

Supplemental Questions for The Twelve

JONAH

That's The One With The Whale In It, Right? (Introduction)

- Jonah's story seems to be written as an account of actual happenings and not as a made-up story. What makes it difficult for some to accept God working in ways that are beyond the natural?
- What tends to be the sticking point for some when it comes to things like miracles, prophecy, and God working in ways that humans cannot?

The Difference That God Makes

- Has there been a time when you questioned the way God was bringing something about in your life? What were your prayers to Him like at that time?
- How has God shown up at a time in your life or in the life of another in ways that were unexpected or worked in unusual ways to bring about His will?

What Are You Running From? (Jonah 1:2-3; Psalm 139:7-10)

- All sound thinking and wisdom can go right out the window when we're pushing against the work of God in our lives. Jonah is recorded as trying to run from the very presence of God. What would you tell someone who is running from God that you have learned from your own experience?

Rough Waters (Jonah 1:4-6, 7-9, 12)

- Have you had a moment when God strongly impressed something on you through someone else? Maybe someone you would not expect?
- God sometimes makes things difficult to get our attention, as we have already seen. He waits for us to stop running so He can meet us where we are and bring healing and restoration. What kinds of things in our minds and hearts drive us to run from God instead of to Him in response to His work in our lives?

The Fear Of God (Jonah 1:5-6, 9, 14-16)

- It was the pagan sailors who cried out to God in fear, not Jonah. It was those sailors who begged Jonah to pray for them in a time of need. Is it possible for us today as Christians to neglect our call to be ambassadors for Christ in praying earnestly for the lost? What kinds of things tend to cloud our spiritual eyes and cause us to lose a sense of urgency in sharing the Gospel with others in need?

From The Depths (Jonah 1:17, 2:1-9; Matthew 12:40-41)

- Sometimes the most honest prayers come from the darkest of places. Jonah's near-death experience finally opened his mouth to praise God. Was there a time in your life where things seemed about as low as they could get and you offered a question or prayer up to God? Do you have a prayer that came "from the depths"?

Second Chance (Jonah 3:1-2, 3-10; Jeremiah 18:7-10)

- Jonah went to great lengths to not only flee the will of God; he tried to flee from the very presence of God. He was searching out a place where he could put God behind him completely. It's hard to imagine a more offensive action than that. But God had plans for this rebel prophet and loved him through all of his rebellious actions and hot-headed tantrums. How patient God is with us! How have you experienced or seen the patience of God expressed and His unending love extended to those some might consider "undeserving."

Wishing God Were Different Than He Is (Jonah 4:1-2, 3, 4; 2 Kings 14:25-27)

- Jonah was very angry with God for accepting the repentant actions of the Assyrians who had made the lives of God's people so bitter for so long. How might someone have trouble with God forgiving someone or a people group who had caused them personal harm or hardship? How might wanting what God wants for them be difficult when an enemy is the subject of God's grace?

You Are Not A Jedi Yet (Exodus 34:6-7; Jonah 4:4-9, 10-11)

- God didn't see Jonah as the bumbling prophet that we might when reading this book. God was gracious and tender to this man who had obviously suffered a great deal under the hand of

those he was called to address. It's proof that we don't have to be perfect for God to work through us and teach us along the way as well. Has there been a time when you "flew off the handle" in some way at something that did not work to your expected outcome and God had to patiently teach you to trust Him?

Expectations (Jonah 4:2, 9-11)

- God doesn't always work in the ways we expect Him to, but He does always work for our good. How might having wrong expectations of God's work become confusing or frustrating? What are some practices that may help release those expectations and to trust God more with outcomes according to His good will?

