

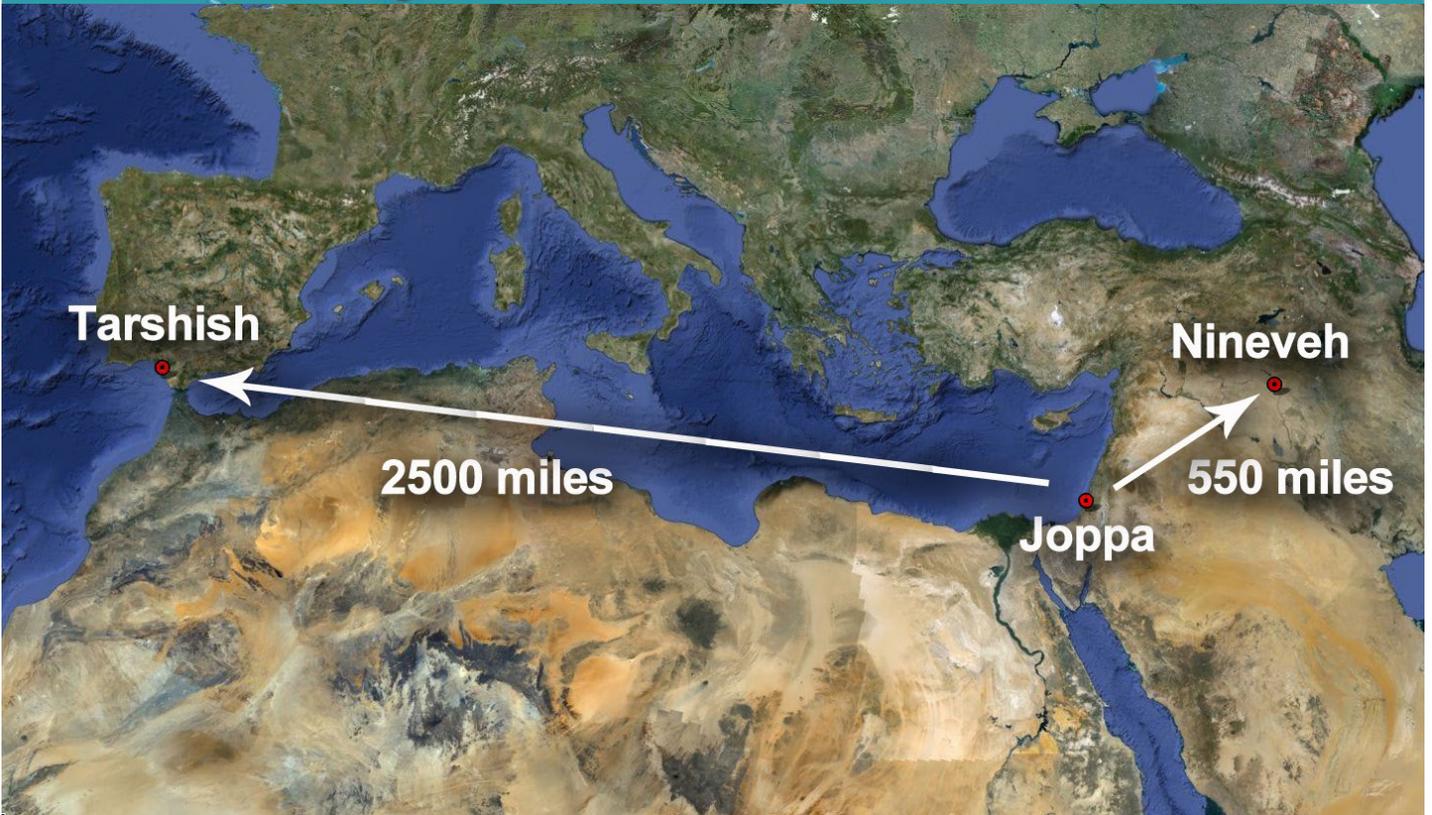
UPSETTING

# JONAH

MERCY



# MAP OF THE WORLD



# How to Read the Bible:

As you begin this 4 week study, our hope is that you will grow in your knowledge and love for God through the study of His word. We hope that this knowledge and love would overflow into action in your life and that you would be made more like Christ. It is also our desire that this study will help you learn how to read the Bible and will benefit you in the years to come as you learn how to read God's word for yourself.

