

SUMMER READING

Summer Reading

Small Group Questions: Part 5: The Book of Jonah

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Read

The book of Jonah

Reflect

Jonah doesn't want God to offer his saving grace to the people of Nineveh (Israel's enemy). So he boards a boat in the opposite direction and runs from God and the task he has been given. He endures a storm, being thrown overboard, and being swallowed by a large fish before he cries out to God and agrees to do God's will. Whether you believe the book of Jonah is a literal retelling or more an allegory, what biblical truth does it reveal about God and about us?

Pastor Adam Martin discusses what really happens when we run from God:

1. Running from God hardens us.
 - a. How are our hearts and Jonah's more similar than we'd like to admit?
 - i. Who do you need to forgive? How hard is it to pray for someone who has hurt you, to receive a second chance?
 - b. Describe a time when you knew what God wanted you to do, but you didn't want to do it.
 - c. How did it make you feel toward God, and toward others?
2. Running from God will always lead us toward discouragement.
 - a. How does bitterness cause us to lose perspective?
 - i. When has this happened to you?
 - b. How often do you recount the blessings in your life?
 - i. When have you lost sight of them—taken them for granted? How did it create discouragement?
 - ii. How did God remind you of those blessings?
3. Running from God is not enough for God to stop running after you.
 - a. What storms has God sent into your life? Why do you think he has allowed them to happen?
 - b. How has God shown you the frailty of what you're trusting in, instead of him?
 - i. What has a higher place in your life than it deserves? What has become too valuable?
 - c. How are you resisting God? Where do you feel stuck in your life?
 - i. What can you do to change that?
 - d. What do you think about the ending of the story of Jonah?
 - e. How has God shown you that he is listening to you?
 - f. What is God calling you to take a step toward?

Respond: Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?