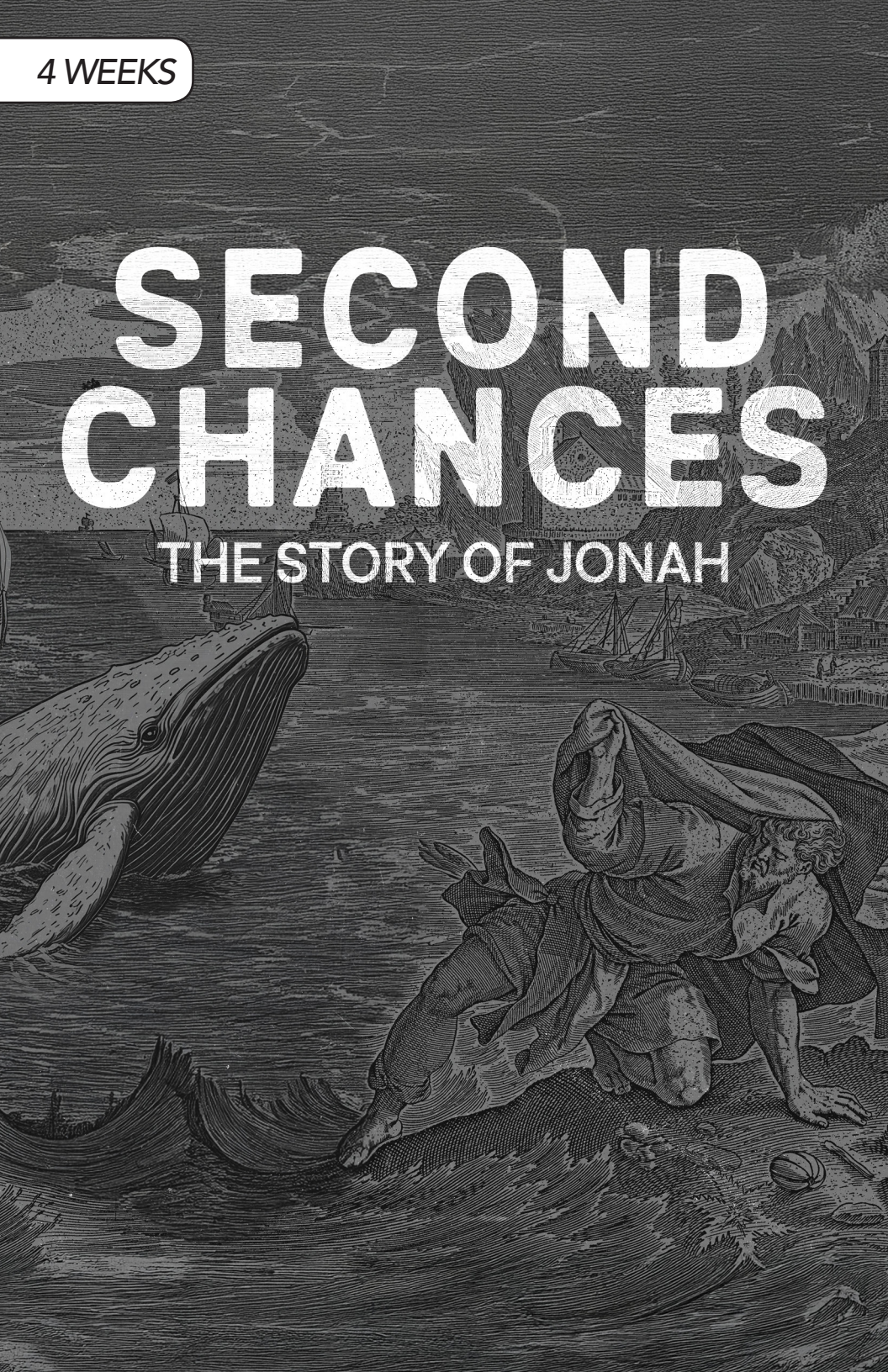


4 WEEKS

SECOND CHANCES

THE STORY OF JONAH





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Have you ever wanted a do-over? We all want second chances, but we sometimes struggle to offer them. What if that reluctance is hindering our own fresh start? As we dive into the book of Jonah, we will discover how one man found his second chance in the most unexpected way.

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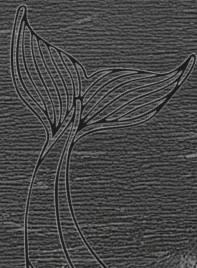
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GOD'S PLANS ARE WRECKING MINE



WEEK 1 SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

Think of a time when you needed directions but tried to go without. How did that experience go?

Read:

This week, we are covering Jonah 1. Read chapter 1 together as a small group.

