

IMMERSED

experiencing the **patience,**
provision, and **presence** of God

JONAH
6-week study

Katie Orr

FOCUSed**15**

Inductive Bible Study
15 MINUTES A DAY

Immersed

Six Week Study of

Jonah

part of the

FOCUSed15 Bible Study Series

Inductive Bible Studies in 15 Minutes a Day

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FOCUSed**15** | Inductive Bible Study
15 MINUTES A DAY

#FOCUSed15

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INTRO: *The Need for Focus*

It's hard to focus.

In a world filled with continual demands for my attention, I struggle to keep a train of thought. Tasks I need to do. Appointments I need not forget. Projects I need to complete.

Yeah, it's hard to focus.

Without a good focus for my days, I wander. I lack the ability to choose well and avoid the tyranny of the urgent. Without focus, days become a blur—tossed back and forth between the pressing and the enticing.

Why focus matters.

I felt pretty lost during my first attempts at spending time with God in the Bible. After a few weeks of wandering around the Psalms and flipping through the New Testament, I realized I had no clue what I was doing.

It felt like a pretty big waste of time.

I knew the Bible was full of life-changing truths and life-giving promises, but I needed to learn how to focus in on the details in Scripture to see all it held for me.

In the medical world, we depend on the microscope. Even with all the fancy machines that can give test results in seconds, the microscope has yet to become obsolete. Some things can only be discovered through the lens of the scope.

What looks like nothing to the naked eye is actually teeming with life-threatening bacteria. Even under the microscope they may not be seen at first glance. But with the smallest adjustment of the focus, the blurry cloud of the field in view is brought into focus and the finest details are revealed.

And those details matter.

You need a microscope to make a diagnosis, but the microscope itself doesn't make the discoveries. It takes a trained eye to distinguish between cells. The average person may be able to figure out how to use the microscope to find a cell and get it in focus, but without training the beginner will not know the clinical significance of what is seen.

Similarly, when we approach God's Word, we must learn to focus in on what we are seeing and develop a trained eye to know its significance.

Ready for more.

I grew up in a shallow Christian culture. Don't do drugs. Don't have sex. Don't tell lies. Read your Bible. Be a light — *sold-out for Jesus*. This was the sum of being a good Christian, or so I thought.

Now, I'm your typical first-born list-checker, so the dos and don'ts worked for me . . . for a while. But as I got older and the temptations of the don'ts became more enticing, I began to wonder if this Christianity thing was worth it.

Is this really what people spend their lives chasing? Seems tiring—and ultimately worthless.

God was drawing my heart—I could undeniably feel it—but I knew I was missing something. I thought I'd check out this reading-the-Bible thing. Sure, I had read a devotional or two and knew all the Bible stories, but I didn't feel I knew God Himself.

A bit nervous, I drove to the local bookstore to buy my first really nice Bible. I excitedly drove back home, and headed straight to my room, opened up my leather-bound beauty and began to read . . .

. . . and nothing happened.

I'm not quite sure what I was expecting, *but it sure wasn't confusion and frustration*. I decided to give it another try the next day and still heard nothing. I had no clue what I was reading.

In all my years of storing up the dos and don'ts in my how-to-be-a-good-Christian box I never caught a *how* or a *why*.

For years I stumbled through my black leather Bible with very little learned on the other side of it all. Yet, God was faithful to lead and to speak, and I fully believe that He can and does speak to us through His Word, *even if we are as clueless as I was*.

However, I also believe that God's Word is meant to be a great catalyst in our growth, and as we pursue how to better know God through His Word we will experience Him in deeper ways.

You and I need a healthy, rich diet of God's Word in order to grow. And as we read, study, and learn to digest the Bible, we move toward becoming more like Christ. When we pursue the nearness of God, the don'ts become lackluster compared to the life-giving promises of His Word.

A focused fifteen minutes.

Over time, I learned incredible Bible study tools that took my time with God in His Word to a deeper level. Yet, with each method it seemed to take more and more time. Certain seasons of life allow for a *leisurely* time in the Bible; my experience has proven that most of my days don't.

As much as I would love to find a comfy chair in my favorite local coffee shop and study God's Word for hours, it is just not often possible. I'm lucky if I can get a decent breakfast in every day before my day starts rolling. Distractions and demands abound, and there have been many days when I have not even tried to study my Bible because I knew I just didn't have what it would take, time-wise, to get

much out of it.

Until I learned to focus.

Even the busiest Christians can learn to focus and train their eye to discover the life-changing truths held in Scripture. No incredibly long “quiet times” or seminary degree required.

All it takes is a focused fifteen minutes.

The method I will walk you through consists of fifteen minutes, five days a week. We will focus on the same set of verses over the course of a week, and each day of that week we will look at the passage with a different lens to gather new insights along the way.

Two ultimate goals.

My prayer for you as we dive into the Bible is two-fold. First, I want to work myself out of a job. I want you to walk away from this study a bit more confident in your ability to focus in on the transformational truths of Scripture on your own.

Second, I hope you will experience God in a whole new way through these focused fifteen minutes. The most important thing about us is what we believe about God, and my prayer is that you will encounter the truths about who He is through your own study of Scripture in such a way that your actions are forever changed — because of who He is.

What you'll need.

- A journal and pen to record your study notes.
- A Bible. If you don't have one, I recommend investing in a good study Bible. Visit my Resources page at KatieOrr.me for solid study Bible suggestions.
- A Hebrew Interlinear Bible and a Hebrew Lexicon. There are in-print as well as free, online versions for both. Check out my resources page for links.

A few important notes.

This is only one method. This approach is my attempt at distilling down how I enjoy spending time in His word. There are other great methods I use from time to time. Take what you can from this method and use what works for you; make it your own.

Studying your Bible is not the only way to connect with God. Prayer, Scripture memory, and personal worship are other important practices that can help us commune with our Maker. *FOCUSed15* is designed only to help you with the time you sit down to study your Bible.

Fifteen minutes is just the starting point. Some of us are in a stage of life where we'll take fifteen minutes wherever we can get it. Others may be able to carve out more time. I will give you suggestions for how to shorten or lengthen the study as needed. I think you will find yourself looking up at the

clock and realizing you've accomplished much in a short amount of time.

Using online study tools will be of great help. You can certainly do this study without getting online, however you will expedite much of the processes through utilizing the powerful—and free—online tools I suggest throughout our time together. I totally get that being online while trying to connect with God has its distracting challenges. Do what works for you. There is no “right” way to do this study. The only way to “fail” is to stop meeting with God.

For a list of free online resources as well as in-print investments, including Hebrew study tools, commentaries, cross-referencing tools, and study Bibles, check out my Resources page at KatieOrr.me.

INTRO: *How to Focus*

Over the next six weeks we will study Jonah together using the FOCUSed15 study method. Think of me as your Bible coach. I will point you to the goal, give you what you need and cheer you on—but you'll be the one doing the work.

The FOCUSed15 method may be different than other studies you've completed. This method is inductive and is great to use verse-by-verse. It can certainly be applied to any verse, but it's designed to be used to study a book or large passage of Scripture.

During our first week together, we will take a bird's eye view of the passage to see where it fits in the whole of Scripture. Once we get a handle on the context of the passage, we will dive into the text.