The Bible is a book about God, not us. So often we approach the Bible with the mindset of self-change and discovery, almost like a self-help book. The Bible is God's declared word to make Himself known to us. When we study His word with the intent to learn more about who He is and His character, we will ultimately be changed. Knowing God and loving Him more is our goal in Bible study.

When you sit down to study God's word it is helpful to have a process. The process that we will use in this study is taken from Jen Wilkin's book: *Women of the Word*.

## PROCESS:

### **Illumination:**

We can read God's word 1,000 times but without the help of the Holy Spirit we won't be able to completely understand what we're reading. Therefore, before you start reading your Bible, pray that the Holy Spirit would help you understand the text you are about to read and that you would glorify Jesus Christ more as a result of what you've seen in God's word. (John 16:13-16; John 14:26)

**Reading the text in the correct context:** The Bible was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, through human authors, at a particular time, to a particular people. This is key to understanding the true meaning of any text and how we can correctly apply it to our life. The text will never mean to us what it didn't mean to the original audience. Once we have understood the context in which the text was written, then we must immerse ourselves in the passage. Reading repetitively gives us greater understanding and will help us better comprehend what the text is saying. In light of this, you will be asked to read and reread Jonah many times.

### **Comprehension: What does it say? (also referred to as observation in other Bible study methods)**

The goal in this step is to read the passage multiple times so that you can understand what it says. Comprehension is the primary goal here. A good way to know if you comprehend the passage is if you can summarize or retell it in your own words. In this study, we will read the entire book, as well as each individual chapter, many times in order to fully comprehend what it is saying. We will highlight repeated words, define key words, and summarize passages in our own words in order to help us better understand what is being said.

**Interpretation: What does it mean?**

In this step of study, you are determining what the passage means. Remember there is one interpretation for passages (the text will never mean to us what it didn't mean to its original hearers). As we do this we will look up cross-references in order to interpret scripture with scripture. At this point, it is also helpful to consult a commentary or two to ensure that your interpretation is within orthodoxy.

**Application: How should it change me?**

At this point in your study, you have done the hard work to understand what the passage says and what it means, and you're now ready to ask, "how should it change me?" Remember the Bible is a book about God; therefore, some helpful questions to ask for application are: What does this passage teach me about God? What does it teach me about people? And how should this truth about God change the way I think, feel, or act?

**Prayer:**

Prayer is such a vital part in all steps of studying God's word; without the help of the Holy Spirit we are unable to understand and apply God's word. Pray before, during, and after reading His word!

## How to use this study guide:

This study is a 4 week study broken into 6 days of homework each week. Before we meet each week, read the text and answer the questions outlined for each day of the week. At the beginning of each class session we will get into small groups to discuss some questions that will help us apply the scripture. These groups are also great contexts to discuss any questions we may still have after studying the text. After we have discussed the passage with our small groups we will listen to live teaching. Remember, it is worth the work! You will get out of this study what you put into it!

It will be helpful to have a purple, green, red, and blue pen available as you walk through this study. If you don't like making marks in your own Bible we encourage you to print off a copy of the book of Jonah, as we will ask you to highlight and mark different words and phrases throughout the course of this study.

**Intro:**

Like reading the front of the envelope before opening a letter, it is helpful for us to know some information about the sender and recipients of any book of the Bible we are studying. Please watch the intro video that was emailed to you after you registered for this study and fill out this page before you begin Day One.