Big Idea:

We often want to hear from God and know His will, but sometimes we don't want to do what He says. Obedience to God isn't always easy, but disobedience always has consequences.

Key Scriptures:

Jonah 1:3

But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare,

he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

Discussion:

1. In what ways are your plans and God's plans often different?
2. Read Jonah 1:3. Why do you think Jonah chose to run from God?
3. In this week's message, Lydia discussed the idea of how the devil is happy to help you when you want to run from God. What do you think about that? Has there been a time in your life when this has been true?
4. Where in your life are you rationalizing sin and running from God? What is God calling you to do about it?

Group Prayer:

Father, thank You for Your grace toward us and always giving us a second chance. Please show us what You want us to do and give us the courage and boldness to do it. In Jesus' name, amen.

This Week:

Find one way to stop rationalizing sin and running from God. Be ready to talk about it with your Small Group the next time you meet.

Prayer Focus:

Pray for those who attended Sunnybrook's services for the first time at Christmas. Pray they would take a next step and join us at the church's campus.

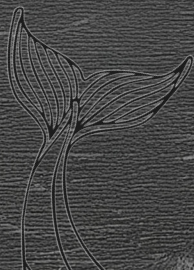
Memory Verse:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9



NOTES:

WHEN YOU'RE WAITING ON GOD



WEEK 2 SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

Where did you stop running from God and start running to Him last week?

What are your initial thoughts or feelings about prayer?

Read:

This week, we are covering Jonah 2. Read chapter 2 together as a small group.

Big Idea:

Sometimes what we call a problem, God calls provision. God doesn't always give us what we want, but He'll always give us what we need. Hard times teach us new ways to depend on Him. God is still working in your life, so you can ask Him for help.

Key Scriptures:

Jonah 2:1-2

From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. He

said: "In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry."

Discussion:

1. When you have a problem in your life, how early do you typically start praying about it?
2. Read Jonah 2:1-2. What does this Scripture show you about God's character? How does this make you feel about trusting in God?
3. Share about a time when you faced a hardship or difficulty. What did you learn about God through that experience?
4. Talk about any ways you're currently waiting on God. In this waiting, what might God be trying to show you, and how can you respond with prayer and praise?

Group Prayer:

Lord, thank You for Your faithful love. If there is anything You

want to show us, or somewhere we need to change direction, please make it clear. Please help us to trust You, and to believe that You're working even in our waiting. In Jesus' name, amen.

This Week:

One of the primary ways that we can depend on God is through prayer. This week, find one way to make prayer a more regular part of your routine.

Prayer Focus:

Pray for the Hope Center and their staff. Pray that God would continue to use their food distribution and Walk With Me programs to make an eternal impact in the lives of the people who utilize it.

Memory Verse:

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9



NOTES:

GOD'S NOT DONE WITH YOU



WEEK 3 SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

How were you able to make prayer part of your daily routine last week?

Have you ever given an activity or food a second chance?

Read:

This week, we are covering Jonah 3. Read chapter 3 together as a small group.

Big Idea:

We have all messed up and disobeyed God, but the good news is that God gives us a second chance. He calls us to repent, turn away from our sins, and turn toward Him.

Key Scriptures:

Isaiah 30:18

Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

Jonah 3:1

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time...

Discussion:

1. What are some similarities and differences between believing in God and trusting in God?
2. Read Isaiah 30:18. What is your first thought or feeling when you read this verse? How could this verse influence the way you view your relationship with God?
3. Read Jonah 3:1. Where might God be reaching out to you again? How are you going to respond?
4. What is God trying to show you? Is there a sin He wants to save you from, or an opportunity He's calling you to explore?

Group Prayer:

God, thank You for Your patience and mercy toward us. Help us to see the second chances You've given us. Please help us to see what our next

steps are and give us the boldness to take them. In Jesus name, amen.

This Week:


Spend time thinking about what God is showing you. Make a choice to do something about it this week.

Prayer Focus:

Pray that people would take the next step and join a group through our Small Groups launch happening at the beginning of February.

Memory Verse:

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
Lamentations 3:21-23



NOTES:

WHEN YOUR EMOTIONS ARE OUT OF CONTROL



WEEK 4

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

What was God showing you last week? What did you do about it?

What is one of your pet peeves?

Read:

This week, we are covering Jonah 4. Read chapter 4 together as a small group.

Big Idea:

It's easy to celebrate God's blessings when they happen on your terms. But what about when He doesn't respond the way you think He should? When we have a bad attitude, it damages our relationship with God and the people in our lives.

Key Scriptures:

Jonah 4:9-11

But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" "It is," he said.

"And I'm so angry I wish I were dead." But the Lord said, "You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?"

