

## Reflecting on Jonah 1-4 July 15, 2018

### General Questions

*(This section aims to identify your current or initial understanding of the story. It is recommended that you answer the following questions prior to studying the book of Jonah further.)*

1. What is your current understanding of the story of Jonah? Specifically, would you describe this story using mostly positive or negative terms? Explain your answer.
  
2. Most people tend to start Jonah's story by highlighting the great fish mentioned at the end of chapter 1. Why do you think this part of the story is so important? What are some other parts of the story that are equally, if not more, essential?

### **Specific Questions**

*(This section is intended to be completed as you study through the book of Jonah.)*

3. Like other Old Testament prophets, Jonah's story begins with him receiving "the word of the Lord" (1:1). How is Jonah's response to God's call different from other OT prophets? Why do you think he reacts the way he does?
  
4. As a great storm threatens to break apart the ship headed to Tarshish, Jonah confesses his faith in God (see 1:9). Do Jonah's words encourage you or surprise, and perhaps, confuse you? Explain your answer.
  
5. Read the sailors' reaction to Jonah's testimony in 1:10. Although Scripture does not give a response to their exclamation, "What is this that you have done!" how might an honest Jonah have answered them?

6. At the end of his prayer in chapter 2, Jonah makes an important admission: "Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love." Soon after the prophet declares, "Salvation belongs to the Lord!" What do these verses teach us about God's sovereignty in our lives? What is at risk when we try to reject His authority and love?
  
7. Jonah's "sermon" to the people of Nineveh is only a sentence long, and yet God uses it to bring an entire nation to repentance. How does this amazing conversion reinforce the truth from Jonah's prayer: "Salvation belongs to the Lord!"?

How does this truth encourage you in your witness to those around you?

8. How does Jonah's prayer in chapter 4 differ from his earlier one in chapter 2? What is Jonah revealing about his own heart even as he rehearses truth about God?

9. Having read (perhaps re-read) through the book of Jonah, how might you answer the *General Questions* of this handout differently, if at all? How would you summarize the message of the book of Jonah?

10. *Application:* Who might be some “Ninevites” in your own life? To ask the question differently, whom are some people that God may be calling you to share the Gospel with? What feelings might you need to overcome to be the witness God wants you to be?