To do this, we'll study through four naturally-fitting chunks of Jonah, and we'll spend a week on each of those sections. Then we'll spend a week on studying the character of God that is revealed in the book of Jonah.

We're focusing on *quality*, not quantity. The goal is not to see how quickly we can get through Jonah, but how *deep* we can go into each verse to find everything we can about God in this book. Exciting, right?!

Here is where we are headed:

- Week 1 - Getting to know Jonah
- Week 2 - Jonah 1:1-16
- Week 3 - Jonah 1:17-2:10
- Week 4 - Jonah 3:1-10
- Week 5 - Jonah 4:1-11
- Week 6 – The Character of God in Jonah

The FOCUSed15 Method

For me, high school history homework typically consisted of answering a set of questions at the end of the chapter. I quickly found that the best use of my time was to take each question, one at a time, and skim through the chapter with the question in mind. So, if the question was about Constantine, I would read the chapter again, this time wearing my “Constantine Glasses.” All I looked for were facts about Constantine.

Little did I know then, this “glasses” method would become my favorite way to study God's Word. The FOCUSed15 method is essentially changing to a new pair of glasses each day, using a different focus than the day before.

- Day 1 - **Foundation**: Enjoying the narrative.
- Day 2 - **Observation**: Finding truths, promises, and commands.
- Day 3 - **Clarification**: Uncovering the original meaning.
- Day 4 - **Utilization**: Discovering the connections.
- Day 5 - **Summation**: Evaluating the role I play.

For example, during week two we will read Jonah 1:1-16 looking for truths, promises, and commands. The next day we will read Jonah 1:1-16 again and take a look at a few of the key Hebrew words in that passage. We'll study Jonah 1:1-16 (and the following passages) five different times throughout the week, each day using a different lens for our studies.

Foundation

Enjoying the narrative

The book of Jonah is a beautiful story of the compassion, forgiveness, and provision of our powerful God. Understanding the flow of the narrative can help us enjoy this book as we would a good novel or movie. To do this, we are going to read through and write out our passage of the week in our own way. I like to write the story out as I would see it in a play, or use simple sentences to summarize what occurred in each section. You may enjoy sketching out each scene in picture form.

Do whatever helps you *slow down* and enjoy the story, paying attention to the details of the characters, the setting, and the overall plot progression.

Observation

Discovering Truths, Promises, and Commands

Truths, promises, and commands are where we practice our daily walk with Christ. The truths of God's Word tell us to what we are supposed to conform our minds. The promises in God's Word are those truths to which we must learn to cling. The commands in God's Word are the guard rails God has given us to help us walk in His presence throughout each day.

For each passage we encounter, we will ask ourselves a set of questions. This set of questions can be applied to any passage. Keep in mind that you might not find the “answer” to each question in every verse you read. These are key questions we are training ourselves to ask each time we sit down to study a passage in Scripture.

Truths - What does this passage teach about ...

- ... God?
- ... each character in the story?

Just as we get to know our friends and family a bit better each day, we can also get to know the character of our God better and better over time. As we read and study the Bible we can view much about what is true about God, cling to the promises of His character, and align our lives to reflect His character to the world around us.

Promises - What is promised to me in this passage?

In many places in Scripture, promises are spelled out for us. Sometimes they are *conditional* promises: If you do this, then I will do that. Other times they are *unconditional* promises. These unconditional promises are life-giving to a healthy thought-life, resulting in fruitful and joyful day-to-day living. As we learn to see the clear promises in Scripture and believe them to be the glorious truths they are, we can live subject to these truths instead of our wishy-washy emotions.

When feelings of guilt overwhelm, I can hold to the truth that:

- God has removed my sins as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12).
- He no longer counts my sin against me (2 Corinthians 5:19).
- I am a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

I could go on and on, listing truths throughout the Bible which point to the fact that I am forgiven. As I learn to lean into and hold fast to those truths about what is true of me—because of Christ's work on the cross—I can combat the lies of the evil one and the deceptiveness of my feelings.

Commands - What can I take away from this passage to act on?

- What are the commands?
- Which characteristics are upheld or rebuked?
- What can I learn from the example of the characters?

Clarification

Discovering the Original Language

This is going to be fun. We are going to look at the original language of the verses. In this case, Hebrew. To do this we will follow three simple steps:

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

In this step, we will find any potential key words to look up.

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Next, using an Interlinear Bible, we'll find the original Hebrew word of each of our potential key words.

Step #3: Define that Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Finally, we will learn about the full meaning of each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

We'll walk through this together each week, and I've provided a "How to Do a Hebrew Word Study" sheet in the appendix for you to reference throughout our study together.

Utilization

Discovering the connections.

"The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture ... it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly." - The Westminster Confession of Faith

Ever notice the little numbers and letters inserted in your Study Bible? Most have them. The numbers are footnotes, helpful bits of info about the original text. The little letters are the cross-references and important tools for study.

Cross-references are doing just that, referencing across the Bible where the word or phrase is used other places in the Bible. They may also refer to a historical event or prophecy significant to the verse you are studying.

Together, we will follow the references for each verse in Jonah to better understand the passage.

Summation

Evaluating the role I play.

"A respectable acquaintance with the opinions of the giants of the past, might have saved many an erratic thinker from wild interpretations and outrageous inferences." - Charles Spurgeon

This is where we begin to answer the question "How should this passage affect me?" To do this we will do three things:

1. Identify – Find the main idea of each passage.

This is where we can finally do the work of interpretation. Interpretation is simply figuring out what it all means. This is oftentimes difficult to do. But, if we are careful to do the work of context (which we will do in week 1) and make good observations of the text, a solid interpretation will typically result.

Commentaries are invaluable tools when interpreting Scripture. They are available on the entire Bible, as well as volumes on just one book of the Bible. For a list of free online commentaries, as well as in-print investments, check out KatieOrr.me/Resources.

2. Modify - Evaluate myself in light of the main idea.

Once we have figured out what the passage means, we can apply the passage to our lives. Many tend to look at application as simply finding something to change in their actions. Much in the Bible certainly leads us to a different lifestyle, but there is another category of application that we often miss—what we believe.

We must learn to see the character of God in what we study, and ask ourselves how our view of Him lines up with what we see. Of course it is helpful to look for dos and don'ts to follow, but without an

ever-growing knowledge of who God is, the commands become burdensome.

3. Glorify - Align my life to reflect the truth of God's Word.

When we see God for the glorious, grace-filled savior He is, the natural response is worship; the dos and don'ts become a joy as they become a way to honor the One we love with our lives. This is true application.

The Cheat Sheet

At the end of most days I've included a Cheat Sheet. While trying to complete a Bible study, I've often been paralyzed with wondering, "Am I doing this the right way?" The cheat sheet is there for you to use as a reference point. This is not the answers sheet. Just a little bit here and there to let you know you are on the right track.

WEEK 1: *Getting to Know Jonah*

Each fall a local farming family creates this *awesome* corn maze. There is a super-simple kiddie maze, a longer easy maze, and the mac-daddy of all mazes. I attempted to take my younger kids through the "easy" maze one year. Though it was only supposed to take 10-15 minutes, I got so turned around and found myself leading a bunch of crying kids around for 30 minutes. We finally had to cheat and sneak through the small spaces in the cornstalk walls to get back to civilization.

