



## Sermon-Based Small Group Leader Notes

For the week of January 15, 2012 (week 1 of 10)

### Introduction

#### Topic

Sermon Title: "YOU 2.0"

Sermon Series: *FLOW* (week 1 of 7)

Scripture: John 7:37–39

Sermon by: Dr. Tom Harrington

#### Goals for This Gathering

1. Get to know each other, paying special attention to welcoming newcomers.
2. Discuss logistics of meeting time and frequency, expectations, group roles. **\*\*Consider creating a Group Covenant.\*\***
3. Discuss the homework.
4. Pray together.
5. Encourage members to invite others.

#### Prayer

1. Take prayer requests and praises.
2. Pray for all Small Groups meeting at Northwest and in homes.
3. Pray for the spiritual connection of your group and for us to acknowledge our tendency to move away from God.

### Getting Started

**Note to Leader:** The following few weeks of sermon-based small group curriculum will consider the sermon's thematic elements in light of the Old Testament book of Jonah. In order to reduce repetition over coming weeks, please encourage your group to limit discussion to the chapters and verses in Jonah selected for each particular week.

The questions in this section allow your group to talk about this week's sermon topic, i.e., spiritual growth through a vital connection with God's Spirit. This is the first week in a seven-week sermon series.

**Question 1** — This opening question allows participants to casually share from their own perspective. There are no right or wrong answers here. Be prepared with some answers of your own. *Note to Leader:* As you move through the study, you will notice the emphasis on control, first through the example of Jonah's actions, then by considering our own motives.

**Question 2** — Try to resist getting too deep too fast on this question. A wide variety of answers will give everyone room to express themselves.

### Into the Bible

In this section, participants have the opportunity to look back briefly at the sermon text from John 7:37–39. Read, below:

<sup>37</sup> On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." <sup>39</sup> By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (NIV1984)

These verses point to the necessity of a relationship with God built on communion with his Holy Spirit. This is how we are designed to handle all that we face in life.

**Question 3** — Taken together, the two statements imply that God is somehow active in our lives in a way that cannot be. Just knowing there is a God or that we are not God fails to extend hope to humanity. Answers will vary depending upon personal experience with allowing God to take control.

#### Considering Jonah

The group will then study the first chapter of Jonah to explore the theme of spiritual growth as it matures through obedient response to God's call on our lives. Real life surges through those who allow themselves to be moved and molded by the Holy Spirit. The book of Jonah is the fifth book of the twelve Minor Prophets. The book is unique among the prophetic books in that it does not contain a series of prophetic oracles but rather consists of a story about the prophet himself and his disobedient relationship with God after being told to go to Nineveh, one of the oldest cities of Assyria (Genesis 10:11–12), and later its capital, to preach repentance.

#### Read Jonah 1:1–10

**"the LORD sent" (v. 4)** — This is one of the major themes of Jonah; God is sovereign and in control of all situations, Jonah's actions notwithstanding. It mattered little what Jonah decided since God had other plans for him, however Jonah seriously endangered himself, others, and his relationship with God by choosing disobedience over God's call on his life. In this case, God sent a storm to stop Jonah. The listener to this story is immediately gratified; Jonah's disobedience to God should not go unpunished. The ship captain, much to his annoyance, finds Jonah sleeping. He uses the same word that God used in v. 2, "call" (NIV and NASB use different English words but the Hebrew word is the same). But Jonah does not call or pray.

**“cast lots” (v. 7)** — This was a common method to find out what God’s, or in this case, the sailors’ gods’, will was (see also Leviticus 16:8; 1 Chronicles 24:13). However, again it is God’s sovereign choice that determines the outcome of the lots (Proverbs 16:33).

**“I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land” (v. 9)** — The sailors immediately would have understood this to mean that Jonah’s God was the supreme God, one among many. This statement from Jonah, like all his statements about God (2:9; 4:2), are all completely theologically correct and orthodox. Jonah knew all the right theology about God and could correctly state God’s attributes, but he was not willing to listen and obey God because that would mean betrayal of his nationalistic views.

Notice all the questions the sailors ask. Five questions in one verse (see also v. 6 and vv. 10-11 for three more)! See v. 16 for their ultimate answer.

### Read Jonah 1:11–17

**“God provided” (v. 17)** — In spite of Jonah’s flagrant disobedience, God was actively working to save him, providing him with the resource he needed in his predicament. God pursues us, using his tools according to his timing to shape us into the person he created us to be.

**Question 6** — Jonah finally faced the reality that God intended him to respond obediently to the mission to which God had called him, i.e., to deliver God’s message to a people he despised. He had been running from God’s call on his life, but in this situation, faced the harsh reality of the consequences his disobedience had brought. Jonah now would rather face being thrown over, regardless of the outcome, than continue to run from his God. When Jonah did this, he was in the flow of the Spirit.

**Question 7** — Refer to Jonah 1:4, 7, 11, 13, 17.

## Digging Deeper

**Question 8** — This question helps to refocus our attention on God’s hand at work in our lives. He sees a larger picture that we are unable to perceive, especially while in the storms of life. Answers may range from general to personal.

**Question 9** — By this point in the discussion, participants might refer back to points that they remember from this week’s sermon. Ephesians 2:10 is a good Scripture to read, in light of this question.

**Question 10** — This question allows for a deeper level of personal sharing. If your group members are not yet comfortable with each other, don’t push it. If you feel comfortable sharing at this point, it might open up discussion for others.

## Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

Close with prayer, praying for each other and for God’s wisdom and power in allowing God his proper role as Lord over every part of our lives.

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### \*\*Group Roles Description

- **Prayer Coordinator** — Responsible to take notes during group prayer time and email them, if possible, to group members.
- **Snack Coordinator** — Creates and passes around a snack signup sheet, then reminds people when it is their week to provide snacks.
- **Service Coordinator** — Helps group find a project, securing a day and time for the group to serve in the community together. Will pass along ideas from Community Ministries Team.

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**\*\*Group Covenant** — Find the Sample Group Covenant on the table in the foyer or at [northwestbaptist.com](http://northwestbaptist.com) under the SBSG Additional Resources section.