



# God's Rescue in Our Ruin

Jonah 1:1-3 |

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## RELATED SCRIPTURES

Nahum 3:19 | Luke 5:27-32 | Romans 3:9-25 | Ephesians 2:8

## SUMMARY

Jonah 1:2-4 paint a portrait for us of Jonah, Nineveh, and God. We'll dig into what these verses preview in the story as the series moves along, but for now take some time and answer these questions about what you observe in the passage:

1. What do these verses tell us about God?
2. What do these verses tell us about people?
3. What else did you learn from this passage?

**Here's what caught my attention:** Here we have Jonah and the people of Nineveh. Both are running from God. One very clearly knows it. The other is likely ignorant of the fact. Yet a'running they are, each in their own way. Jonah because he mistrusts Yahweh and Nineveh, well, because they haven't become acquainted yet. **Although, according to Paul in Romans 1**, they knew enough to know about God and enough to know that their society promoted violence and wickedness. The king even commands everyone to "turn from their evil plans and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows?," the king says, "God may not call them to account for their evil?!" (Jonah 3).

But whereas Nineveh's running is explicit and in your face, Jonah runs away subtly, right under our noses and, he thinks, perhaps God's. It's been happening for years, just like the elder brother in Luke 15, Tim Keller notes, *"Neither son trusted his father's love. Both were trying to find ways of escaping his control. One did it by obeying all the father's rules, the other by disobeying them all."*

## GROUP QUESTIONS

- From the sermon, or your direct reading of Jonah 1-3, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you about how God speaks with Jonah?
- How would you describe both Jonah's and Nineveh's need for divine rescue? How does each show a mistrust of God?
- Flannery O'Connor describes one of her fictional characters, Hazel Motes, as knowing that 'the way to avoid Jesus was to avoid sin.' How was this true in Jonah's life? How might it be true in your own?
- Romans 3:9-25 describes a whole lot! How would you summarize what it says in your own words? How does this passage help us to understand Jonah's story?
- If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of these portions of Scripture, what is that thing?