

# Life Group Notes

## God is with us

This week's Life Group study covers our All-In service on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. There was not a sermon as such, but we considered creatively how God is with us using the story of Jonah to help.

### To begin...

Share some times when you have known for sure that God was with you. How did that feel? What about the times when you weren't so sure?

**Read Jonah 1:1-3:3a** It's quite a long reading! For variety, you could split it up and have someone reading the narrative parts, someone being Jonah, others being the sailors on the ship, and a further person reading Jonah's prayer. It may be helpful to print out a few copies from [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and to highlight the various parts.

If all that is too complicated, simply read the verses in turn!

### Questions

1. In 1:1, 'the word of the Lord came to Jonah'. We're not told how, but how might it have come? How has the Lord's word come to you?
2. Jonah is told to go to Nineveh (located in modern-day Iraq) to preach against it. That was a tough call! What things has the Lord asked you to do that seemed too difficult? What was your response?
3. Jonah runs away from the Lord (1:3 & 10). In what ways today, do people run away from the Lord? What is the result?
4. Can we really run away from God? See Psalm 139.
5. When the sailors conclude that they must throw Jonah overboard to save themselves, the situation is bleak for Jonah! But God provides a big fish to swallow him (still quite bleak!). What can we learn from the prayer that Jonah offered to the Lord? What does Jonah learn from the experience?
6. Given a second chance by God, Jonah goes to Nineveh and preaches the word of the Lord. Unexpectedly, and remarkably, they believe in the Lord and repent. How might this encourage you when facing a tough task that God has given?
7. Read Matthew 12:38-41. Jonah is presented as a signpost to Jesus, albeit an imperfect one. As Jonah spent three days and nights in a fish, the Son of Man (Jesus) will spend three days and nights (there is some artistic licence here) in the earth. What did Jonah's 'resurrection' mean for him? What does Jesus' resurrection mean for us?

### To finish

There are many promises in the Bible that reassure us that God is with us. God says, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you' (Deut 31:6, Heb 13:5). There is the reminder of Immanuel ('God with us') in Matt 1:23. And Jesus says, 'Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age' (Matt 28:20). Be encouraged that God is always with you and there for you!

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