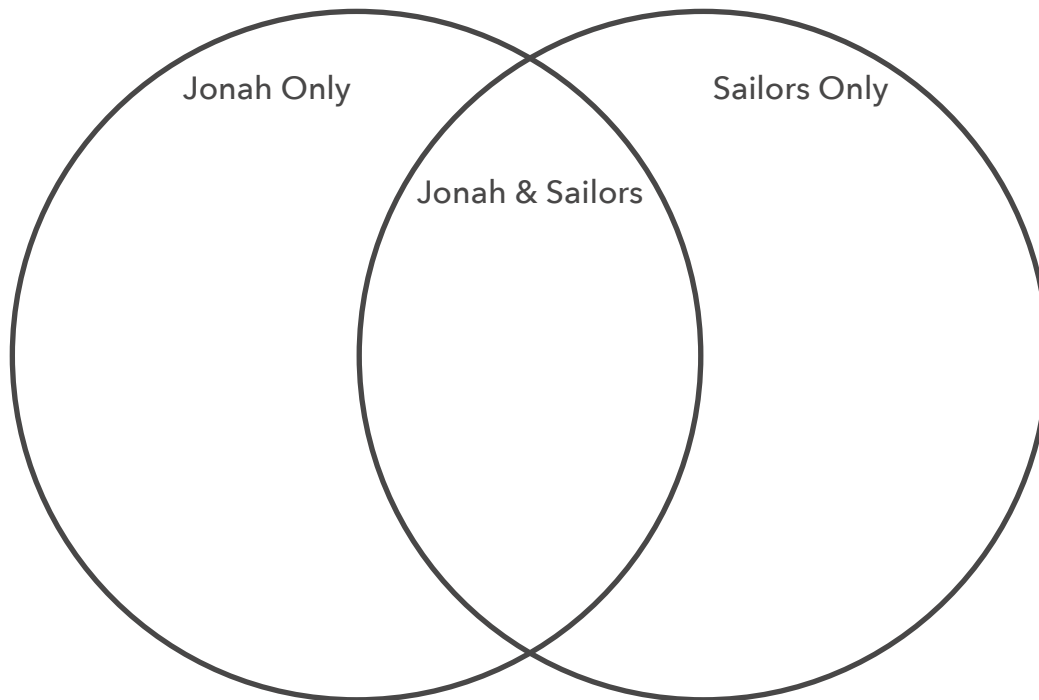
1. Today, I prayed and trusted Jesus as my Savior. I will email [pastor@tbclife.net](mailto:pastor@tbclife.net) to let someone know of my decision.
2. This week, I am going to confess to someone I trust about an area(s) in my life in which I am at fault, struggling, or in need of help.
3. This week, I am going to tell \_\_\_\_\_ the good news of Jesus Christ and how Jesus saved and redeemed my life.
4. This week, I am going to pray daily, celebrating and giving thanks to Jesus for all the ways He continues to provide for me/my family (just like God provided for Jonah and the sailors).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Open your group in prayer, and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions and Next Steps above, or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the three essential questions at the end before the Digging Deeper Section. **NEW:** Check out the section called Toolbox that gives you practical tools to take this further!

### OBSERVE | *What Do I See?*

1. Compare and contrast the actions and attitudes of Jonah and the sailors in this passage.



### INTERPRET | *What Does It Mean?*

2. What is the role of the prophet in the Old Testament (Exodus 7:1-2 and Jeremiah 1:4-7)? How does God's call to Jonah compare with the call of other prophets (Isaiah 20:2-3 and Ezekiel 4:1-8)?
3. What does the sovereignty (i.e. authority and control) of God over the storms in our lives reveal about both His character and His purposes (Hebrews 12:6, Proverbs 10:27 and Proverbs 19:16)?
4. In 1:1-16, we see significant spiritual change in the lives of the sailors due to their run-in with a disobedient prophet. Specifically, how did they grow in their understanding of the Lord? And what do we learn from the fact that God used the disobedience of His prophet to lead others closer to Him?

