

Discussion Questions

Date: February 8, 2026

Preacher: Matt Bovard

Sermon Outline

Talking Points

Running from Mercy | Jonah 1-2

God's Concern for Nineveh Causes the Prophet to Run (Jonah 1:1-16)

- God's call reveals His mercy and exposes the prophet's reservations. (1:1-3)
- The prophet's disobedience produces praise from those who do not know God. (1:4-16)
- **Question:** What reservations about God's mercy have caused you not to follow in obedience?

* What made Nineveh such a shocking destination for a prophet of Israel? Why would this assignment feel offensive or unjust to Jonah?

* Share about a time in your life where you actively went in the opposite direction of where God was asking you to go. What resulted from this?

* What is so miraculous and beautiful about God using Jonah's disobedience to reveal Himself to the pagan sailors? When have you seen God work despite your failures or mistakes?

Jonah's Prayer of Despair (Jonah 1:17-2:10)

- Jonah's prayer excludes accepting responsibility.
- Jonah's prayer excludes sincere repentance.
- **Question:** What are some areas of discontinuity between prayer and practice? Does your prayer life make room for you to confront your sins and express repentance?

* Whether it's from personal bias, stereotypes, or from simply bad experiences, are there people or groups in your life that you struggle to love and show mercy as Christ has?

* What is missing from Jonah's prayer, and why does it matter when it comes to repentance and restoration?

Bottom Line: God's call often exposes areas of reservation and resistance.

* When in your life have you found yourself praying similar prayers like Jonah did in this passage?

* Where in your life are you focused more on relief from consequences rather than repentance from sin? How will you actively pursue authentic repentance this week?

Understanding Scripture

1. Read the passage aloud.

- Question: How would the original audience have understood this passage?
- Question: What was God's desire for them?

2. Reread key verse(s) aloud.

- Question: What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
- Question: What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?

3. Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.

- Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
- Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
- If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.

4. Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group ("Okay, so far we've seen in Amos...")

- Question: What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
- Question: How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Prayer Requests

