



# SERMON CHEAT SHEET

YOU CAN RUN, BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE | JONAH 1

## GOD REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH OUR OBEDIENCE

### The Pull of Disobedience

We can all relate to feeling that tug between what we know we should do and what we want to do. Just like Jonah, who chose to run from God's command to go to Nineveh, we often find ourselves in a similar dilemma. Remember that moment when you thought you could outsmart your parents by hiding something? Jonah decides to flee to Tarshish, thinking he could escape God's directive. Yet, *Scripture reveals that when we disobey God, we not only cause turmoil in our lives but also impact those around us.* Jonah's choice stirred up a mighty storm that endangered the sailors on the ship, reminding us that our disobedience can have collateral damage. When God asks us to act, it is for our own good and for the good of others; rejecting that call can lead us into storms that affect many.

### The Reality of Running

Jonah's narrative shows that we can never truly escape from God. As we run away from what He calls us to do, we often spiral downward into more significant issues, both spiritually and emotionally. This downward journey is illustrated vividly in Jonah's hiding below deck, asleep while chaos ensues above. It's so human to underestimate the power of our choices, thinking we can dodge responsibility or hide from God's presence. Yet, the truth is, *God is always aware of our situation and will pursue us, reminding us of His sovereignty, and challenging us to rise and heed His call. When we attempt to run, we may find ourselves slipping deeper into discontent and unease.*

### Facing Our Fears

Jonah's reluctance to go to Nineveh reveals his deep-seated fears of the unknown and his disdain for those he was called to reach. Often, when God leads us into uncomfortable territories, whether it be a job, a conversation, or even serving, instead of running towards Him, we run away. We fear rejection, misunderstanding, or worse, we worry about our safety. Yet in this story, God doesn't call Jonah because He needed him; **He calls Jonah because He wants Jonah to experience transformation.** Just as God used a storm and even a big fish to redirect Jonah, He can turn our fears into a new understanding of His love and grace, pushing us toward growth when we trust Him.

### God's Purpose is Unyielding

Despite Jonah's attempts to evade God's call, God's purpose remains unstoppable. The sailors on the ship, who began as mere characters in Jonah's refusal, end up worshipping the true God once the storm settles after Jonah is cast overboard. This illustrates an essential truth: *our obedience or disobedience plays a vital role in how God's work unfolds in our lives and the lives of others.* If we neglect to follow God's lead, we may miss out on witnessing His grandeur unfold in ways we cannot imagine. Our God is not contingent upon our decisions; He will find a way to accomplish His will, but we have the choice to be part of that empowering story.

## LIVE IT OUT THIS WEEK

- Reflect on areas in your life where you may be running from God's direction. What is one step you can take this week to move closer to obedience?
- Think of someone you've been hesitant to share your faith with. Make a plan to reach out to them this week, inviting them for a coffee or conversation.
- Set aside time this week to pray specifically over the things that God has placed on your heart, asking for courage to act.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Pray for a heart that is willing to obey God's call, even when it feels uncomfortable.
- Ask for forgiveness for areas where you've run from God's direction, and for strength to make a change.
- Lift up the people in your life who may be affected by your obedience or disobedience, asking God to bless them.