### **APPLY | How Does It Work?**

5. When have you resisted the clear desire of God in your own life? Is there an area in your life right now that you sense resistance to God?
6. How can the confession of truth and one's own sin provide the first step towards turning from sin and back to the Lord? What steps could you take this week to turn back to the Lord?
7. It is striking that the pagan sailors had more compassion upon Jonah than the prophet had for the people of Nineveh. Can you identify a few factors that may hinder your compassion for those who may not know Jesus? How can you practically begin to resolve those factors this week?

Create a personal application statement that expresses how you will apply this truth in your life:

### **THREE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:**

If you have more time, the following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message!

1. **What do you think?** How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking? What point in this message was most impactful for you?
2. **What will you do?** How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?
3. **How can you help others in your group?** How can you encourage, affirm, pray for, and keep accountable the commitments they put into practice?

## TOOLBOX:

- The Live, Work , Play Map | For many of us, we lack compassion for those who do not know Jesus simply because we don't take the time to really know our neighbors, coworkers, and others in our daily lives. The Live, Work, Play Map will help you identify the people already in your sphere of influence. Read over the description in Appendix 1 to learn about this tool. Spend some time in the coming week drawing your own map. Be ready to share it when your group meets next time.
- Every Neighbor Prayer | Together as a group, create a board that will serve as a physical reminder for your group to pray for the people in each other's lives. Reaching people with the message of Jesus is done best on the foundation of prayer and with each other! Pray together for the names on the board. Read through the ideas behind Every Neighbor Prayer tool. See Appendix 2.

## DIGGING DEEPER:

### Lots (1:7)

The Old Testament refers several times to lots as a means of discovering God's decision in a specific case. Lots were used to determine how to divide the promised land (Josh. 14:2), who was to lead the attack in battle (Judg. 20:9), who was the chosen king (1 Sam. 10:18-19), what families were to live in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:1), and how to allot the Levitical cities (Josh. 21:8).

Lots could apparently give yes/no, either/or decisions. The exact nature and method of using lots is lost in the mist of history. Apparently small stones or similar items were used, somewhat like dice. The result of a decision by lot was specified as one's lot, especially in cases of the division of property (Josh. 15:1). (*Trent C. Butler, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Holman New Testament Commentary [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005]*)

### Jonah's Answer (1:9)

Jonah answers the last question first, explaining that he is a Hebrew, the term generally used by the people of Israel in describing themselves to foreigners. Since Yahweh was "the God of the Hebrews" (Ex. 3:18), this means that Jonah is a worshipper of Yahweh. Worship is literally "fear," but its use on Jonah's lips contrasts starkly with its meaning in vv. 5, 10. Jonah's fear is a feeble thing, for all its orthodoxy, compared with the numinous awe of the seamen, which Jonah is deliberately not recorded as sharing. The runaway prophet is shown in a bad light: crew and captain can teach him many a lesson about his own faith.

The epithet God of heaven which Jonah appends to the divine name, although an ancient one (Gen. 24:3, 7), sprang into popularity in the Persian period after the exile. It identified Yahweh as the supreme Deity, the ultimate source of all power and authority. Jews used it especially in contacts with Gentiles, who it was assumed possessed a knowledge of Yahweh's universal sovereignty as distinct from the Jews' insight into the purposes of Yahweh as "God of our fathers." By this title Yahweh is presented as no mere local deity, but one to whom all peoples may look for help. This universalistic note is reinforced by the claim that Yahweh is maker of land and sea. It is a credal confession which echoes such cultic statements in the Psalm as

*The sea belongs to him, for he made it;  
So does the dry land, which His hands molded. (Ps. 95:5)*

(Leslie C. Allen, *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976])

## APPENDIX 1:

**LIVE, WORK, PLAY MAP** The word "oikos" is a Greek word that means family. In Jesus's time, a family would include workers, extended family, and people residing in their home. Basically, this was their greatest circle of influence. For us, this can also include not only our family, but our friends, coworkers, and acquaintances. It can include the guy at the gas station that you see at each fill up, or the barista that serves you that mocha latte each morning. It is anyone that we commonly encounter on a regular basis, giving you the ability to have influence in their lives.