<p>Who wrote the book? _____</p> <p>When was it written? _____</p>	
<p>To whom was it written? _____</p> <p>Where does this take place? _____</p> <p>What type of book is this? _____</p>	

<p>What is the purpose of the book?</p>	<p>Any other notes about the book:</p>
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INTRO VIDEO NOTES:

# Week One:

**Pray each day before you begin your study. If you're unsure what to pray you can pray something like this:**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for revealing yourself through your written word. You are holy and worthy of all honor and praise and I ask that you, Holy Spirit, would help me understand these Scriptures so that I would glorify Christ in my life today. In Jesus' name, amen.*

## **DAY 1: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read the whole book of Jonah in one sitting and try to notice any common words, phrases, or themes that are repeated.

What common words, phrases, or themes did you see repeated throughout the book?

What words or ideas that you came across while reading the book are confusing?

What questions did you have after reading the book?

**DAY 2: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 1.

Go back and mark the words "Lord" or "God" in purple. How many times do you see God's name in chapter 1?

Mark the words or phrases that show going up or going down in green - for example: "arise," "went down," "come up."

Now go back and read the chapter one last time looking for the words "great" and "hurled / throw." Mark these words in red.

Summarize in a few sentences what is happening in this chapter.

**DAY 3: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Re-read Jonah 1. Remember, the best way to understand and comprehend a text is repetitive reading. Don't skip this part!

Who are the characters in this first chapter?

Jonah also appears in 2 Kings 14:23-27. What happens here? Read the context. What can we learn about Jonah from this account?

God is sending a Jewish prophet to an evil pagan city to warn them of coming wrath. What does this tell us about the character of God?

What type of attitude does Jonah have toward the task the Lord has given?

Write out below the four questions the sailors ask Jonah and Jonah's subsequent response to those questions. What might we gather from how he answers these questions?

Questions:

Jonah's Answer:

1)

2)

3)

4)

**DAY 4: Interpretation: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 1 and journal new observations or questions you see as you read it again today. Pray that the Holy Spirit would help you.

Throughout this chapter, the Lord has shown his power and control over situations and circumstances. What specific things has the Lord had power over in order to carry out his plan?

What do we know is true about how God works through circumstances? How does Romans 8:28 help us understand this?

Using scripture to understand scripture is helpful and necessary to good interpretation. Therefore, what other passages in the Bible pertain to topics or themes in Jonah 1? If you are newer to reading your Bible and don't know, that is ok!

What do we know about the Ninevites as they were in Jonah's day? Why would Jonah have wanted to flee?

What attitude does Jonah seem to have towards the sailors and Ninevites?

Read John 4. How does Christ respond to those different from Him? Give a few other examples of how Christ treats those who are different from Him.

**DAY 5: Application: How should it change me?**

Read Jonah 1 with an eye toward the attributes of God we see in this passage.

List the attributes of God you saw here or in the margin of your Bible. If you need help thinking of attributes of God, you can refer to the list at the end of this study.

In light of seeing Jonah's response to the Lord's direction, do you find yourself quick to listen to God's direction and do what he commands? Or, like Jonah, do you look for convenient ways to pursue your desires rather than God's?

We've seen in this passage Jonah reacting in ways we wouldn't think a prophet of God would respond. He has shown high concern for himself and low concern for others. How do you tend to view others who might be different than you?

So often our society is filled with an "us" and "them" mentality. Who do you view as "them"? What is your general attitude toward "them"?

Jonah is eventually redirected and saved by a literal storm. How have you seen God use "storms" in your life to direct your path?

DAY 6: **JONAH 1 IN SUMMARY:**

What does this teach me about God?

What are the contrasts between Jonah and Jesus in this chapter? May our prayer be "Lord, make me more like Jesus and less like Jonah."

What does this teach me about others?

How should what I've learned about God change the way I think, feel, and/or act today?

***Discussion Questions: (These questions will be discussed with your table at the beginning of Bible study this week. Take time to write down an answer for each of these so you are prepared for discussion at your table.)***

1. Why do you want to do this study?

2. What other passages were helpful in understanding Jonah 1?

3. How can each one of us intentionally reach out in kindness or evangelism toward the “Nineveh” we may have identified as we’ve studied? Or perhaps you may think of an example of personal disobedience that would take intentional steps to rectify, like turning the ship around (which would be preferable to throwing ourselves overboard).

