

Note: Again, don't feel pressure to "get through ALL of the questions". The goal of the study is to marinate a bit more on Jonah, then explore how the truths of God's Word impact the lives on those in your group. Encourage everyone to contribute. Listen carefully. Encourage freely and love deeply.

Warming Up

If you had a chance to take a cruise anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

What role has "distance from family" played in your decision of where to go to school or live?

Have you ever been caught in a terrible storm while traveling?

Digging Deeper

Softball Questions:

What was surprising about God's command for Jonah? Why do you think Jonah disobeyed? What effect did God's calming the storm have on the sailors?

Hardball Questions:

When have you "run from God"? Has there been a clear sense of God's leading that you ignored...walked away from?

Read Psalm 139-7-12. What does this passage tell us about getting away from God?

What storms brought you back to God?

Read Jonah 2. What changed in Jonah's heart...in the way he now related to God?

Describe a time in your life that you felt far from God...perhaps stuck in a situation beyond your ability to control. How did God bring your life "up from the pit" or has He?

For a time in my life, I feared being "all in" for God. Because I thought He might send me to Ninevah...or Africa or Siberia. How does this reflect a wrong understanding of God? What is God's purpose when He allows storms to come into our lives?

Bringing it Home

Read Ephesians 2:8-10. In his book, the Purpose Driven Life, Rick Warren uses the acronym, S.H.A.P.E. to describe how God has uniquely designed each of us to serve a purpose He has for us in His kingdom work.

If you have time...share with the group what you believe your unique S.H.A.P.E. is? It's not an exact science. Rather, it's a tool to help think about and to be encouraged that God designed us for His purpose.

Here is what the acronym stands for:

SPIRITUAL GIFTS. Have you ever explored the gifts God gave you when you became a follower of Jesus?

HEART AND PASSION. What areas of your life are you passionate about? Have you ever stopped to consider that perhaps God placed that passion in you?

ABILITY. What natural abilities has God given you? Some people are book smart and love nothing more than studying. Others are more playful and enjoy socializing. Some of you are wired as good athletes or creative people. How might God use your natural ability for His work in your circle of influence?

PERSONALITY. We all have a personality. God gave you this to relate to others in specific ways.

EXPERIENCES. The good, the bad and the ugly. God uses all of it for His Good (Romans 8:28).

Talk about how the unique combination of S.H.A.P.E. in your own life might be guiding you into the career/ministry that God has for you?

Pray for one another.