

# JOURNEY TOWARD GOD - 1

## Rejecting God's Call

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here." - Matt. 12:39-41

"Men have been looking so hard at the great fish, that they have failed to see the great God."  
- G. Campbell Morgan

Sometimes we read the word of God and miss the whole point of it, because we are looking at the wrong things. Regarding the story of Jonah, G. Campbell Morgan said, "Men have been looking so hard at the great fish, that they have failed to see the great God." The main character in this book is neither the prophet nor the great fish but God, who is mentioned thirty-eight times. The story draws attention to the unstoppable purposes of God to extend His grace to both a wicked city as well as a prodigal prophet.

### Welcome

Have you ever been caught in a terrible storm? Describe it.

### Word

**Read Jonah 1:1-17.**

1. Why does Jonah respond as he does to God's call for him to go to Nineveh? What are some similar signs of self-willfulness you have seen in your own life?
2. What were the consequences of Jonah's willful behavior? What is one negative consequence you've had to face because of a willful decision you've made?
3. What is ironic about Jonah's response to the sailors (vs 9) and their reaction to an increasingly dangerous situation (vss 13-16)? What does the outcome imply about God's ability to work out His purposes?
4. Can you identify your "Nineveh?" What is the word of God you don't want to hear at the moment? Share one area of your life in which you need the prayers and support of your small group as you seek to submit to God's will rather than follow your own desires.
5. What is a practical, measurable, and possibly painful change you will have to make in order to nurture a willing spirit in this area of your life?

### Worship

Pray together as a group and thank God for His saving patience. Praise Him for loving you through both your willful and willing times. Celebrate His commitment to love you even when you wander from Him.

### Works

You can run, but you can't hide! What is one scripture you could memorize that would encourage you toward a deeper love for God and commitment to seek His will and not your own?