Discussion:

1. What has been your biggest takeaway from the Second Chances: The Story of Jonah message series?
2. Read Jonah 4:9-11. Where might you be tempted to choose your own will in your life, and how could you trust God instead?
3. Have you experienced a time when you chose to skip God's lessons and go straight for His blessings? What opportunities do we miss when we ignore God's lessons?

4. Where might God be giving you another chance? What choice will you make in response?

Group Prayer:

Lord, thank You for always giving us second chances. We trust Your will and Your plan, even when it's different from what we want. Please help us to keep our emotions under control so that we can love You and others well. In Jesus' name, amen.

This Week:

Pay attention to where God is giving you second chances this week. Talk about what you learn with your Small Group.

Prayer Focus:

Pray for our Kids' Ministry team. Pray that they would continue to come up with fun and memorable ways for families to grow in their relationship with God together.

Memory Verse:

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7



NOTES:

THE JONAH POEM

by Harry E. Fletcher

CHAPTER 1

The Lord told Jonah to arise
And go to Nineveh. God's eyes
Had seen their sin. Their time was up,
And soon they'd drink God's wrath-filled cup.
But Jonah didn't want to go
To preach this dreadful word of woe.
So down to Joppa Jonah trod
To try to get away from God.
He got on board a ship that day
And sailed for Tarshish far away.
In vain the prophet tried to flee;
God sent a storm upon the sea.
Each sailor quickly grabbed an oar
And vainly tried to row to shore.
The prophet told them 'bout his sin
And said, "You'll need to throw me in,
If you want God this storm to end
And make the waters calm again."
With heavy hearts they followed through
And tossed him in the ocean blue.
The Lord then sent a great big fish
To swallow up this tasty dish.
Three days & nights God's man was there.
In chapter two we see his prayer:

CHAPTER 3 (CONT.)

With mighty mercy God the Lord,
Despite their sins which He abhorred,
Withheld the judgment they deserved.
When their repentance He observed.

CHAPTER 4

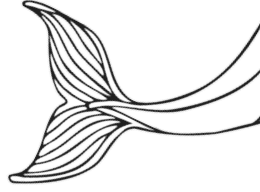
And what of Jonah? you may ask.
Upon completion of his task,
He made his great displeasure known
To God for all the grace He'd shown.
"That's why I fled from You at first –
Because You love the very worst!
Your grace is great, Your anger slow.
Why must You such great mercy show?"
Then, angry as a man can be,
He said, "Lord, take my life from me."
But God replied, "Do you do well
To be so mad?" – And then, do tell,
The prophet sat beneath the shade
Wrought by a plant the Lord had made.
This set-up made old Jonah smile,
And he felt happy for awhile.
But then a worm sent by the Lord
Ate up that lush, gigantic gourd.

CHAPTER 2

"I called to God in my distress,
Surrounded by the ocean's depths,
Where weeds were wrapped around my head;
I thought I was as good as dead.
Yet in that deep, dark, dreadful place,
God showed me mercy, love, and grace -
The things that I could not perceive,
But chose by faith to still believe.
From fish's gut I give my praise
To You, the sov'reign God who saves."
'Twas then God did the fish command;
It threw up Jonah on dry land.

CHAPTER 3

With slimy Jonah back on shore,
God spoke to him just like before.
Determined this time to obey,
The prophet left without delay
For Nineveh, that no-good town,
Where God would rain his judgment down.
"In forty days, you'll be o'erthrown!"
The prophet said in somber tone.
The people listened and believed.
They fasted, prayed, and greatly grieved
O'er all their sin, from which they turned
To serve the one true God they'd spurned.



The sun beat down on Jonah's brow.
He faintly prayed, "Lord, kill me now."
Then came this answer from the Lord:
"You showed such pity for the gourd -
A plant not made or grown by you,
And here for just a day or two.
Should I not care for Nineveh
Whose multitudes are lacking the
Discernment to choose right from wrong -
One hundred twenty thousand strong?
Remember, there are cattle too,
Which may not mean that much to you;
But they are worth more than a gourd
And matter much to me, the Lord."

And on this note the story ends.

What difference will it make, my friends,

In our own lives as we think through

The lessons here for me and you?

When God commands, will we obey,

Or will we run the other way?

Is mercy just for me and you,

And not for other peoples too?

The sign of Jonah points today

To Jesus Christ, the living Way.

He died and rose to save the lost.

Let's spread the news whate'er the cost.

Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
 - Take time to prepare.
 - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
 - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
 - What is the purpose of our group?
 - What is the vision for our group?
 - What are your expectations?
 - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
 - What are some things we value as a group?
 - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?

Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
 - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
 - Encouraging and challenging one another
 - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

Group Agreement

OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: _____

OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes _____
- Childcare _____
- When we will meet (day of week) _____
- Where we will meet (place) _____
- We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be _____
- Date of this agreement _____
- Date we will review this agreement again _____
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study _____



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