So what does this have to do with us, and how does it help us spread the gospel? "Oikos" is used around 120 times in the New Testament. Often when Jesus or his disciples found people that were open to the gospel, He would eventually share the message with the entire network, their oikos and their communities. Jesus met the woman at the well (John 4), and after revealing His message and who He was as Messiah, she was amazed and told her oikos, her whole town, AND many believed! We want to see the same happen. Every Day and Every Neighbor means that we are participants in a Greater Story of God's plan of salvation and we can be ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5) wherever and with whomever we find ourselves.



Draw your own network: Think about the people in your spheres in influence. With whom do you live, work, and play? Be as exhaustive as possible and brainstorm away! Also, think about people who are just beyond your normal spheres. People who are that next step out- perhaps an acquaintance whom you don't know well, a neighbor who is different from you ethnically or social-economically, a community member whom the Holy Spirit has put in your path but is more a stranger than friend? Be creative and think outside the box on this one!

## APPENDIX 2:

**EVERY NEIGHBOR PRAYER** At the heart of Every Neighbor, there is a desire to be observant, expectant, and involved in who God is putting into our paths where we Live, Work, and Play. He wants us to pray- that many will know Him as Father and as Savior, as He draws them to Himself and His Kingdom (John 6:44). As well, Jesus modeled prayer for those who were like "sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6:32- 34)." Jesus's own ministry of compassion (Matthew 14:14, 15:32) to those who were on the fringes of society, those who had no status or reputation, was a beautiful example of who we are to be praying for and seeking to include in our daily lives- those who are outside our comfort zones, but fully loved and wanted by our God.

Each week, we gather to pray for these people. Who did God impress upon you when you drew out your Live, Work, and Play network? Who are the people who might be seeking His Kingdom, who are asking hard questions, who are far from Christ and need a better Hope? Using your Live, Work, and Play network, who do you need to purposively add to the Every Neighbor Prayer board? On this board, collect the names of those you are hoping to bless with the gospel through service, acts of love, conversation, and/or Bible study. Pray boldly for God to reveal Himself to them and open their eyes to His power and freedom.

You may meet someone new this week or renew an old relationship from the past. Is this someone God is asking you to put on the Every Neighbor Prayer board, to actively pray big for their salvation? Add them to the board. Each week, take time to update your group, and let's see what God will do! Another tool that's useful is [www.blesseveryhome.com](http://www.blesseveryhome.com).

## KIDS' DISCUSSION:

Either ask your children to go to their bedrooms and hide their dirty clothes inside the clothes they are wearing, or ask them to hide their dirty laundry somewhere in the house. Use the discussion questions to help your child make the connection between the mess that dirty clothes create, and the “mess” of sin in our hearts.

- What would happen if we never washed our clothing?
- How would our house smell if we never washed our clothes?
- Do you think God is more concerned about your bedroom being clean or your heart being clean?
- How can you get the sin washed out of your heart? Read 1 John 1:9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

If our laundry was left unwashed, the whole house would eventually begin to smell. Wearing dirty clothes can also cause a person to smell. Dirty laundry is like having sin in our hearts that we have not confessed. To God, that sin stinks.

Just as it was impossible to hide the smell of your dirty clothes by stuffing them under your shirt or somewhere else in the house, it is impossible to hide our sins from God. It is each person's responsibility to tell God he is sorry for the sin he has committed. A parent can wash their child's dirty clothes, but they can't wash their child's heart. Washing our sin away is something only God can do. God loves us so much that He gets rid of our sins completely when we confess them.

Pastor David said in his message, “Just like Jonah did in Jonah 1:9-12, we must accept responsibility for our actions, we must repent before a holy and righteous God and then we must lay aside our pride and commit to doing things God's way.” Just as dirty laundry smells bad, our sin “stinks” to God. We stay clean by regularly confessing our sins.