It was not fun.

If I could have seen an aerial view of the maze I would have had a much better chance at getting through it. Being able to see the patterns and knowing the general direction of the finish line would have given me confidence in leading my kiddos through all the turns.

And so it is with Bible study. It is incredibly helpful for us to first get a good aerial view of where we're headed.

As we begin our time together in Jonah, let's spend a few moments asking God to do what only He can in our hearts over the next several weeks.

Where my soul is filled with sorrow, strengthen me with your words.

Where my heart seeks selfish gain, turn me toward your statutes.

When I'm afflicted and discouraged, fill me with hope and comfort in your promises.

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of your law.

Give me a love for your word. Make it my meditation all the day.

(Taken from selected verses from Psalm 119)

Consider writing out this prayer—or a prayer of dependency in your own words—on a 3x5 card to keep as a bookmark for this study and a reminder to begin each day's study with a dependency on God's Spirit to lead and teach.

Week 1 - Day 1: A First Read

Today we're going to read all of Jonah. That's it. Just sit back and enjoy. Don't try to over-analyze or dissect. Just read it like you would any other book.

If time allows, read it another time or two. Remember, this week we're simply laying the foundation for the rest of our study. We'll dive in deep soon, I promise.

If you have additional time after you read, spend some time journaling a dedication over the next six weeks. Declare your need for God to give you a desire to be in the Bible, as well as the grace to obediently choose to spend daily time with Him. Ask Him to do a great work in your heart, and thank Him for the work He has already done.

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.
Philippians 2:13 NLT

Week 1 - Day 2: Looking at the When

c. 760 B.C.

I've come to love studying history. I certainly did *not* enjoy it growing up. I struggled to cram in dates and names, only to have them quickly leave my mind once the test was taken. Additionally, I was taught history in chopped-up segments, with no understanding of how each story and character fit in with the rest of the world. For all I knew Joan of Arc and Abraham Lincoln lived at the same time. *Seriously.*

The Old Testament is often taught the same way—as separate, singular stories. I was well into my twenties when I realized that Abraham was Joseph's great-grandfather (and this was after growing up in Christian school all my life). I knew all about Abraham and Isaac, knew the stories of Jacob and Esau, as well as the 12 sons of (Jacob) Israel. It wasn't until I began to read and study Scripture as a whole, instead of a bunch of parts, that I could see how these stories all weave together to reveal God's incredible story of redemption.

As we string together the Biblical stories, we can learn more about each one through the association of the others. Before we take a look at the contemporaries of Jonah, and what was going on during his time, take a moment to pray for God's leading over your study time.

1. Do a quick read of 2 Kings 14:23-25 and write down what you learn about the following characters:

- Jeroboam II
- Jonah

2. Take a quick glance through the Old Testament in a Nutshell chart in the appendix. Now, read 2 Kings 14:23-25 again and look for clues that tell us at what time in history Jeroboam and Jonah lived.

3. Take another look at the nutshell timeline and note where the story of Jonah takes place.

You and I are blips. Teeny tiny dots on the timeline of history. James calls us a mist which appears for a time, then disappears (James 4:13-15). Yet the tapestry of God's plan now and throughout history utilizes each small thread of a life and weaves into a beautiful display of His glory.

Pray to our tapestry-weaving God today, asking to see a glimpse of His plan for your life today. Ask for the grace to remember your smallness, and your great need for God's strength, guidance, and grace for today.

Cheat Sheet

Looking at the When

1. 2 Kings 14:23-25:

Jeroboam II

- reigned in the 15th year of Amaziah (king of Judah)
- son of Joash
- king of Israel
- reigned in Samaria
- reigned 41 years
- did evil in the sight of the Lord
- restored some borders of Israel

Jonah

- spoke the word of the Lord
- servant of God
- son of Amittai
- prophet
- from Gath-hepher

2. Clues that tell us at what time in history Jeroboam and Jonah lived.

- 15th year of Amaziah's reign (v23)
- There is reference to kings of both Judah and Israel (v23)
- borders of the Kingdom were restored by Jeroboam

Since there is a reference to King Amaziah of Judah, we know that Jeroboam led the nation of Israel after the split of Israel into two kingdoms.

3. The story of Jonah takes place after the split of the nation of Israel and before Assyria invaded.

Jeroboam II was the 14th king of Israel after the split. There were 20 total who ruled.

"In spite of doing evil in God's sight as did the other kings of Israel, Jeroboam II was one of Israel's most successful rulers. He continued his father's program of aggressive expansion and was able to almost completely restore Israel's borders to where they had been under Solomon. Jeroboam II's management skills, in addition to relative freedom from enemy attacks during his reign, led to unprecedented prosperity."

Michael Ruston, *The Complete Book of When and Where in the Bible: In the Bible and Throughout History*

Week 1 - Day 3: Looking at the Where

Today we're going to skip ahead and do some of the cross-referencing work for next week's passage. Take a moment to ask God for focus as you study more background of Jonah.

1. Read Jonah 1:2 and follow the cross-references for Nineveh. Note your observations. (My notes from the first verse are below and the rest are in the cheat sheet.) Don't get bogged down with trying to find "the right answers." Just read and note anything you think is interesting. If nothing catches your eye, that's fine. If something "unrelated" interests you, follow the Spirit's leading. The goal is not to get the right answers, but to better know God and the message of His words to us.

Nineveh Cross-References:

- Genesis 10:11-12 – These verses mention that the "great city" was built, but not by whom or when (unless I just happen to remember where Genesis 10 falls in the timeline of history ... which I didn't.) I did a quick look up of Genesis 10 and discovered that Nineveh was founded after the great flood by Nimrod who was Noah's great-grandson.

Continue to look up the referenced verses and note what you learn about Nineveh.

2. Find the Assyrian Empire in the map, then locate Nineveh within that Empire.



3. Read Jonah 1:3 and look for the other places in Jonah's story and find each location on the map.
4. If you have additional time, look up Nineveh, the Assyrian Empire, Joppa, and Tarshish in a Bible dictionary, or "Google" them and note anything interesting you learn about each location and its culture.

Cheat Sheet

Looking at the Where

1. Read Jonah 1:2 and follow the cross-references for Nineveh.
 - 2 Kings 19:36 - home of Sennacherib, king of Assyria
 - Nahum 1:1 - The book of Nahum is a record of the prophet Nahum's "oracle" against Nineveh. So, Jonah was not the only prophet sent to Nineveh.
 - Zephaniah 2:13 - Prophecy: Nineveh will be made desolate.
 - Matthew 12:41 - Nineveh repented at preaching of Jonah.
 - Luke 11:30 - Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh.
 - Luke 11:32 - Same mention as Matthew passage.
3. Other places in Jonah's story to find on the map:
 - Joppa and Tarshish

Week 1 - Day 4: Looking at the Outline

Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up.
- A. A. Milne

It's time to get organized.

To do so, we are going to read Jonah one more time and make our first attempts to outline the book. Outlining will give us one more big-picture look at the book, but with a bit of structure to it.

Open your time in prayer, asking God for clarity and focus as you dive into the structure of Jonah.

Read through Jonah a chapter at a time and attempt to create an outline of the book. As a shift in the narrative occurs, take note and try to section the book out in chunks. Give each chunk a title or summary statement for what has occurred.

