



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



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

### #2 of 6: *Sailors freak out*

#### ➤ **READY TO GO**

Do you know what it's like to freak out? To really be at your wits' end with fear and confusion? In these circumstances people sometimes make rash promises to God which they fail to keep when things improve. This is sometimes called "foxhole faith". Have you ever done this? "God if you get me out of this mess I'll go to church more regularly" or "I'll put more money in the collection plate" or something similar. Let's meet a group of sailors who were in dire straits but who turned to God after they saw His power and faithfulness.

#### ➤ **READ**

- **Read Jonah 1:4-16.** What encouragement do you take from the fact that God sent a storm to engulf Jonah's ship? (verse 4)
- Can you think of a time when someone who is not a Christian challenged you? (verses 5, 6) How did you respond?
- What aspects of Jonah's confession are positive and which negative (verses 7-10). What practical lesson do you learn from this?
- What do you learn about personal responsibility from Jonah's instruction to the sailors? (verses 11, 12)
- How does the change in the sailors' attitude to God (verses 13, 14) encourage you as you try to witness for Christ?
- What elements of genuine life change did the sailors show (verses 15, 16) and how does this challenge or encourage you?

#### ➤ **REFLECT**

A believer's disobedience can cause a great deal of trouble. So Jonah landed these poor sailors in a right fix. The storm was the worst they had ever experienced. They did what they could. They cried to their own gods. They threw the cargo overboard. They challenged the sleeping prophet to renewed devotion to his God. They rowed with all their might. But all to no avail. The only solution was to throw Jonah into the sea. Jonah the disobedient, but now contrite, prophet. But before they did that they cried out to the Lord, the only true God, in a statement of faith that shamed Jonah's disobedience. Then it happened – a flat calm. The sailors believed in God when He showed up in person, but by then Jonah was in the sea, tangled in weed and drowning. He wasn't there to see these hardened sailors, those worshippers of false gods, those men who thought they could save themselves from the storm, turn to the Only True God. How sad...

**God will accomplish his purpose with or without our help. Our disobedience won't thwart God's purposes but will cause a lot of trouble to many innocent people and will rob us of much blessing.**