

# IT'S COMPLICATED

SIMPLIFYING EVERYDAY  
RELATIONSHIPS

## WEEK 2 | LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### CONNECT

- What's the one food or smell that just the thought of it makes you want to gag? Feel free to share a story.

### CONSIDER

- What encouraged or challenged you from the sermon and/or daily devotions this week?

### CHRIST

Read Jonah 1 as a group.

- Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire. The Assyrians were one of the cruelest and most violent peoples of ancient times. They were a constant threat to the Northern Kingdom of Israel throughout the life of Jonah. To Israel, they were a wicked people, enemies of their nation, and this is who God was calling Jonah to go preach to. **What seems both fitting and surprising about God's command and Jonah's reaction?**
- Having compassion means we are sympathetic and willing to step into the lives of others in the midst of their pain or struggles. It's pretty easy to infer why Jonah might have lacked compassion toward the Ninevites. Without realizing it, we can easily fall into the same traps as Jonah and lack compassion. **Read Colossians 3:12-14. What do you learn about compassion from this passage? What influences from your past or present have either grown or diminished your compassion for others?**
- Tarshish would have been located at the most western part of the known world to Israel. In other words, God called Jonah to go east, and he went as far west as he could go. **What are some of the reasons people run from God and His plan today? Can you think of a time when you ran from or resisted God?**
- After being swallowed by a big fish, chapter two is a record of Jonah's prayer of repentance. Spoiler alert, Jonah is still going to struggle, but God is merciful and patient. But, surrender is the beginning of all faith steps and a healthy relationship with God. **Read Luke 22:39-42, John 13:12-15, and 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. What do you learn about surrender from these passages?**

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**Read Jonah 3 as a group.**

- This time Jonah listens and preaches. Then the people of Nineveh repent and God has compassion. Jonah wasn't too happy about this (4:2), but He still obeyed God's call. There's a lesson to learn on the importance of obeying even when we don't feel like it. **Can you think of a time you obeyed even though you had a bad attitude about it? If so, explain.**
- The Ninevites took some radical steps when they surrendered to God. **Looking back, what have been some radical faith steps you have taken in response to God's love?**

**Read Jonah 4 as a group.**

- This large city (3:3 & 4:11) repenting should be a cause for celebration, but Jonah was angry at God for being God. Timothy Keller writes, "As long as serving God fit into his goals for Israel, he was fine with God. As soon as he had to choose between the true God and the god he actually worshipped, he turned on the true God in anger."<sup>1</sup> This quote along with Jonah's story creates a tension in our lives surrounding who we want God to be and who God truly is. **How have you experienced this tension in your own faith?**
- God takes a moment to try and teach Jonah one last lesson before this book ends. **What was God trying to teach Jonah about mercy? How do we avoid limiting God's mercy to others?**

## CALLING

- We don't know how Jonah responds to God's lesson and question. What we do know is this book was written with very specific details and emotions of Jonah. This means it had to be Jonah writing this account. So, why would Jonah show so much of his own brokenness? The answer, only someone deeply loved by God could write this. **What are you running from? How do you need to run toward and with God?**
- **Daily Devotions:** Spend 15 minutes each day with Northside devotions. Text JOINGOD to 81411 or use the Study tab in Northside's App for Daily Devotions.
- **Memorize:** "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Colossians 3:12
- **Further Study:** Read *The Prodigal Prophet* by Timothy Keller.

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Keller, *The Prodigal Prophet* (Penguin Random House, 2018), 225