If you feel this is taking too long, or just not the way your brain is working today, do a search online for an outline of the book of Jonah (or peek at mine in the cheat sheet). Copy down the outline you find, or simply note what you learn from seeing the book organized this way.

Outline Cheat Sheet

My outline of Jonah:

1:1-3 God assigns - tells Jonah to go to Nineveh; Jonah runs

1:4 God intervenes - sends a storm to alert Jonah

1:6-16 Pagan sailors fear God; Jonah relents in his escape

1:17 God provides - sends a fish to save Jonah

2:1-9 Jonah prays to God

2:10 God delivers - makes the fish spit Jonah onto dry land

3:1-4 Go to Nineveh; Jonah obeys

3:5-9 Nineveh believes in God and repents

3:10 God relents

4:1-5 Jonah is angry over God's compassion

4:6-11 God appoints - sends a lesson of rebuke

Week 1 - Day 5: Looking at Jonah in the New Testament

Some stories and truths in Scripture are hard to fathom. The whole earth was flooded and animals lived for over a year on a big boat. Really? The whole of the Nile River turned into blood. Really? The disciples went around healing people. Really? Jonah was swallowed by some sort of big fish and survived for three days. Really?

There are critics who say that the Biblical account of Jonah is simply an allegory—a story created by the writer to explain spiritual truths, but not tell a historical event. If I'm honest, I can see the attractiveness of this theory. Mainly because the likelihood of a man living inside of a fish for three days or a plant growing and dying in a day seems impossible.

But our God is a God of power and impossibilities. He is not bound to the laws of nature. He can stop processes, suspend time, and create or destroy as He wills. He is God, and though I have not seen with my eyes a man being spit up from the belly of a fish, I have seen him do mighty works in my life. I have known His transforming work, and experienced fruit come forth from my life that has no other explanation than a movement of His Spirit.

Seeing His work in my life gives me confidence in His ability to do much greater things.

Though we must learn to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), we do have several places in the New Testament which allow us to see the validity of the story of Jonah as a true, historic event.

1. Read Matthew 12:38-42 and record what Jesus mentions about Jonah.
2. This account of Jesus' response to the scribes' request for a sign is also recorded in Luke 11:29. Read it and add to your list any additional details you see.

The question the scribes had for Jesus was rooted in doubt. They doubted that Jesus was the Messiah, and their request for a sign had everything to do with them wanting to get rid of Jesus.

3. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and Romans 15:4 and list what is true of God's Word.

Jonah was written with great purpose. This story holds much for us to see and I'm excited to see how God will use the life of Jonah—his mistakes and virtues—to speak truth to our hearts over the next five weeks.

Spend some time recalling and recording how God has used His Word to transform your heart and mind to become more and more like Jesus. Journal your praise for God's faithful work in your life and for the provision of His written Word.

Cheat Sheet

Jonah in the New Testament

1. Read Matthew 12:38-42 and record below what Jesus mentions about Jonah.

- a prophet
- a given sign
- spent three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish
- likened to the Son of Man's (Jesus') death, burial, and resurrection on the third day
- preached to Nineveh, who repented
- Jonah is a foreshadowing of greater things to come

2. This account of Jesus' response to the scribes' request for a sign is also recorded in Luke 11:29. Read it and add to your list any additional details you see.

- Jonah is given to the generation as a sign.
- Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, just as Christ would be a sign to that generation.
- Something greater than Jonah is here.

3. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and Romans 15:4 and list what is true of God's Word.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

- Able to make you wise for salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ
- God-breathed
- profitable for
 - teaching
 - reproof
 - correction
 - training in righteousness
- brings
 - completeness
 - equipping for every good work

Romans 15:4

- For our instruction
- Encouragement
- Brings hope

WEEK 2: *Jonah 1:1-16*

Dozens of students sat in pews with arms crossed and heads tilted, exuding a too-cool-for-school attitude while they “listened” to the chapel service. Friday after Friday, someone preached to these teenagers about being a good Christian. *Count the cost. Be sold-out for God. Jesus suffered and died for you; the least you can do is live for Him.*

As a teenager, the thought of counting the cost for Jesus meant throwing away my secular music and wearing a Christian t-shirt. The chapel speakers encouraged me to be “sold-out” for Jesus, but they might as well have asked me to go to jail for Jesus. Both seemed equally daunting.

I honestly thought that if I surrendered my life to God I would end up in a hut in Africa. Yep. Hut. Africa. *Worst fate ever for a 16-year old.* I pictured a sold-out-for-Jesus-Katie as void of all comforts, accolades, and purpose besides “living for God.”

I didn't understand much about living for the glory of God. *Obviously.*

Oh, how I had it all backwards! I spent years wanting more of God in my life but unsure of how to experience Him outside of youth group and Bible class. The fears of my heart paralyzed me from following the promptings of the Spirit.

Jonah had fears, too. And I really can't blame him for running. I've been the runner myself. My guess is you've been too.

Sometimes our running looks just like Jonah's physical flight to Tarshish. Sometimes it looks like that 16-year-old girl; glued to her pew and refusing to follow the Spirit of God.

Us runners, we have trust issues. Yes, Jonah chose disobedience. Yes, I chose to sit instead of walking forward in obedience. But the issue is not in the fleeing or the sitting. It's more than our actions. Our actions (or inactions) are simply a reflection of our hearts.

Our heart's position is the problem. We refuse to trust that God is good and trustworthy. Our view of God is small and our view of self is inflated. Our reluctancy plagues our heart, binding us captive to the fear of what-ifs.

Instead of giving into fearful fleeing, let's focus on God's faithfulness. Let's release the notion that we can control our circumstances and embrace the pursuit of the presence of God. It is only in His presence we experience the peace, joy, and fulfillment that we long for. I pray we experience that fulfillment this week.

“You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.”

Psalm 16:11 NLT

Week 2 - Day 1: Foundation

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 1:1-16

Today we are going to enjoy the story of Jonah and slowly take in the setting, characters, and scenery.

Begin your time in prayer, asking God to enlighten and lead you as you study.

Read Jonah 1:1-16 and re-write the story as you go along. You could write it out like a play would read or summarize the main events of each section. If you are artistic, you may enjoy drawing out each scene. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to do this. Simply read the story and re-write (or draw) it in a way that helps you slowly see how the plot unfolds.

Reading verses in different translations can help you get a fuller meaning for the author's original word choice. You might consider investing in a parallel Bible, which allows you to read through your passage with three or four different translations side-by-side. Or you may want to use an online tool or mobile app that allows you to toggle easily between translations. Check out KatieOrr.me/Resources for free online resources as well as in-print suggestions.

Foundation Cheat Sheet

Jonah 1:1-16

Scene 1: God calls Jonah, Jonah runs.

God approaches Jonah with a command to go to Nineveh and call the people out of their sin. Jonah runs away from God's presence via a ship to Tarshish.

Scene 2: At Sea

God brings a great storm to stop Jonah from running.

The sailors freak out and start praying to their gods for help.

They throw cargo out to help lighten the ship.

Jonah sleeps through it all.

The captain of the ship awakens Jonah; asks him how he can sleep at a time like this?