4. What did Jonah 1 teach you about God and how does this change the way you think, feel, or act?

## Kids Section (optional)

If you have children in your life, invite them into what you are studying! Take an evening to read Jonah chapter 1 with them and do this activity. Kids can learn the Bible too!

As you read Jonah 1 have one person act as God and another person act as Jonah. Every time you read the rise up or go down language, physically do it. (In the end, the one acting as Jonah will be on the ground and God will not have changed.)

Talk with your children about how God never changes, but how Jonah chose to disobey God and turn from him. However, at the end of the chapter, GOD is the one to send salvation down to Jonah through the fish!

Take a moment to thank the Lord for sending His Son Jesus down to us for our salvation.

# Week Two:

**Pray each day before you begin your study. If you're unsure what to pray you can pray something like this:**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for the great gift of salvation that I have been given in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit, help me see with greater clarity and detail the greatness and beauty of Jesus Christ, and help me to be more conformed to His likeness in every area of my life. In Jesus' name, amen.*

**DAY 1: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Listen to the book of Jonah (on the Dwell or YouVersion app). Hearing the Bible read aloud is another way to take in God's word and can help you understand it in a new light.

**DAY 2: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 1:17 - 2:10.

Write down any questions or observations you have as you are reading.

Go back and mark the words "Lord" or "God" in purple, also mark in purple the word "you" when it refers to God. How many times do you see God's name in chapter 2?

Mark the words or phrases that show going up or going down in green.

Draw a picture of what you envision this scene looking like. Pay careful attention to Jonah's descriptive words.

Summarize chapter 2 in a few sentences.

**DAY 3: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 2 in two different translations (The Christian Standard Bible, New Living Translation, New American Standard Translation, and English Standard Version are a few good translations to try out).

What different insights did you see from the different translations?

How was Jonah's life spared? And who spared Jonah's life? (Write down the verses in which you find this.)

How many days was Jonah in the belly of the fish? According to Matthew 12:40, why is this number significant?

What is true about God even when it seems as though we have hit rock bottom? What passages in God's word show us these truths?

Just as many Psalms begin with raw expressions of emotions and then end with anchors of truth, what truth does Jonah use to end his prayer?

What do we see about God from his command in verse 10?

**DAY 4: Interpretation: What does it mean?**

Read Jonah 2 through the lens of how this fits within the Bible as a whole.

Jonah 2 is written in a different style than the rest of Jonah. What style is it written in and how should this change the way we interpret it?

Jonah is deeply distressed as he is crying out to God. Read Psalm 40 and 42. How are these passages similar to Jonah's prayer?

What truths about God do you see in Psalm 40 and 42?

Jonah says in 1:3 that he was fleeing the presence of the Lord, but what changes about his language now in chapter 2? Look specifically at verses 2, 4, 6, and 9.

What is contrasted in verses 8 and 9? Where had Jonah been placing his hope? What does he say that indicates he has changed his mind?

Write the main point of Jonah's prayer in one sentence.

**DAY 5: Application: How should it change me?**

Read Jonah 2 with an eye for the attributes of God. Don't forget reading repetitively is key to understanding God's word! You will see new things everyday!

List the attributes of God here or in the margin of your Bible.

Have you been in a place where you have almost hit rock bottom and the Lord has brought you out for His good plan and purpose? How did God use that in your life?

What vain idols are you looking to for hope and love like Jonah states in verse 8?

Jonah makes it clear "Salvation belongs to the Lord!" Have you accepted this free gift of salvation? If not, what is keeping you from receiving this free gift of salvation?

What are ways that you need to be more like Jesus and less like Jonah?

**DAY 6: JONAH 2 IN SUMMARY:**

What does this teach me about God?

What does this teach me about others?

How should what I've learned about God change the way I think, feel, and/or act today?

***Discussion Questions: (These questions will be discussed with your table at the beginning of Bible study this week. Take time to write down an answer for each of these so you are prepared for discussion at your table.)***

1. What questions did you have as you studied Jonah 2?
2. How have you seen the Lord work through your "rock bottoms" to bring you to Himself?
3. What does it mean that "salvation belongs to the Lord?" Have you received this free gift of salvation? If not, what is keeping you from doing so?

