

## **Waves of Mercy**

### **Week 1: Mercy On the Run**

**Objective:** To help us recognize and respond to God's mercy in our lives.

**ICEBREAKER:** Think about a time when you worked harder avoiding a task than it would have taken to simply do it.

- What was the task?
- Why were you avoiding it?
- Looking back, was avoiding it worth the effort?

#### **1. Mercy Is More Than We Think**

The sermon defined mercy as:

**"Kindness, forgiveness, and compassion shown to someone when you have the power to punish or harm them."**

- Before this message, how would you have defined mercy?
- Why do you think we naturally love receiving mercy but often struggle to see others receive it?
- When is showing mercy most difficult?

#### **2. Jonah's Real Problem**

Jonah didn't run because Nineveh was dangerous. Ultimately, he ran because he didn't want God to forgive them.

- Why do you think Jonah resisted God's mercy toward Nineveh?
- Have you ever found yourself wanting justice for someone else more than mercy?
- What does Jonah's attitude reveal about the human heart?

#### **3. Running from God**

The sermon pointed out that Jonah wasn't simply running from a task—he was running from where obedience would lead.

- Why do we sometimes resist what God has clearly asked us to do?
- What are some modern ways people "run" from God without literally going anywhere?
- Why is obedience often harder than we expect?

#### **4. When Mercy Feels Like a Storm**

One of the key statements in the sermon was:

**"Sometimes God's mercy looks like a storm."**

- What do you think that means?
- Have you ever experienced a difficult circumstance that, looking back, became an instrument of God's grace?
- Why is it often hard to recognize God's mercy in the middle of hardship?

#### **5. You Can't Outrun Mercy**

Throughout Jonah's downward journey, God's mercy continued pursuing him.

- What stood out to you about Jonah's continual descent?
- Why is it encouraging that God's mercy keeps pursuing us even when we keep running?
- How does this deepen your understanding of God's character?

#### **6. Mercy Reaches Unexpected People**

While Jonah resisted God's mission, the pagan sailors encountered the living God.

- What irony do you see in this part of the story?
- What does this teach us about God's ability to accomplish His purposes despite our failures?
- Have you ever seen God work through someone despite their imperfections?

#### **7. The Fish Was Mercy**

The fish seemed like judgment, but it actually became Jonah's rescue.

- Why do you think we often mistake God's rescue for punishment?
- What "fish" has God used in your life to stop you from heading in the wrong direction?
- How can difficult circumstances become opportunities for repentance and growth?

## **8. Personal Application**

The sermon asked an important question:

**"Where am I resisting what God has said because I don't like where obedience might lead?"**

Spend a few moments reflecting.

- Is there an area where God has already made His will clear?
- What fears make obedience difficult?
- What is your next step of obedience this week?

### **FINAL THOUGHT**

Jonah thought he was running away from God. Instead, he discovered he was running into God's relentless mercy. God's mercy didn't excuse Jonah's rebellion.

It confronted him.

Interrupted him.

Rescued him.

The same God still pursues us today. He refuses to abandon us to the paths that lead away from Him because His mercy loves us too much to let us remain there.

**God's mercy pursues us even when we run.**

### **THIS WEEK – STOP RUNNING**

This week, spend time asking God to reveal any area where you've been resisting Him.

### **REFLECT**

Ask yourself:

**"Where am I resisting what God has already made clear?"**

### **CONFESS**

Bring that area honestly before God.

Don't defend it.

Don't explain it.

Simply acknowledge it.

### **OBEY**

Take one concrete step toward obedience this week.

It may be a conversation.

A confession.

An act of forgiveness.

A step of faith.

Or simply saying "yes" where you've been saying "no."

### **REMEMBER**

When obedience feels difficult, remind yourself:

**God isn't pursuing me to destroy me. He's pursuing me because He loves me.**