

Week 1: Running from God

Pastor Stephanie Ehmke – October 25, 2026

Questions…

1. When you think about the story of Jonah, what typically comes to mind? How does shifting our focus from Jonah and the great fish to God's will, grace, and purposes change the way we understand this familiar story?

2. ***Read Jonah 1:1-3***

   Jonah received clear direction from God but immediately chose to run in the opposite direction. Why do you think we sometimes resist God's direction, even when we know what He is asking of us?

3. In the message, we were challenged with the question*, "Does God know best, or do I?"* What circumstances or areas of life make it most difficult for us to trust that God's ways are better than our own?

4. Jonah's national identity and feelings toward the Ninevites had become more important to him than God's purposes. What are some good things in our lives that can become idols when we allow them to take priority over obedience to God?

5. God called Jonah to take His message to people Jonah believed were undeserving of grace. Are there individuals or groups of people we sometimes struggle to believe deserve God's mercy and forgiveness? What does this reveal about our understanding of grace?

6. ***Read Jonah 1:4-6***

   While the sailors desperately sought help during the storm, Jonah was asleep below deck. What might Jonah's response reveal about his spiritual condition? How can we become spiritually unaware or indifferent when we are resisting God's leading?

7. One of the striking ironies in Jonah 1 is that the pagan sailors demonstrated greater compassion and spiritual awareness than God's own prophet. What can this teach us about the danger of assuming that our religious knowledge or position automatically makes us spiritually mature?

8. Jonah's disobedience didn't just affect him; it placed everyone aboard the ship in danger. How can our choices to resist God impact the people around us, including our families, friendships, workplaces, and church community?

9. ***Read Jonah 1:14-16***

   After the storm calmed, the sailors continued to worship God, offering sacrifices and making vows to Him. What is the difference between seeking God for what He can do for us and worshiping Him simply because of who He is? How can we cultivate the latter in our daily lives?

10. Despite Jonah's resistance and disobedience, God was still at work, revealing Himself to the sailors. What does this teach us about God's grace and His ability to accomplish His purposes even through imperfect people? Is there an area of your life where God may be inviting you to stop running and begin trusting Him?

Closing Reflection

"Everything and everyone in Jonah chapter 1 obeys God, except His servant."

As you close, invite group members to reflect on this question:

Am I truly following God's leading, or am I asking God to bless the direction I've already chosen?

Pray that God would reveal anything competing for first place in your hearts, give you courage to obey even when His direction is difficult, and help you extend His grace to others as freely as you have received it.