4. What did you learn about God this week and how does this change the way you think, feel, or act?

## Kids Section (optional):

If you have children in your life, invite them into what you are studying! Take an evening to read Jonah chapter 2 with them and do this activity. Kids can learn the Bible too!

As you read Jonah 2 try to envision what Jonah is describing. He is crying out to the Lord and retelling the story. Just as you tried drawing a picture in day 2 of what you think this would look like, have your children draw a picture or a few pictures (if they want to make a graphic novel style) of Jonah's salvation by the fish. Drawing out something that you read is a good way of using a different part of your brain to comprehend what is happening.

After you're each done drawing, share your pictures and take time to talk about God saving Jonah from drowning and how Jonah was able to pray to God from anywhere, even the belly of a fish!

What is something you could pray for together and know that God hears our prayers and is able to save.

You can also discuss the three Jonah 2 summary questions with your children if it is age-appropriate. (What did this teach me about God? What does this teach me about others? and How does this change the way I think, feel, or act?)

## Week Three:

**Pray each day before you begin your study. If you're unsure what to pray you can pray something like this:**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for your care for all people. Thank you that you have sent your Son to offer salvation to all. Holy Spirit, please help me understand your word and be changed more into the likeness of Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### DAY 1: **Comprehension: What does it say?**

The book of Jonah is written in a very unique and artistic pattern in that the first two chapters mirror the last two chapters in some key ways.

Read the verses and write out the parallel patterns you see below.

Part 1:	Part 2:
Jonah, the Pagans, and the Sea	Jonah, The Pagans, and the City
1:1	3:1
1:2	3:2
1:3	3:3
1:4 The warning	3:4 The warning
1:5 The response of the pagans	3:5 The response of the pagans
1:6	3:6
1:7	3:7
2:1-10	4:1-10

### DAY 2: **Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 3.

Go back and mark the words "Lord" or "God" in purple.

Mark the words or phrases that show going up or going down in green.

Now go back and reread chapter 3, looking for the word "turn[ed]". Mark every occurrence in blue.

In a few sentences summarize what is happening in this chapter.

**DAY 3: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 3.

According to 1:2 why did God send Jonah to Nineveh?

When God speaks to Jonah again in chapter 3 He tells Jonah to go to Nineveh and prophesy against it with the message He will give him. What was the message in verse 4 that Jonah called out?

What are your thoughts on Jonah's delivery of the message?

What was the response of the people of Nineveh and the king? Look closely at WHO is responding to the message.

What did the people turn from?

How did God react to their response?

What is the main point of chapter 3?

**DAY 4: Interpretation: What does it mean?**

Read Jonah 3.

What other passages in the Bible relate to or help you better understand Jonah 3?

Yesterday we wrestled through some hard questions. Jonah seemed to go halfway into the city to share an underwhelming message and then the whole city repented, from the greatest to the least. What do we know about repentance from God's word?

Read these passages and write out what it says about God's wrath, repentance, and God's response.

*2 Peter 3:9, Romans 2:1-11, Acts 5:31, Romans 6:23*

What do we see about the character of God in Jonah 3 and these above passages?

God's perfection cannot allow evil to go unpunished. Yet God is merciful and willing to forgive. How are God's judgment and mercy displayed in Jonah 3?

**DAY 5: Application: How should it change me?**

Read Jonah 3.

As you read the response of the Ninevites to their evil, what sin do you need to repent of?

Who do you know that you think is too far gone for God's salvation? (like the Ninevites)

Because salvation belongs to the Lord, how should this change the way you interact with them and pray for them?

Read Matthew 12:38-42, Matthew 16:1-4, and Luke 11:30. How do these passages help us understand what is happening in Jonah and how it points to Jesus?

**DAY 6: JONAH 3 IN SUMMARY:**

What does this teach me about God?

