



Sermon Notes

Topic: Don't Run

Bible Passage: Jonah Chapter 1

Preacher: Ps Paul Curtis

Date: 8 February 2026

Study Guide Overview

- All of us can easily put some distance between ourselves and God. It can be deliberate like Jonah or it can happen slowly over time as we withdraw.
- But Running from God only makes things worse. In the end we can run – but we can't hide. When there is no intimacy with God – there is no joy – no peace – no purpose – no sense of hope.
- However – if like Jonah we show honesty and integrity and some real wisdom – we can return. We can enjoy God again.He is never very far away – all we need to do is turn around.
- God will be there. His methods may be unusual – even difficult to understand at the time – but always effective – always for our eventual benefit.

Small Group Questions/Discussions

Read Jonah Ch 1 together. Discuss what stands out to you in this biblical account. What do you think is the main problem here? Can you in anyway identify with Jonah's response? Do you see some people as beyond God's grace?

Looking back, what has contributed to the times when you were distant from God? Was it intentional or just over time or both. Share some examples. Do you sometimes feel it is all too much and you just want a break from your Christian responsibilities? How has that turned out?

We may run from God, but because we have His spirit within us, ignoring Him or doing our own thing only brings a lack of joy and peace. Share together how you feel when God is not prominent in your thinking? How does life go for you when you are distant from God?

God is always close to us. So, all we need to do is turn around and he is there. Do you always feel confident returning to God – does guilt sometimes rob you of that? Share an experience of returning to God – it may simply be giving up on a bad attitude or character trait – what was a barrier that delayed your actions?

Has God ever had to get your attention by doing something significant in your life? Share your story. It may not be an encounter with a large fish, but what does it show about God's character? What have you learnt from Jonah's story and your own about keeping God at a distance?