The captain tells Jonah to pray to his god to spare their lives.

The crew cast lots to see who had offended the gods and started the storm.

The lot falls on Jonah and the mariners ask what he did to bring this storm on. They also ask him: "Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?"

Jonah answers: "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

The men are now very afraid, as they remember Jonah is running from the presence of his God.

The storm grows worse.

They ask Jonah what should be done.

Jonah tells them to throw him overboard to stop the storm, as he knows the storm is his fault.

Instead, the men tried to get back to dry land, but the storm becomes even worse.

So they call out to Jonah's God: "O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood, for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you."

Then they throw Jonah overboard.

The storm stops.

The mariners fear God "exceedingly" and offer a sacrifice and make vows to Him.

I'd love to see the narrative through your eyes! Share your insights on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using the hashtag #focused15.

Week 2 - Day 2: Observation

Discovering the Truths, Promises, and Commands

Jonah 1:1-16

We get to put our observation glasses on today. This is another place in our study where it is easy to skip to interpretation. Just write what the text shows. We're simply gathering facts.

Before you read, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to the truths in Jonah 1:1-16.

Truths:

1. Read Jonah 1:1-16, first looking for truths about our major characters. If you are short on time today, simply look for truths about God.

- God
- Jonah
- Mariners

Promises:

2. Take a look at the truths about God you observed. Can any of these truths be promises you can cling to?

Here is one I see:

- My God, the God of heaven, commands and controls the sea. He made the sea and dry land; He *can* control my every surrounding.

Take a few truths about God and create a statement of belief you can hold-fast to. Consider writing it out on a 3x5 card to be seen throughout the house. If you feel brave, share your promise on social media using #focused15.

Commands:

In some passages, especially in the New Testament, commands are easy to find. Do this, don't do that. Put on this, lay aside that. In Old Testament narrative (though they are not as obvious) we still have much to observe that can be directives for our lives. These will typically be found as we look at the virtues and vices of the characters in the story.

3. Spend some time reviewing the actions and attitudes in the characters you've seen in Jonah and the mariners so far. Highlight anything you can take away from their example.

- Actions and attitudes to avoid
- Actions and attitudes to adopt

Finding truths, promises, and commands in Scripture is so much more than list-making. We're shaping our theology when we observe Scripture in this way; we're intentionally learning more about God,

where we stand as His children, and how we are to live out God's purpose for our lives.

Standing on the promises that cannot fail
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail.
By the living word of God I shall prevail.
I'm standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,
bound to him eternally by love's strong cord,
overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises I cannot fall,
listening every moment to the Spirit's call,
resting in my Savior as my all in all,
standing on the promises of God.¹

Let's stand *firm* on God's promises today.

¹ Standing on the Promises, R. Kelso Carter, 1849-1926

Observation Cheat Sheet

Jonah 1:1-16

1. Read Jonah 1:1-16 today, first looking for TRUTHS of our major characters.

God:

- brings a word to His people
- speaks individually to His people
- commissioned Jonah to bring a warning/He uses His people to do His work
- God's presence could be avoided? (This is something I want to look into tomorrow. There are places in Scripture that teach that God's presence cannot be escaped, yet there is certainly a distancing from God we can cause through our sinful choices.)
- commands and controls the sea
- "God of heaven" (truth spoken by Jonah)
- "made the sea and dry land" (truth spoken by Jonah)

Study Tip: Be careful making observations about God when it is someone speaking. In our passage, Jonah speaks what he thinks is true about God. What Jonah spoke is indeed true of the character of God. However, this is not always the case.

Jonah

- chose disobedience (v3)
- ran in opposite direction of what he was told (v3)
- hoped to escape the presence of the Lord (v3)
- a Hebrew (v9)
- "I fear the Lord, the God of heaven" (v9)

Mariners

- feared the storm
- each had their own god
- cried out to their gods in trouble
- smart - knew what to do in the storm

2. Now, look back at the truths about God you've observed. Can any of these truths about who God is be PROMISES we can cling to?

- My God, the God of heaven, commands and controls the sea. He made the sea and dry land; He is able to control my every surrounding.
- The word of the Lord came to Jonah, assigning him to a great task. God speaks to his people, and He chooses to use us in His great redemptive plan.

3. Spend some time reviewing the actions and attitudes in the characters you've seen in Jonah so far. Highlight anything you can take away from their example.

Actions and attitudes to avoid

- Instead of wrestling with God about a hard situation, Jonah tried to run and hide from God.
- He chose flagrant rebellion over obedience. (v10 “for the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.”) He wasn't even trying to hide his choice to run.
- Jonah's words and actions were inconsistent. He claimed to fear God (v.9) but his disregard for God's call on his life showed otherwise.

Actions and attitudes to adopt

- After realizing the danger he had brought on the mariners, Jonah showed some sort of compassion for them, to be thrown into the sea on their behalf.
- The mariners responded with a healthy fear and submission of God after seeing evidence that He is the creator—and stopper—of the great storm. (v. 16)
- The mariners, though they barely knew this new-to-them-God, prayed to Him and attempted “imperfect” obedience, even when they were uncertain of what exactly to do. (v14)

Week 2 - Day 3: Clarification

Uncovering the Original Meaning

Jonah 1:1-16

In this age of information and technology, we have incredible tools to help us study the Bible right at our fingertips, even if we have never stepped foot into a seminary classroom.

Sometimes words in the original language mean exactly what we think they do. Other times the original word has an incredible depth and complexity, which is difficult to convey in translation. This is why we see different words used in various English translations.

I highly recommend using an online Hebrew study tool or mobile app, which will allow you to find what you need quickly. Refer to KatieOrr.me/Resources for suggestions.

Begin your time in the Word with a prayer, asking for clarity and understanding as you study.

Let's walk through our Hebrew word study steps again.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

A great way to start is to quickly read the passage of study and record any repeated words or phrases you see. You can also take note of any other potential key words you would like to look up.

After a quick scan of this week's passage, I noticed that the word “presence” is used multiple times, so let's start there.

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Next, use an Interlinear Bible to find the original Hebrew word for each instance of the word presence.

presence

- 1:3 - paneh/paniym
- 1:3 - paneh/paniym
- 1:10 - paneh/paniym

Pretty straight-forward, right? It may seem repetitive to look up each reference, but sometimes different words are used which translate to the same English word.

Step #3: Define the Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Now that you have your Hebrew words found, let's discover the full meaning of the word by looking it up in a Hebrew lexicon, noting the following:

- Definition of Hebrew word.
- Number of times used.

- Part of speech used (verb, noun, etc.).
- Other words it is translated into.
- Any other notes.

Here is how this looks for our word:

Presence: *paneh/paniym*

- Definition of Hebrew word: front, head, face
- Number of times used: 1947 (94 times as presence)
- Part of speech used (verb, noun, etc.): noun
- Other words it is translated into: before, face, front (and many more)
- Any other notes: Strong's #6440

OK, now it's time to try it out for yourself. Start back at step one and work through each step. I have a few examples in the cheat sheet if you get stuck. Look up as many words as time allows.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Do a quick read of Jonah 1:1-16 and note any potential key words and/or repeated words.

Now choose which word you would like to study and move to step #2.

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Using an Interlinear Bible, find the original Hebrew word for every instance of your word in Jonah 1:1-16.

