

Series: Mission Unsinkable

Scripture and Background Information for October 17-23.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we continue our series, "*Unsinkable*." With this series, we are looking at the book of Jonah, one of the Old Testament prophets. The book focuses on conversations between God and Jonah, rather than the message of God to the people through the prophet. With the different focus, we see God's heart and mission both to humanity but also using imperfect and broken messengers to accomplish His purpose. Today, we will look at **Jonah 1:4-17** and talk about "*The Picture*."

Background for Jonah 1:4-17:

After God sent Jonah to Nineveh, Jonah went into a ship to go as far west as possible. God interrupted Jonah's plan and sent a big storm. While Jonah slept on the ship, the sailors fought to keep the ship afloat during the storm. The sailors realized the supernatural origin of the storm and they prayed to their gods.

After the sailors realized nothing was working, they woke Jonah demanding him to pray to his God. When the sailors realize that Jonah is at fault for the storm, they don't immediately do something to him, but continue to try every other alternative until they were left with no other choice. They eventually toss Jonah into the sea, only after praying to the Lord begging for His mercy.

Questions to engage with the text:

1. The chapter shows a contrast in character by comparing the prophet with the pagan sailors. What do you notice about both of them? How do those details reflect their posture toward God? Whom does Jonah fear? Whom do the sailors fear?
2. How does the knowledge of God affect the heart of Jonah? How does it affect the Sailors? What was the outcome of Jonah's knowledge vs. the sailor's knowledge?
3. After Jonah told the sailors who he was and who his God was, what was Jonah's solution to their problem? Was his solution heroic, or what was Jonah's intention? Consider 1:3.
4. Remember, repetition is a resource for Bible authors to make their point. Like last week, continue to look for similar concepts described in the chapter. How do those concepts tell what Jonah was doing or trying to do? Did Jonah's plan succeed? Use 1:10 as a comparison point to Jonah's actions.

Note: God comes to His end! Jonah tried everything to escape and go a different direction but ended up in a fish. The belly of the fish is not always a judgment but can sometimes be a second chance.