

Discussion Guide

March 22, 2026

Hey... You Are Running The Wrong Direction

Built Different Week 4

Pastor Daniel Groves

Main Idea

God does not call His people merely to hear His voice, but to obey His direction. The story of Jonah reveals that spiritual resistance often looks less like confusion and more like deliberate hesitation. This matters now because many believers desire God's blessing while resisting the very path He has clearly placed before them. As one season closes and another begins, the Lord often confronts the places where we have been running from His will. Spiritual formation deepens when we stop negotiating with God and surrender fully to His purpose.

Anchor Verse: *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* (Ephesians 2:10, ESV).

Anchor Passage: Jonah 1:1-17 NIV; Jonah 2:1-10

1. Running From God Never Produces Peace

Jonah's story makes clear that disobedience may create temporary distance, but it never creates lasting peace. He did not merely run from an assignment. He attempted to run from the presence of the Lord, and that decision led him into greater unrest. Many people mistake delay for safety, yet delayed obedience is still disobedience before God. The peace we seek is not found in avoiding God's will but in yielding to it. Christ calls His people not to manage conviction, but to respond to it with surrender and trust.

Scripture: Psalm 139:7-8, Jonah 1:4, Isaiah 30:15

Discussion: Reflect on an area of life where you may be calling your resistance wisdom, caution, or timing when it is really avoidance. Consider how running from God has affected your peace, clarity, or closeness with Him, even if outward life still appears manageable. What would it look like for you to stop delaying and to respond honestly to what the Lord has already made clear?

2. God Interrupts Our Plans To Restore Our Purpose

The storm in Jonah's life was not random chaos but divine interruption. God was not abandoning Jonah in the middle of his rebellion; He was confronting him with mercy. Even the great fish was not merely an instrument of judgment, but a means of preservation and redirection. What felt severe was actually the hand of God keeping Jonah from being lost completely. The Lord will often disrupt the plans we prefer in order to restore the purpose He has ordained. In Christ, divine interruption is often a form of rescue, even when it arrives in uncomfortable ways.

Scripture: Jonah 1:17, Proverbs 16:9, Hebrews 12:6

Discussion: Consider a moment when a closed door, difficult season, or unexpected disruption may have been God redirecting your steps rather than opposing you. Reflect on how quickly you interpret inconvenience as punishment instead of considering that the Lord may be preserving you through it. How might your perspective change if you viewed God's interruption not as rejection, but as mercy designed to restore your calling?

3. A God's Purpose Is Greater Than Our Feelings

A Jonah eventually prayed from the depths, and his prayer marked the beginning of renewed alignment with God. His feelings were real, but they were not meant to govern his calling. The Lord met him in distress, heard his cry, and spoke to him again, showing that God's purpose is not canceled by human reluctance. This is one of the great comforts of Scripture: God is patient, gracious, and persistent with His people. Yet His grace does not affirm our avoidance. It calls us back into obedience so that His redemptive purpose may move forward through our lives.

Scripture: Jonah 2:2, Jonah 3:1, Philippians 2:13

Discussion: Think about where your feelings have been louder than God's instruction and how that tension has shaped your recent decisions. Reflect on whether you have allowed fear, frustration, offense, or discomfort to become the final authority over your obedience. What would change in your life, family, or calling if you believed that God's purpose is still standing and that His invitation to obey is coming to you again with grace?

Scripture Of Confidence

"Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time."
(Jonah 3:1 NIV)

SUMMARY

Jonah's story reminds us that running from God never leads to peace, even when it appears to offer relief for a moment. The Lord loves His people enough to interrupt their detours and call them back to His purpose. His grace is steady, and His voice comes again, even after resistance and delay. Spiritual formation takes place when we stop excusing our hesitation and begin walking in surrendered

obedience. God's purpose remains greater than our fear, and His mercy is strong enough to call us forward again.

CALL TO ACTION

- **Identify one clear area** where you have been delaying obedience and submit that area to God in prayer this week.
 - **Write down the last instruction**, conviction, or prompting you know the Lord has placed on your heart and take one concrete step toward it.
 - **Thank God for His mercy** in your detours, then ask Him for courage to obey without further negotiation.
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GROUP LEADER RESOURCE

Direction Check Moment

Give each person two to three quiet minutes to complete this sentence on paper: "I know God has been calling me to _____, but I have been resisting because _____." Afterward, invite anyone who is willing to share briefly with the group, then pray together for courage, surrender, and renewed obedience.