What are the contrasts between Jonah and Jesus in this chapter? May our prayer be "Lord, make me more like Jesus and less like Jonah."

What does this teach me about others?

How should what I've learned about God change the way I think, feel, and/or act today?

***Discussion Questions: (These questions will be discussed with your table at the beginning of Bible study this week. Take time to write down an answer for each of these so you are prepared for discussion at your table.)***

1. What questions do you have after studying this passage this week?

2. What passages helped you better understand this chapter of Jonah?

3. Are there any sins in your life that you need to repent of and turn from?

4. We see in Jonah that salvation is open to all - no one is outside that reach. Is there anyone in your life that just seems too far gone to be saved? Spend some time praying for these people's salvation.

## Kids Section (optional):

If you have children in your life, invite them into what you are studying! Take an evening to read Jonah chapter 3 with them and do this activity. Kids can learn the Bible too!

As you read Jonah 3 have one person act as God again like our activity in Jonah 1 and another person act as Jonah. Put a blindfold on Jonah's eyes. Now have "God" read Jonah 3. Everytime it says "arise" have "Jonah" take a step forward and everytime it says "turn" have Jonah turn around. As you finish Jonah 3 have the child take the blindfold off. Notice where are they? Who was directing their steps? Who was obeying?

Take some time to talk about how God is sovereign (controls all things). He knows what's best and is directing all things. Also discuss how everytime Jonah turned he was turning away from something. This is what we do when we repent from sin. We turn from that sin and towards God asking forgiveness for our sins.

Take a moment to thank the Lord for his mercy in our lives and forgiving us of our sins.

You can also discuss the four Jonah 3 summary questions with your children if it is age-appropriate. (What did this teach me about God? What are the contrasts between Jonah and Jesus? What does this teach me about others? and How does this change the way I think, feel, or act?)

## WEEK 4:

**Pray each day before you begin your study. If you're unsure what to pray you can pray something like this:**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for your word and how you use it to show me your greatness and glory. Thank you for your patience and mercy. I pray that you would help me understand your word today and that you would receive glory and honor in my life today. In Jesus' name, amen.*

### DAY 1: **Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read the book of Jonah one final time as a whole and circle every time you see the Lord appointing or commanding something. Write down each occurrence below.

### DAY 2: **Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 4.

Go back and mark the words "Lord" or "God" in purple.

Mark the words or phrases that show going up or going down in green.

Mark the words "great" or "exceedingly" in red.

If someone were to walk up and ask you what you just read about, how would you answer them? Try summarizing the two parts of the text in a few sentences (4:1-4 and 4:5-11).

**DAY 3: Comprehension: What does it say?**

Read Jonah 4. You're nearing the end of the study, don't skip this part now! Keep going with the repetitive reading!

Why is Jonah angry?

What is Jonah's real reason for not having wanted to go to Nineveh?

Why do you think Jonah went out east of the city and sat there?

What is God's response to Jonah's anger?

What does God appoint in this chapter? Why do you think He did that?

What point do you think God is trying to get across through the vine, worm, and wind?

How does the book end? Why do you think it ends this way?

**DAY 4: Interpretation: What does it mean?**

Read Jonah 4.

Jonah says that he knew God was “a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and one who relents from sending disaster.” He is quoting from Exodus. Read Exodus 33:18 - 34:9.

When Jonah quotes Exodus 34:6, he only quotes part of the description of God. Why is this omission important in understanding Jonah’s response?

How do we reconcile God’s grace and mercy that relents from sending disaster, but also the fact that he is a God who “will not leave the guilty unpunished”?

We see another prophet also very upset to the point of death in 1 Kings 19:3-18. How does the Lord respond to Elijah? What does this show us about the character of God?

What emotions is Jonah feeling in this chapter? What was he hoping for?

**DAY 5: Application: How should it change me?**

Read Jonah 4 for the last time, looking specifically for the characteristics of God you see in this chapter.

Jonah becomes very angry. What are some things that have made you very angry this week?

If God were to ask you if it is right for you to be angry about those things, how would you respond?

What does your anger reveal about your priorities? What does your anger reveal about how you understand God's mercy?

