



Session 4

Jonah

week starting February 23

Many familiar “classic” Bible stories are sanitized and simplified for younger audiences—a choice that’s understandable but can strip these stories of their depth. As a result, these “PG” versions can seem like clean, fairytale-like narratives. What if these stories were meant to convey more? We’ll examine five well-known Bible stories, uncover their richer meanings, and live out a deeper faith.

Leaders, feel free to choose the questions that best fit your group. No pressure to answer every question!

OPENER

- Briefly share about a time you were in a bad storm and how you felt.
- Was there ever a time you wanted to ‘run away’? Explain.
- Describe a time you needed an attitude adjustment about something or someone.

MESSAGE

- In Jonah 1:1–3 Jonah tried to run from God’s call. Why? What might “running” from God in our own lives look like? In what ways do you see the world ignoring what God says?
- God used a “fish” to redirect Jonah. What are some unexpected ways God has brought you back to His will or corrected your path?
- Jeremey noted that the book of Jonah is in the genre of Satire with word plays and reversals that reveal just how selfish people can be and how gracious God is. What tensions are present in the Jonah story and how do we make sense of them?

SCRIPTURE

- Read the book of Jonah ahead of your group meeting or view the summary at bibleproject.com/explore/video/jonah.
- In Jonah 1:14–16, the pagan sailors show more humility and repentance than Jonah does. What point is being made? When have you seen humility and repentance in a person or situation from whom you didn’t expect it?
- Jonah 4:1–4 reveals Jonah’s attitude toward God’s mercy. How do you feel about God loving those you don’t feel deserve it? Does the depth of God’s mercy challenge you?
- Jonah gave the shortest sermon ever (Jonah 3:3–6) and left it intentionally bleak, but God used it to lead the Ninevites to repentance. What can we learn about God working in unexpected ways?

APPLICATION

- In what ways does this story challenge you or grow your picture of God?
- Is there a Nineveh in your life—a situation, someone, someplace or something you’re avoiding? What might God be asking you to do? Who might God want you to reach?
- What holds you back from doing what you believe God wants you to do? What step forward can you take? How can this group support you in prayer and otherwise?

CLOSE

- Pray for one another and the steps forward you discussed in the last question. Report back next week.