

JAM JONAH

CALLED, RELOCATED AND SENT



JOURNEY WITH US AS WE MOVE BEYOND BEING PASSIVE OBSERVERS AND BECOME ACTIVE DISCIPLES OF JESUS
6 - 27 September 2026

Johannesburg is a city of opportunity, ambition, diversity, creativity and possibility. BUT it is also a city where many young people experience pressure, inequality, unemployment, loneliness, violence, corruption, injustice and uncertainty about the future. For young professionals' life can easily become a cycle of work, traffic, deadlines, money, social life and survival. While unemployment creates its own issues of hopelessness, withdrawal and financial strain which often leads to mental health issues. Which grew from lives of students that were focusing on passing, graduating on time and finding success. For teenagers they face pressures of finding themselves in this busy, overwhelming and consuming world has led us to a place where even a twelve-year-old can be diagnosed with deep mental health issues. In the middle of all of this, Jesus is still calling young people to "Follow Him".

The story of Jonah is not simply about a man, a fish and a city. It is a story about a person who was called by God to make a difference in the city God had sent him. Jonah wanted to run, and at times we want to run too. Run into our careers, into entertainment, into relationships, into comfort, into busyness, running because we believe that someone else will deal with the ill that young people face in our city. BUT God calls Jonah toward Nineveh! God is calling you to Johannesburg where injustice, hopelessness and brokenness have become normal.

This series invites us to use **youth month** to move beyond being Sunday Christians and passive observers into becoming active disciples of Jesus. To say:

"I am Jonah, I have been called. I may have run. I may have struggled. But God is still sending me." The title invites us to ask deep seeking questions of who we are in relation to Jonah, if we are willing to fully submit to the will of God regardless of our own feelings, boundaries and self-justice. Moving from passive Christianity to active disciples means allowing God to control every aspect of our identity in discipleship, giving away our selfhood to take on our Christhood.

I am Jonah called to be relocated for ministry sent into Nineveh.

Blessings

Lolo: sent to be a pastor to the young flock in Bryanston by the will of God through Jesus Christ.

Called, Relocated and Sent

Series Theme:
From comfort to
calling. From
spectators to
disciples. From
the church
building to the
city

WEEK 1:

I am called

WEEK 2:

I am not too far gone

WEEK 3:

I am sent

WEEK 4:

I am sent to people I
might not choose

Moving from “What do I want?” to “What is God calling me to?”

Identify your “Nineveh”

Discipleship begins when we stop running from God’s call and start responding to it. The challenge is not always that we do not hear God’s call. It is because the call of God interrupts our plans. We live in a world that has put profit as the goal even to a point of allowing the need for results to define our identity. Young professionals are not only called to work for a salary they are called to represent Christ in their workplaces, but students are also called to be disciples on campus and teenagers are called to be part of the body of Christ.

WORSHIP SONG: Chris Tomlinson – Good, good Father

https://youtu.be/qIsQrycKKsY?si=yUfYuYef_rq0ivl

Jonah 1:1-3 New International Version

Jonah Flees from the Lord

1 The word of the Lord came to Jonah’s son of Amittai: ²“Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”

³ But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK’S BIBLE READINGS written by Lolo Diutlwileng

1. GOD’S CALL CAN INTERRUPT OUR PLANS

Jonah 1:1–3, Jonah receives a very clear instruction from God: “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it.” But Jonah goes in the opposite direction. Nineveh was not somewhere Jonah wanted to go. The people of Nineveh were enemies of Israel, and Jonah did not want to participate in God’s mission of showing them mercy. So, Jonah chooses Tarshish. He chooses what is comfortable. He chooses what makes sense to him. He chooses his own plan. And sometimes, if we are honest, we do the same thing. God may be calling you into something uncomfortable. Maybe God is calling you to serve. Maybe God is calling you to forgive. Maybe God is calling you to start something new. Maybe God is calling you to leave something behind. Maybe God is calling you to speak up when everyone else is silent. Maybe God is calling you to use your gifts for something bigger than yourself. And we respond: “God, are You sure?” We often want God’s direction to fit neatly into our plans. But God’s call doesn’t always come with convenience. Sometimes obedience means saying: “God, I don’t understand this, but I trust You”.

2. YOU CAN RUN FROM THE CALL, BUT YOU CANNOT RUN FROM GOD

Psalms 139:7–10, Psalm 139 gives us one of the most comforting truths in Scripture: There is nowhere we can go where God is absent. David asks: “Where can I go from your Spirit?” The answer is nowhere. Jonah runs from Nineveh, but he doesn’t run outside God’s presence. He boards a ship, but God is there. He goes into the depths, but God is there. He tries to escape, but God is still pursuing him. And perhaps that is one of the most beautiful things about Jonah’s story. God does not abandon Jonah simply because Jonah runs away. Think about that personally. There may be seasons when you feel far from God. Perhaps you have questioned your faith. Perhaps you have been disappointed with God. Perhaps you have made decisions you regret. Perhaps you have ignored God. Perhaps you have simply become distracted by life. But Psalm 139 reminds us: God has not moved. You may feel distant. You may feel lost. You may feel like you’ve gone too far. But God is still there. His presence is not dependent on your performance. You don’t have to become perfect before you can come back to God. You simply have to turn around.

