

RUNAWAY

A grown-up story about childish ways

DAY 1

READ Jonah 1:4-16.

Last week we read through the book of Jonah and made notes about Jonah, God, and the people of Nineveh; **LOOK** through what you wrote from chapter 1 under the columns titled “Jonah” and “God”. Although Jonah ran away, what did God do? (v.4) Violent storms have a way of refocusing our attention; the things that we may have been focused on, or had seen as being of upmost importance, quickly fade into the distance as we, in an effort to survive the storm, assess the situation and take appropriate action. In His kindness, God pursues Jonah and provides him with the opportunity to repent. But how does Jonah respond to the storm?

Can you relate to Jonah’s attempt to “sleep” through the storm, maybe denying that there was anything to worry about? The sailors were shocked that Jonah could sleep in the conditions they were experiencing...denial can be a powerful “sleep inducer”! Are you currently attempting to ignore a storm that is intended to provide a way of repentance? What led you to this point? **PRAY** for grace to see God’s truth and for courage to make the choices God is leading you to.

DAY 2

READ Jonah 1:4-16 again.

Today, **ADD** notes about the sailors; what did they do? What was their attitude? Their emotional state? Jonah’s decision to run from God, directly affected the lives of others. The choices we make, whether to do good or to do bad affect others, most often those we care about the most (or are closest to us). From the scripture, it doesn’t look like Jonah is in any hurry to face the reality of the storm; who does God use to *persuade* Jonah to “wake up” and deal with it?

Has there been a time that God used someone to speak truth to you? To perhaps “wake up” to something you weren’t wanting to face? To encourage you to “wake up” to the truth of a situation you didn’t want to face? If so, how did you respond? Have you served as a speaker of truth to someone? Did you speak from a heart of grace and love? If so, what was their response?

PRAY: Father, give me wisdom, grace, and love when You call me to speak a difficult truth into the life of someone else. Open my eyes to the realities in my own life that I might want to ignore, and for those times when I refuse to see, bring someone into my life to speak your words of truth to me. Father, thank you for never letting me go and for pursuing me with Your grace and love.

DAY 3

READ Jonah 1:9-12.

God had provided the storm as an opportunity for Jonah to repent, but ignoring the situation or mere admittance is not repentance. **READ** Acts 3:19, Acts 26:20b, and 2 Cor 7:10. How is repentance described in these verses? What does it mean to have Godly sorrow with regard to your sin? What does Godly sorrow actually lead to? Is God, in His kindness giving you an opportunity to repent? Will you fully take the opportunity He has provided?

DAY 4

READ Matthew 8:23-27.

Storms don’t always mean there is a need for repentance; God can also give us other opportunities in the midst of storms. **READ** through the verses again, what opportunity is given through the storm to the disciples? Did they miss the opportunity? If so, what difference could trusting God have made in their storm? How would that have affected their attitudes, thoughts, or actions?

THINK about a challenge, difficulty, or fear you are currently encountering. What does trusting God look like in that situation? What would an attitude of trust look like? What might thoughts centered in trusting God and trusting in His goodness, sound like? What specifically can you do to act on or rest in that trust today?

DAY 5

READ Matthew 14:22-33.

When Jesus told Peter to “come” (v 29), Peter was being given the opportunity to be enlarged, to be stretched in his own faith and to experience Jesus in a new way. Being moved from our comfort zone can not only force us to rely on God, it can provide us with the opportunity to grow in ways we would never experience otherwise. Instead of being centered on Jesus and focusing on Him, Peter focused on the impossibilities surrounding him. What might have been different if he had kept his focus on Jesus and obediently took one step at a time toward Jesus?

Where is God calling you to “come” right now? Where is he asking you to move from your own comfort zone in order to take steps of faith? How will you respond to Him?