Step #3: Define the Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Look up your Hebrew word (or words if you found more than one) in a Hebrew lexicon, noting the following:

- Definition of Hebrew word.
- Number of times used.
- Part of speech used (verb, noun, etc.).
- Other words it is translated into.
- Any other notes.

As time allows, you can continue through these steps for additional words you would like to study.

End your time with a prayer to our personal *'elohiym*, *Yehovah*, our existing, eternal God.

Clarification Cheat Sheet

Uncovering the Original Meaning

Jonah 1:1-16

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

god/the Lord – 1:1, 3(x2), 4, 5, 6(x2), 9, 10, 14(x2), 16(x2)

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

god/the Lord

- 1:1 - Yehovah
- 1:3 - Yehovah x2
- 1:4 - Yehovah
- 1:5 - 'elohiym
- 1:6 - 'elohiym
- 1:9 - Yehovah 'elohiym
- 1:10 - Yehovah
- 1:14 - Yehovah x2 (Notice the shift? The mariners now call God by name!)
- *1:16 - Yehovah x2*

I tend to lump God and Lord together in my mind, but as we can see they are two different Hebrew words.

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

god: *'elohiym*

- Definition of Hebrew word: divine being
- Number of times used: 2596
- Part of speech used: noun
- Other words it is translated into: God, god, deity
- Any other notes: Strong's #430, , the plural form of the word *el*, which means *a god*. This denotes that God is no ordinary deity, in the Middle Eastern Pantheon, He is the Mighty God.

the Lord: *Yehovah/Jehovah/Yahovah/Yahweh*

- Definition of Hebrew word: “the existing One”
- Number of times used: 6826
- Part of speech used: proper noun
- Other words it is translated into: God (313 times)
- Any other notes: Strong's #3068; proper name of the one true God

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

called – 1:2, 6, 14

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

called

- 1:2 - *qara*
- 1:6 - *qara*
- 1:14 - *qara*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

called/cry – *qara*

- Definition of Hebrew word: to call, to shout
- Number of times used: 731
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: cried, cries, read, summon (and more)
- Any other notes: Strong's #7121

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

fear/afraid – 1:5, 9, 10, 16

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

fear/afraid

- 1:5 - *yare*
- 1:9 - *yare*
- 1:10 - *yare*
- 1:16 - *yare*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

- fear/afraid – *yare*
 - Definition of Hebrew word: to fear, be afraid
 - Number of times used: 316
 - Part of speech used:
 - Other words it is translated into: awe, awesome, revere, terrifying
 - Any other notes: 3372

Week 2 - Day 4: Utilization

Discovering the Connections

Jonah 1:1-16

Oftentimes in small group Bible studies we end up in some incredible discussions—a word I believe God prepares for us even though I hadn't planned for it. I love a good "rabbit trail," especially when it is enlightening to the group.

We're going to chase rabbits today. Some paths will be helpful. Some might not add anything new to the story. Some might make you scratch your head a bit. That's OK. Just follow the trails as God leads and if you run into anything super confusing make a note and you'll have more time on Day 5 to answer any lingering questions.

Start today's time in the Word with prayer.

Using your study Bible or online tool, head over to Jonah 1 and look for a little superscript "a" in verse 1. This "a" denotes that there is another verse or verses with some relation to the word or phrase the "a" is directly in front of. In my Bible, it is leading me to another mention of "Jonah the son of Amittai."

Using an online tool makes cross-referencing quick and easy. If you don't want to get online during your time with God, you can just do some good ol' flipping around your Bible, but it will take longer. Note that each Bible's cross-references are set by the editors of that study Bible. The letters and references may vary from Bible to Bible, but most will be similar. Check out a list of great, free online tools, including my favorite for cross-referencing at KatieOrr.me/Resources.

1. Look up as many cross references as you have time for in Jonah 1:1-16. Follow those rabbit trails and jot down anything of particular interest in your study notes. If you come to a verse that peaks your interest, stop and read the surrounding passage just like we did last week with the Nineveh cross-reference. Recall that reading more of Genesis 10 allowed us to see who built Nineveh and when.

Close your time in prayer, thanking God for the inescapable grace He has lavished on us!

Utilization Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Connections

Jonah 1:1-16

Below are some of my observations for the references given to us in Jonah 1:1-16. You may have notes for verses I don't have. God speaks to us through His word, and he may have enlightened a truth for you in those passages that I missed. In other words, don't take this as the comprehensive "answer sheet." It is simply an example of what you might find as you hop your way through the cross-references.

Jonah 1:2 - The evil of Nineveh has "come up before me"

- Revelation 18:5 uses "sins are heaped high as heaven".

Jonah 1:3 - "away from the presence of the Lord"

- Genesis 4:16 is where Cain fled the presence of the Lord after killing his brother Abel.
- Psalm 139:9-10 makes the point that God's presence cannot be escaped.

Jonah 1:4 - "the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea"

- Psalm 107:25 echoes this truth that God controls the wind and the sea.

Jonah 1:5 - "each cried out to him god"

- Another reference to Psalm 107. The response of the mariners mirrors the example given in Psalm 107:28 "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress." This response is recorded four times in the Psalm (verses 6, 13, 19, and 28).

Jonah 1:7 - "cast lots"

- This cross-reference doesn't seem to help much. To figure out what "cast lots" means, we might want to make a note to learn more about this later in the week. We might also learn some insights tomorrow as we look at the original language.

Jonah 1:12 - "for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you"

- Jonah's words here are compared to the sin of Achan which was found out in Joshua 7:20.

Jonah 1:15 - "and the sea ceased from its raging"

- Of course, connected to Luke 8:24 where Christ calms the storm with His command!

Week 2 - Day 5: Summation

Evaluating the Role I Play

Jonah 1:1-16

I try my best to do the pat, pat, pat every day before I leave the house. Pat back pocket for my phone, check. Pat front pocket for my keys, check. Pat head for my sunglasses, check. If I forget my keys, I'm not going very far, but if I forget my phone or glasses, I'm in trouble.

I leave my house every single day, yet I still have to be incredibly intentional not to forget the essentials.

We are forgetful creatures, aren't we? And it doesn't stop at our morning routine. Intentionality is also needed to apply God's Word to our lives.

There is a warning in God's Word that is seen over and over again: do not forget. We are to remember God's character and past deeds (Deuteronomy 8), his laws (Joshua 1:8), as well as what we hear from His Word (James 1:22-25). We remember, then we are to act. James likens a lack of action to looking at yourself in the mirror, only to forget what you look like when you walk away.

Like when I'm doing the pat, pat, pat—looking for my phone in my back pocket while I'm chatting with my sister on said phone.

We often search for what we need and forget we already have it close by. An unsettledness in our spirit or dry season hits and we look all around for a new experience to jump start our walk with God. All the while, we already have what is needed for spiritual growth, and we already know much more than we can ever obey. The solution to our problem is not a brand-new Bible study, or more exciting church, or fresh worship song.

Our problem is forgetfulness.

Today is a time to remember. What has God revealed to you this week? It may not even have been through this study, but through your local pastor's teaching or through a meaningful conversation with a godly friend. What has the Spirit of God whispered to your heart this week? Have you been still enough to hear it?

