



Word Notes: Sunday 04/03/18

Tony Hodge: Spot the difference: Jonah – 1, when the going gets tough

Series Text: Jonah

### **Summary**

Jonah is given a tough job – take God’s warning to Israel’s enemy in Nineveh. He runs away, not because of the danger but because he knows God’s forgiving nature (Jonah 4:2) will extend even to his enemy. Running away from a hard task or one we don’t agree with is a common human trait - even among Bible heroes. But when God has a plan, for the salvation of others and our own rescue from hardened thoughts, He will not be thwarted however far we try to run.

You may feel like you’ve run in the opposite direction, hidden yourself away in the bottom of boats, or maybe kept the truth from people around you; but God loves you and will keep giving you opportunities to open your mouth and speak His truth. God’s plan is bigger than any of our mistakes.

### **Study & Application**

Do you recognise Jonah’s fears, either of a difficult task or of God’s love extending to those you don’t think deserve it? Discuss these questions:

1, The Ninevites’ wickedness has “come up before God”.

- What do you take that to mean and why does God respond the way He does?

2, Why do you think Jonah runs? Do you recognise any times in your life when you’ve run away from God or his call or been tempted to?

3, Jonah is found asleep during a storm that threatens to break up the boat.

- Read Matthew 8:23-27 and compare the two situations.
- What similarities and differences can you find and what are your conclusions about the Lord’s role in both?

4, God is not going to let Jonah off the hook (excuse the fishy pun).

- How far has God pursued you when you’ve tried to run away, or in order to save you in the first place?
- What does Jonah’s experience and your own tell you about the love of God?
- What does that mean when we consider any who are not yet saved – whatever their actions, words, lifestyle or any other “Nineveh” factors in their lives?