



... when you need a break from the daily grind



JONAH FOR GROWN-UPS: A PICTURE OF GOD'S OUTRAGEOUS GRACE

#1 of 6: *Jonah drops out*

➤ **READY TO GO**

Ever had to do something you really didn't want to do? You knew it was the right thing but you also knew it might involve difficulty or rejection or something else unpleasant and you balked at the prospect. Did you go through with it and do what was right or did you try and get out of it? Enter Jonah. He is the poster boy for Christians who don't want to do what God wants. Can you see yourself in Jonah? Let's find out...

➤ **READ**

- **Read Jonah 1:1-3.** What encouragement do you take from the fact that God's word came to Jonah? (verse 1)
- In what ways does God speak to us today and what can you do this week to make it easier for you to hear God's voice?
- In your situation what might be a similar task to the one God gave Jonah? (verse 2) How do you think you would react to it?
- Can you think of times in your life when you have run away from God? (verse 3) How did you feel and how did you get back to Him?
- Does anything strike you about the sequence of steps Jonah followed in his attempt to run from God?
- In what ways do you think we can evaluate circumstances as we seek to know God's guidance for our lives?

➤ **REFLECT**

Ever needed guidance? We always seem to want guidance from God in life, but the problem more often than not is that we know what God's will is, we just don't want to do it. Jonah was in no doubt about what God wanted, but he didn't want to be moved out of his comfort zone so he tried to get away from God. We sometimes try to run from God too. We turn our back on him; we lose sight of Him, we no longer hear his voice; we stop walking in step with him. This is a dangerous place to be. Jonah was disobeying God, yet at first sight circumstances seemed to be in his favour. He found a ship going to Tarshish; there was a berth; he had money to pay for it; the weather was favourable; BUT he was trying to get away from God. Favourable circumstances don't necessarily mean we are going in the right direction in life. We need to evaluate circumstances by the Bible, asking for the help of the Holy Spirit and also running our situation by a few trusted friends. But then of course this all assumes that we actually WANT to obey God.....

Favourable circumstances don't necessarily mean we are living right. And unfavourable circumstances don't necessarily mean we are living wrong. The key issue is MOTIVE. If we want to do what God wants then we can use circumstances to guide us – provided we've been to the Bible first.

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Unless otherwise stated, the Bible version used is the New International Version.