Let's take some time to be still and reflect back on our studies. We'll take three actions to help us remember and act on what God is teaching us.

Identify – Find the main idea of each passage.

Now is the time to pull out your commentaries and study Bibles and see how your observations line up with those who are much more studied than you and me.

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you.

1. Write out what you think the main teachings in Jonah 1:1-16 are.

Do you have any lingering questions about this week's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Modify - Evaluate myself in light of main idea.

Take a look at the attitudes and actions observed in our characters this week (day 2, question 3) and journal through the following evaluations.

2. Do my attitudes and actions resemble Jonah's rebellion in any way?

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way.

Psalm 139:23-24 HCSB

3. Are my words consistent with my actions? If I say that I trust and serve God, do my actions match that declaration? Confess any inconsistencies to God. Ask Him for the grace and strength to obey.

Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD!

Lamentations 3:40 ESV

4. Is there anything I need to do as a result of this week's study?

I thought about my ways and turned my steps back to Your decrees.

Psalm 119:59 HCSB

Glorify - Align my life to reflect the truth of God's Word.

We come to our last evaluator as we look to apply Jonah 1:1-16 to our lives. We exist to bring glory to God. Like the moon which reflects the glory of the sun, we are satellites to show off God's blazing glory to those around us. Application is not digging down deep within ourselves so we can try harder and do better. Application is a re-alignment; a coming back to the One who is at work within us and allowing Him to do as He wills, so that we can show Him glorious to those around us. Studying God's Word helps us see the adjustments needed to better depend on God and to reflect His glory.

5. How does your view of God line up with what you've learned in Scripture? (See day 2.) Take some time to look at each characteristic and ask yourself if you believe it is true. Journal through them and ask God to renew your mind with the truth about who He is and give you the grace to cling to who He *truly* is. Spend some time in prayer, thanking God for His Word and His work in your heart.

We all have room to grow in our view of God. We see Him as smaller than He really is. We may believe notions about Him that are simply not true. We cannot honor God if our view of Him is incorrect. We cannot worship God if we don't really know who He is. When we see God for the glorious, grace-filled savior He is, the natural response is worship; the dos and don'ts become a joy, as they become a way to honor the One we love with our lives. This is true application.

WEEK 3: *Jonah 1:17-2:10*

We have this thing called rest time in our house. It doesn't happen every day, but when we are in a good rhythm, rest time happens. “But mommy, I don't *need* to rest.” and “Mommy, I'm not tired.” are often heard when the rest time announcement is received. Typically, it comes from the child who has just completed their third tantrum of the day.

I give this time to my children because I know they need it. They certainly don't view rest time as a gift. Video games, movies, or playtime outside are certainly more welcomed than the dreaded household quiet time. But as their mom, who loves them more than they could ever understand, rest time is provided because it is what is best for them.

Our Father God provides for us, too. We may not always view the trials in our life as a gift of love, but often the most difficult seasons of our life are exactly that—God's loving hand of correction, drawing our hearts back to His presence.

My child, don't reject the LORD's discipline, and don't be upset when he corrects you. For the LORD corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.

Proverbs 3:11-12 NLT

Week 3 - Day 1: Foundation

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Begin your time in prayer, asking God to enlighten and lead you as you study the narrative today.

Read Jonah 1:17-2:10. Summarize the passage through a simple re-write, summary statements, or drawings. Whatever helps you slow down and enjoy the movement of the story.

Foundation Cheat Sheet

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Scene 1: The Lord provides deliverance (1:17)

- appoints a great fish to rescue Jonah from drowning
- allows for three days and nights in the belly of the fish

Scene 2: Jonah prays from the belly of the fish.

Sounds like he had a near-drowning experience before God rescues him with the fish.

Groupings I see from Jonah's prayer:

Jonah's actions:

I called out to the Lord; He answered me.

I cried out from Sheol and you heard my voice.

Jonah's realizations:

You cast me into the seas, the flood surrounded me, your waves passed over me.

Then I said: "I am driven from your sight, but I will see you again in your holy temple."

Jonah's experiences:

The waters closed in, the deep surrounded me. My life almost taken; weeds wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land, but you brought me up from the pit.

Jonah's response:

As my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord.

My prayer reached the Lord in His holy temple.

Jonah's resolve:

Those who regard vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love, but I will sacrifice to you with the voice of thanksgiving. What I have vowed I will pay.

Jonah's declaration:

Salvation belongs to the Lord!

Scene 3: The Lord speaks to the fish and the fish vomits Jonah out upon dry land.

Week 3 - Day 2: Observation

Discovering the Truths, Promises and Commands
Jonah 1:17-2:10

Open your time in prayer, then read Jonah 1:17-2:10 looking for the following.

Truths:

We must be careful to differentiate from truths about God, and what Jonah said was true about God. So, we will look at truths about God with two different lenses, asking three questions.

- What does the text say is true about God? (not including 2:2-2:9)
- What does Jonah speak as true about God?
- Does the rest of Scripture affirm these characteristics?

Read through Jonah 1:17-2:10 and note the following truths. If you are short on time, just look for truths about God.

1. What does the text say is true about God? (not including 2:2-2:9)
2. What does Jonah speak as true about God?
3. Does the rest of Scripture affirm these characteristics?

"Does the rest of Scripture affirm these characteristics?" is a great evaluator to have running through the back of your mind as you listen to Scripture being taught. If you have a church home with a pastor you trust to preach God's Word accurately, then you should easily be able to answer "Yes!" to this question. However, when we encounter new teachers we need to be on guard for bad teaching. When we hear a teaching about God declared, we must always evaluate that "truth" alongside the teachings of the Bible. If you hear a teaching you are unsure of, you can always approach a trusted pastor or friend for help with discerning its value.

4. What is true about Jonah?

Promises:

5. What truths about God can I cling to?

Commands:

6. Look for the following in today's passage.
 - Actions and attitudes to avoid
 - Actions and attitudes to adopt

Observation Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Truths, Promises and Commands

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Truths:

1. What does the text say is true about God? (not including 2:2-2:9)
 - control over the fish (1:17)
 - rescued Jonah through the fish (1:17)
2. What does Jonah speak as true about God?
 - God answered his prayer in distress (2:2)
 - God heard his prayer (2:2)
 - God threw him into the deep, the heart of the seas (2:3)
 - God's "waves and billows" passed over him (2:3)
 - God brought Jonah up from the pit (2:6)
 - Jonah's prayer came to God, in His temple (2:7)
 - Salvation belongs to the Lord (2:9)
3. Does the rest of Scripture affirm these characteristics?
 - Yes!
4. What is true about Jonah?
 - was swallowed by a fish
 - stayed in the belly of the fish for 3 days and nights
 - prayed to God from the belly of the fish
 - called out to the Lord while in the water
 - saw that God had answered him, through the fish
 - was in "the belly of Sheol"
 - cried to God from Sheol
 - his prayer was heard by God
 - was in the deep, heart of the sea
 - surrounded by floods, waves, billows
 - claimed a promise that he would be rescued (?) (v4)
 - waters closed in over him, deep surrounded him; he almost drowned
 - seaweed wrapped around his head
 - was at the roots of the mountains (bottom of the sea)
 - was down to the land "whose bars closed upon me forever" (Sheol)
 - was brought up by God from the pit
 - he remembered the Lord when his life was fainting away
 - his prayer reached God in His holy temple
 - makes a vow to God, will sacrifice a payment attached to this vow
 - was vomited onto dry land by the fish

Promises:

5. What truths about God can I cling to?

- God hears my prayers

Commands:

6. Actions and attitudes to avoid

- none seen

Actions and attitudes to adopt

- Even after great disobedience, Jonah cried out to God for deliverance.

