

## SMALL GROUP GUIDE: JONAH - PART 2

*Keep this conversation no longer than 40-45 minutes. Do your best to draw out the contributions of everyone. Don't be 'rigid' in the use of this guide - reword or change or leave out questions if you want. Be aware of any people who might not yet be Christ-followers, and be inclusive of them.*

### Understanding and applying Jonah chapter 1

1. *Download and play the 7 minute audio clip available on the website, called 'Jonah 2 Audio Summary.mp3.'*
2. *Read verses 4-6.* The sailors represent people who, for whatever reason, don't fully believe in the God of the Bible. The first thing they need to hear is that, though they think of themselves as being irreligious, in fact they're still worshippers - who find their identity and meaning in such things as wealth, pleasure, family etc. As you reflect on 'sailors' around you what are the most common 'gods', those things people live for?
3. The problem with living for the 'gods' rather than God is that the gods 1) can't lastingly fulfil, 2) don't forgive you when you fail them and 3) ultimately will forsake you! Does that ring true in your own experience?
4. *Read verses 15-16.* At first the sailors try earn divine acceptance through obedience (as all religions other than the way of Christ encourage), but later realize that they're accepted by sheer grace (paid for by Jonah's sacrifice) and once they're accepted they want to obey (v15-16). To summarize, the way of religion is summed up: 'obey then you're accepted'. The way of Christ is 'be accepted (because of Christ's loving sacrifice) and then obey'. Does this fundamental difference make sense to you?
5. Jonah seems to avoid the sailors. They have spiritual questions, and he has spiritual answers but his avoidance of them means he can't help them at all. How about you? Do you feel you're below deck? Who are the 'sailors' that you spend most time with? How can you spend more time with more people far from God?
6. *Read verses 8-9.* Jonah makes an impact upon the sailors by telling them about his God. What would you say - in one sentence or paragraph - is the heart of the message we need to communicate to people far from God?
7. *Read verses 11-12.* Jonah lovingly lays down his life for the sailors. He communicates a message through his deeds. Do you have any stories to tell of you or someone else who was Christian related to people who don't know God in such a way that it either put them off God, or perhaps got them more interested? Tell us.

### Pray together

*Either as a whole group or in subgroups of 3 people:* Respond in prayer to the insights that came from tonight's conversation. Be sure to ask for opportunities to reach out to people far from God.