

“Jonah: Cut Loose”

Growth Group Guide

November 9, 2025

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

I’m sure you’ve heard the phrase, “It’s a sign of the times.” This phrase tries to point out that the period we live in is a bad, unwelcome one. In Matthew 12:39-41, when talking to Pharisees and teachers of the law, Jesus used Jonah (the man) as a sign...a sign of a person who passed through death and is now alive (resurrected)! Jesus was using Jonah to show the Pharisees and teachers of the law what would happen to Him soon, which would change the “times” forever, not for bad but for the best. They didn’t know it then, but Jesus was also giving a picture of what happens to the Christian IN Him. God puts us into Christ, and we die and raise with Him. How is this good news for the Christian? How is it good to know this for the “time” we live in?

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Read the verse below and praise God that because we are in Christ, His death and resurrection are really ours.

Romans 6:3-5 (PHILLIPS) Have you forgotten that all of us who were baptized [placed] into Jesus Christ were, by that very action, sharing in his death? We were dead and buried with him in baptism, so that just as he was raised from the dead by that splendid Revelation of the Father’s power so we too might rise to life on a new plane altogether. If we have, as it were, shared his death, let us rise and live new lives with/[in] him.”

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. **Read Jonah 2:5-10 NIV.** Why do you think Jonah is praying this prayer? Can you identify? Have you prayed like this at some point?
2. Based on Jonah 4, we know that Jonah isn’t changed much by his experience in the fish. How can you still see independent living in his prayer? How does Jonah interact with God? How does God respond?
3. Jonah travels through an experience of death and resurrection, but he doesn’t do it well, not allowing it to transform him. We too can go through experiences that feel like death and resurrection, but not be transformed by them. What is the essential starting point that allows us to benefit from experiences like this? (See **Matthew 26:39 and Psalm 51:16-17.**)
4. **Read Philippians 3:10 and Galatians 2:20.** God desires that Galatians 2:20 become a testimony for us, but it requires that we share an experience of Christ’s suffering and be conformed to His death, so His trip to the cross and resurrection become our trip to the cross and resurrection. Discuss why God would do this for us and why it is a gift?
5. We won’t go to the cross like Jesus, but what might be some ways we’d experience our spiritual cross and resurrection with Christ?

6. **Read Philippians 2:5-8.** How would you describe Jesus’s attitude in this passage? Why would Paul say it is valuable for us to have this attitude, especially when/if we are having and experience of our co-crucifixion with Jesus?
7. God orchestrated the exact events Jesus went through on His way to the cross, so we might know what we will go through as we experience our death and resurrection with Christ. It’s this path that frees us from fleshly living. Have you ever connected these experiences of Jesus with experiences of suffering you’ve had in your own life? How does seeing these connections change things for you?
8. An experiential knowing of our death with Jesus is what frees us from fleshly independent living. Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus walked His path through the cross because there was joy for Him on the other side of it. What joys are available to you on the other side of your death and resurrection experience with Jesus?

WALK *(Living out God’s purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea:** God frees us from our independent living by making our death and resurrection with Jesus a reality. Jonah wasn’t transformed by his death and resurrection experience, but we can be if we walk Jesus’ path with Him. Nobody likes the idea of “dying,” and the idea of joining Jesus on this path can be fearful. What concerns give you pause in stepping out in faith with Jesus on this path? Talk to God about it and a trusted friend if needed.

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

The motto of the See the City prayer guide is: “Know The City. Love The City. Pray For The City.” Each page of the guide gives us an informed way to know, love, and pray for our city and county. And as God answers our prayers, we as a church get to see God’s love at work in us and for our communities. On page two of the guide, you’ll find a guided prayer. Spend time this week praying it with faith. Pick up the November Update to hear encouraging testimonies of answered prayer. This month’s testimonies are about the youth and college students in our communities. During a time in our country when bad reports are heard everywhere, God is still good and doing more than we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).

Guided Prayer: “Lord, thank you for being here with me now. I want to know you more, and share in your love for my community. Increase my love for my neighbors as I pray. I see the needs are great. But as I lift my eyes to you, I’m reminded of your compassion, willingness, and wisdom. Holy Spirit, teach me to pray with faith, according to your limitless power. Help me see what you are doing in my city, and *what you will do*, if I ask. Help me see how to partner with you, as an answer to these prayers. Your Kingdom Come, Your will be done, *right here in my city*, as it is in heaven.” Amen. (See the City Guide, Sept-Dec, pg.2)

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