

# SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE / OCTOBER 8

## TO APPLY—NOT REHASH—THE SERMON

### Read

Read Jonah 1:17–2:10 and consider making some observations about the passage.

### Sermon Recap

Review the sermon with your group, highlighting the following:

- This is what sin does: It makes a mess of our lives, and our refusal to turn from sin “takes us down, down, down.”
- “There is no mess that is beyond God’s mercy,” and we can find great beauty in our encounters with God in the pit.
- “Like any responsible parent, God is more than willing to cause momentary discomfort for long-term good and maturity among his kids.”
- “Jonah is going to encounter God’s mercy in this pit, and will emerge as a vessel of God’s mercy to the people of Nineveh.”
- “There is no decision we could ever make that would make God stop being ‘Dad’ to us.” It is a lie that we tell ourselves that God wants nothing to do with us in the pit.

### Group Discussion

1. Pastor Bryan defines a “pit” as any situation you find yourself in that you can’t get out of on your own and causes you great despair. When have you encountered God’s mercy in this kind of situation?
2. Matthew 12:40 compares Jesus’ death and burial to Jonah’s experience in chapter 2. How are these two events similar? (Hint: The wording of Jonah’s prayer may help.)
3. How has experiencing God’s mercy in despairing situations made you better able to minister to others?
4. How do you remind yourself that God remains steadfast in his love for you when it gets hard to believe and trust?

### WEEKLY RESPONSE QUESTIONS

- Reflect:** What characteristics of God are evident in Jonah’s prayer (Jonah 2:1–9)?
- Respond:** Are there areas of life where you are believing the lies that God wants nothing to do with you, or that he does not have steadfast love for you? How can you guard yourself against these lies?
- Reach:** Who in your life is despairing and might need help remembering God’s mercy and steadfast love? How can you be a help to that person this week?

### PRAYER

- Pray that those in our church who are in a pit of despair would remember God’s faithfulness and trust, and that he has the power to redeem their present circumstances. Be specific with names of people who need his mercy in these prayers.
- Pray that we (members of The Summit Church) would respond to God’s call on our lives to be “vessels of his mercy” in various ways in our community. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in moving toward opportunities to show mercy.