BIBLE READINGS:

WEEK 1:

Jonah 1:1-3

Psalms 139: 7-10

Matthew 28: 18-20

WEEK 2:

Jonah 2:1-9

Psalms 18:6

Luke 15: 11-24

WEEK 3:

Jonah 3:1-10

Psalms 103:8-13

Matthew 12:38-41

WEEK 4:

Jonah 4:1-11

Isaiah 55:6-9

Matthew 20:1-16

3. JESUS DOESN'T JUST CALL US—HE SENDS US

Matthew 28:18–20, In Matthew 28, Jesus gives His disciples the Great Commission: “Go and make disciples.” Notice something important. Jesus says “Go.” Jonah also heard “Go.” The difference is that Jonah ran away, while Jesus' disciples were called to go into the world. The Christian life is not simply about coming to church. It is not only about attending Bible study. It is not just about knowing Scripture. It is about being sent. We are sent into our schools. We are sent into our universities. We are sent into our workplaces. We are sent into our families. We are sent into our communities. We are sent into Johannesburg. We are sent into South Africa. We are sent into a world that desperately needs to encounter the love, justice, hope and grace of Jesus. But there is something else Jesus says that we must not miss. He doesn't simply say: “Go.” He says: “I am with you always.” That connects beautifully with Psalm 139. God's presence goes with us. When we go where God sends us, we never go alone.

GROUP AND CLASS QUESTIONS to take the reflection deeper

1. What is God asking me to do that I have been avoiding?
2. Where am I tempted to run from God's call?
3. Who is God calling you to disciple, encourage or introduce to Jesus?

DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYERS

MONDAY

Verse: “The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai.” — Jonah 1:1

Prayer: Lord, help me to hear Your voice clearly and respond with obedience today.

TUESDAY

Verse: “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it.” — Jonah 1:2

Prayer: Lord, give me courage to go where You send me and speak what You ask me to speak.

WEDNESDAY

Verse: “But Jonah ran away from the Lord.” — Jonah 1:3

Prayer: Lord, show me where I am running from You and gently lead me back into Your will.

THURSDAY

Verse: “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?” — Psalm 139:7

Prayer: Lord, remind me that Your presence surrounds me wherever I go.

FRIDAY

Verse: “Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.” — Psalm 139:10

Prayer: Lord, hold me securely and guide my steps with Your faithful hand.

SATURDAY

Verse: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” — Matthew 28:18

Prayer: Jesus, help me trust Your authority over every part of my life.

SUNDAY

Verse: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.” — Matthew 28:19

Prayer: Lord, send me out with love and boldness to share Your good news with others.

KIDS AND TEENAGER SECTION: Family Time Devotion: I Am Jonah

Week 1: What Is God Calling Me to Do?

Bible Reading: Jonah 1:1–3

Big Idea: God calls us to follow Him wherever He sends us.

Key Verse: “The word of the Lord came to Jonah.” — Jonah 1:1

Let's Talk About It

Have you ever been asked to do something that you really did not want to do? Maybe your parent asked you to clean your room. Maybe your teacher asked you to help someone. Maybe you knew you should say sorry, but you really did not want to! Jonah knew exactly how that felt. One day, God spoke to Jonah and told him to go to a city called Nineveh. But Jonah did not want to go. So, what did he do?

He ran in the opposite direction!

Jonah wanted to do what **Jonah** wanted to do. But God had a different plan. Sometimes we can be a little like Jonah too. We might know that we should be kind to someone, help someone, forgive someone or tell the truth—but instead, we want to do what we want. God calls us to follow Him. That does not always mean going to another country or doing something scary. Sometimes God calls us to do something right where we already are!

For **a child**, your “Nineveh” might be your **school**, your **home** or a friend who needs kindness. For **a teenager**, it might be standing up for someone or making a good choice when your friends are doing something wrong. For **an adult**, it might be showing Jesus at work, helping someone in need or doing the right thing even when it is difficult. Wherever we are, we can ask: **“Jesus, what do You want me to do today?”**

Family Questions

For Younger Children

1. Why did Jonah run away?
2. What did God ask Jonah to do?
3. Is there someone you can be kind to this week?

For Older Children and Adults

1. Have you ever known the right thing to do but not wanted to do it?
2. Why can following God sometimes be difficult?
3. Where has God placed you right now?
4. How can you show Jesus there?

Family Activity: Where Am I Called?

Give everyone a piece of paper and ask them to draw a place where they spend a lot of time. It could be:

- Home
- Church
- School
- With friends
- Work

Now ask everyone to write or draw **one way they can follow Jesus in that place this week**.

For example:

At school: I can include someone who is lonely.

At home: I can help without being asked.

At work: I can be honest and kind.

With friends: I can encourage someone.

Say This Together

“God, I want to follow You.

I will listen to Your voice. I will not always run away.

Show me what You want me to do. Help me to follow You every day.

Amen.”

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank You that You know us and love us. Thank You that You have a plan for our lives.

Sometimes we want to do things our own way, just like Jonah did. Sometimes we know the right thing to do, but it can be difficult. Please help us to listen to You. Show us how we can follow You at home, at school, at work, with our friends and everywhere we go. Help us to be kind, brave and helpful. **Jesus, show us what You want us to do today. Amen.**