In Jonah 4, what does God care about? What does Jonah care about? Does your heart align more with the cares of the Lord or the cares of Jonah?

What do Matthew 6:28–34 and Matthew 28:18–20 show us in reference to what God cares about?

**DAY 6: JONAH 4 SUMMARY:**

What does this teach me about God?

What are the contrasts between Jonah and Jesus in this chapter? May our prayer be "Lord, make me more like Jesus and less like Jonah." Look specifically at Luke 19:41-44 for how Jesus responds to a situation similar.

What does this teach me about others?

In light of what you've seen about God in chapter 4, how should this change the way you think, feel, or act?

**Final Thoughts:**

What aspect of God's character have you seen the most as you have studied the book of Jonah? Why?

How has the Holy Spirit convicted you through the book of Jonah?

How has the Holy Spirit encouraged you through the book of Jonah?

What is one way that your life is different because of God's work in you through studying the book of Jonah?

What can you thank God for as a result of this study?

***Discussion Questions: (These questions will be discussed with your table at the beginning of Bible study this week. Take time to write down an answer for each of these so you are prepared for discussion at your table.)***

1. What has caused your heart to become angry this week and how does that reveal what your heart finds its joy in?

2. God's heart is for ALL to be saved. How does this change the way you think, feel, or act this week?

3. What has the Lord taught you through the study of Jonah this month?

## Kids Section (optional):

If you have children in your life, invite them into what you are studying! Take an evening to read Jonah chapter 4 with them and do this activity. Kids can learn the Bible too!

As you read Jonah 4 think about some of the things God has given you to enjoy. Have everyone list 3 of things, or better yet—gather them up! Do you have a favorite toy, a snuggly blanket, or a special cup you like to drink from?

Talk with your children about how God provides things for our comfort and enjoyment. These things should be viewed as gifts from a God who loves us and sees our needs. These things should give us a picture of what God is like—God creates things to show us he is real, powerful, and caring.

Take a moment to celebrate all that is good in God's creation. Thank the Lord that he exists, that he is good, and that he has created things we get to enjoy. Spend a moment enjoying a gift God has given you.

You can also discuss the four Jonah 4 summary questions with your children if it is age-appropriate. (What did this teach me about God? What are the contrasts between Jonah and Jesus? What does this teach me about others? and How does t

# Attributes of

*God is a personal God that can be known. Let's deepen our love for Him by delighting in who He is.*

## God is:

### **POWERFUL (OMNIPOTENT)**

There is no limit to God's power. He has the ability and strength to do whatever He wants. Nothing is difficult for Him.

### **PRESENT (OMNIPRESENT)**

God's presence isn't limited to time or place. He is everywhere and is always giving active attention. He is always with you.

### **KNOWING (OMNISCIENT)**

God is the root of all knowledge and understanding. No question is unanswerable; nothing is hard for Him to understand. Even our futures are fully known to Him.

### **IN CONTROL (SOVEREIGN)**

All authority belongs to God. Nothing is outside of His command and purpose. Creation, circumstances, and events are in His hands.

### **PURE (HOLY)**

God is set apart and completely perfect. His integrity is without flaw. There is nothing that compares to His magnificence.

# God

## **JUST**

He rightly weighs good and evil, innocence and guilt. His verdict is always correct and uncorrupted. He will not allow evil to go without punishment.

## **LOVE**

God is true love. His essence is lovely so He generates love to share with His creation. This love never stops because God never ceases to be Himself.

## **MERCIFUL**

God desires to relieve us of the result of our sin. His mercy is what keeps judgment and wrath from destroying us instantly. Instead, He gives time and opportunity to repent and be restored to the right relationship with Him.

## **UNCHANGING (IMMUTABLE)**

God is true to Himself. If He was, He still is, and will always be. If He promises, He fulfills. He never goes off-course.

## **GRACIOUS**

God is lavish in generosity, giving freely as an overflow of His greatness. His grace is not something to be earned or received as a wage we could work towards. Rather, He gives without condition because He is great.

