

“Jonah: God’s Heart”

Growth Group Guide

November 30, 2025

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

God’s good, loving, gracious heart is a delight and is His primary mode of operation. Our study of the book of Jonah showed that His heart and character was, and is, the same in any time-period and on any day. God is deeply trustworthy. But, sometimes we see God different on our good days vs. our bad days. Discuss reasons why this might occur. Why might Jonah have thought it a bad idea to trust God even though he knew God?

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Read the verses below. Celebrate that God is deeply trustworthy, His heart is completely good, and His love abounds with grace.

Psalm 91:2 (NIV) I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

1 Peter 1:3 (NIV) His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly live through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

John 1:16-18 (MSG) We all live off his generous abundance, gift after gift after gift. We got the basics from Moses, and then this exuberant giving and receiving, This endless knowing and understanding—all this came through Jesus the Messiah. No one has ever seen God, not so much as a glimpse. [Jesus] this one-of-a-kind God-Expression, who exists at the very heart of the Father, has made him plain as day.

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. **Read Jonah 4:2b NIV.** What character qualities of God does Jonah mention? How would you define each of these qualities?
2. What other character qualities do you know of God? Do you know where these qualities are mentioned in Scripture?
3. Jonah knew these things about God, but they didn’t change him. What things might need to occur to make information about God become first-hand experience in our relationship with Him? Why is this important?
4. **Read 1 Samuel 16:7.** Compare and contrast how humanity and God look at people? What’s most important? What are they each after? **Read Ezekiel 36:26** to discover the heart God sees inside a Christian.
5. In chapter 1 of Jonah, how do the events described look different to you in light of God’s character qualities you listed above?
6. Jonah’s prayer in chapter 2 could look good on the surface. However, we know where his head really is based on chapter 4. What elements may have been different in his prayer had he been engaging with God based on what he said he knew about God?

7. How do you see God’s character displayed in chapter 3? Do you see any other characteristics you might add to your list from above?
8. God works with each of us personally. How do you see that displayed in God’s interactions with Jonah in chapter 4? God wants us to have connected understanding between who is and what we are experiencing. How is He trying to accomplish that with Jonah? How might He be wanting to accomplish that with us?
9. What character trait or traits of God would you like to grow in? Why are these particularly meaningful to you at this time?
10. We’ve reached the end of our trip through the book of Jonah. What have been some highlights and take-aways for you? How would you summarize what the book is all about?

WALK *(Living out God’s purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea: We are transformed by knowing and embracing God’s heart for us.** Enjoy reflecting this week on how God has the same love and compassion for us that He had for Jonah. He wants us to know He’s gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in love, and that He’s eager not to destroy us especially when difficulties arise.
- ✓ God knows our attitudes and habits of living independent of Him, and He will allow, the impossible into our lives to bring the unhealthy into the open so it can be dealt with. This week, as you consider what God is teaching you through the story of Jonah, a few things to focus on: 1) Graciously and with gratitude, receive whatever unhealthy habits or attitudes God is lovingly exposing to you. 2) Seek, and then embrace, His heart for you in this experience. No need to fight Him or perform for Him. 3) Let Him fill you with His Spirit to join Him in His good work in you. 4) Praise Him for all the benefits He has ahead for you as you trust and walk the road of transformation.

WORLD *(Embracing God’s heart for others)*

81.3 percent of Nepalis are Hindus. There are small Muslim and Christian minorities as well as a growing Marxist (atheistic communist) movement. Families, communities, Marxist groups, and Hindu groups pressure Christians who are seen as people who “destroy culture” and promote foreign religions. Christians face false accusations, harassment and beatings. Christians are considered to be untouchables. Pray for our special missionary who travels around Nepal sharing the Gospel that his work will be filled with the Spirit and he will be safe. Pray for his family to be safe and cared for too especially when he is away. Pray he will be able to get home safely during government unrest and weather crises. Pray that Christians whose churches have been attacked by Hindu mobs will reflect God’s love to their persecutors. Pray that Nepali believers will stand firm in their faith as Hindu nationalists promote opposition to Christians. Pray that every Christian in the country will have a copy of God’s Word. (*Global Prayer Guide by Voice of the Martyrs, accessed 11/25/25 at: <https://www.persecution.com/globalprayerguide/nepal/>*)

[Copies of this Guide are available at <https://thurston.church/resources>]