Week 3 - Day 3: Clarification

Uncovering the Original Meaning
Jonah 1:17-2:10

Begin today's study with a prayer, asking God to open your eyes to the truths in His Word.

On to our Hebrew word study!

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Quickly read Jonah 1:17-2:10. Look for potential key words and repeated words or phrases and make a quick list.

Now choose which word you would like to study and move to step #2.

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Using an Interlinear Bible, find the original Hebrew word for every instance of your word in Jonah 1:17-2:10.

Note that you might find words we've already studied. For example, "call out" in 2:2 is the same *qara* we saw in chapter 1. Once you've discovered that it is a Hebrew word you already know, you can stop there, then go back and find a new word to study.

Step #3: Define that Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Look up your Hebrew word (or words if you found more than one) in a Hebrew lexicon, noting the following:

- Definition of Hebrew word
- Number of times used
- Part of speech used (verb, noun, etc.)
- Other words it is translated into
- Any other notes

As time allows, continue through these steps for additional words you would like to study.

End your time with a prayer thanking God for the depth of His Word.

Clarification Cheat Sheet

Uncovering the Original Meaning

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Below are a few examples of Hebrew word study from this week's passage.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

appointed 1:17

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

appointed: *manah*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

appointed: *manah*

- Definition of Hebrew word: to divide into parts, count
- Number of times used: 28
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: number, assigned, count, determined, apportioned
- Any other notes: Strong's #4487

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Sheol 2:2

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Sheol: *shaol*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Sheol: *shaol*

- Definition of Hebrew word: wasteland, void, underworld
- Number of times used: 65
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: grave, hell, pit
- Any other notes: Strong's #7585;
 - “the OT designation for the abode of the dead.” - Enhanced Strong's Lexicon
 - “place to which people descend at death” - NAS Hebrew Dictionary

Week 3 - Day 4: Utilization

Discovering the Connections

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Start today's time in the word with a prayer of dependency on God's Spirit to reveal the important connections in His Word through today's passage.

Follow several of the cross-references in Jonah 1:17-2:10 as you have time. Jot down anything of particular interest in your study notes.

Utilization Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Connections

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Here are a few of my cross-reference notes:

1:17 - Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights

- references to Jesus' mention of Jonah.
- Matthew 12:40 parallels Jonah's time in the fish with Christ's stay in the grave.

2:2 - I called out

- Psalm 3:4 Another cry in the face of death.
- There are two references to Lamentations 3. Verses 55-56 are very similar to the start of Jonah's prayer.

2:4 I am driven away from your sight

- Psalm 31:22 - Psalm of David. Another instance of "being cut off from your sight", but though David could no longer see God, God could hear his cries for help.

2:4 yet I shall again look upon your holy temple

- 1 Kings 8:35,38 Part of Solomon's prayer of dedication, after the temple building was completed.

2:5 the waters closed in over me to take my life

- Another reference to Lamentations 3

2:7 my prayer came to you, in your holy temple

- 2 Chronicles 30:27 - The priests pray on behalf of the people and they reached God's holy dwelling place.

2:8 those who pay regard to vain idols

- 2 Kings 17:15 "they went after false idols and became false" The nation of Israel at the time of exile.
- Jeremiah 2:5 "they went far from me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless" God said through the prophet Jeremiah about the nation of Israel.
- Psalm 31:6 Psalm of David "I hate those who pay regard to worthless idols."

2:8 forsake their hope of steadfast love

- Jeremiah 2:13 God through the prophet Jeremiah (same passage as above!) "my people have committed two evils" 1. forsaken God, their source, the fountain of living waters 2. made cisterns for themselves, but they are broken and hold no water.

2:9 I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice...I have vowed

- Psalm 50:14 "sacrifice of thanksgiving...vows to the Most High" Psalm of Asaph
- Hosea 14:2 "we will pay with bulls the vows of our lips"

- Hebrews 13:15 a charge to offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, "the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name"

2:9 Salvation belongs to the Lord

- Exact wording as Psalm 3:8 Psalm of David while running from Absalom. Same passage as referred to in verse 2!

Week 3 -Day 5: Summation

Evaluating the Role I Play

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Let's bring it all home. It's time to process and apply what we've learned this week.

Identify – Find the main idea of each passage.

Take some time to review this week's study, looking for any places you would like clarification. Consult your commentaries and study Bible to see how your observations line up.

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you.

1. Write out what you think the main teachings in Jonah 1:17-2:10 are.

Do you have any lingering questions about this week's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Modify - Evaluate myself in light of main idea.

Take a look at the attitudes and actions observed in our characters this week (from day 2) and journal through the following evaluations.

2. Am I hesitant to call out to God after I disobey? If so, what am I afraid of?

Test me, LORD, and try me; examine my heart and mind.

Psalm 26:2 HCSB

3. Is there anything I need to do as a result of this week's study?

I will hurry, without delay, to obey your commands.

Psalm 119:60 NLT

Glorify - Align my life to reflect the truth of God's Word.

4. How does my view of God line up with what I've learned in Scripture this week? (See day 2.) Take some time to look at each characteristic and ask yourself if you believe it is true. Journal through them and ask God to renew your mind with the truth about who He is and give you the grace to cling to who He *truly* is.

Spend some time in prayer, thanking God for His Word and His work in your heart.

WEEK 4: *Jonah chapter 3*

We live in such an insulated world here in the States. Sure, we hear of starving children, modern day slaves, and religious wars when we turn on the news, but we don't really see it. A 10-second video clip can be avoided and ignored all too easily.

But God sees it all. He sees the suffering and the sin and the deep, deep wickedness of every one of our hearts. Big and small, young and old, he sees us. There is no hiding.

Jonah 1:2 says “the evil of Nineveh has come up before me.” In the ancient world, the Assyrian Empire was ruled with tactics of sheer brute and terror. They were known for flaying people, where they would skin their enemies alive.

This brutality was not only among the men of battle. The king of Nineveh himself in Jonah 3:8 proclaimed that every citizen “turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.”

No wonder Jonah fled to Tarshish!

Because of their wickedness, God had some heavy-handed plans for the people of Nineveh. They had proven stubborn and disobedient. But God, through his prophet Jonah, gave them a chance to release their sinful ways. And by God's grace, they repented and He relented.

God's sees every wicked deed and He is a good and holy judge who must punish sin. But His great mercy led Him to provide a way to escape His wrath—through the sacrifice of Christ—and He is ready and waiting to withdraw His wrath from anyone who would repent and accept the righteousness of Christ on their behalf.

What a patient God!

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 6:23*

Week 4 - Day 1: Foundation

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 3

Begin today's study in prayer, asking God to enlighten and lead you as you study. Thank Him for His relenting, merciful grace.

Read Jonah chapter 3 and re-write the story as you go along.

I'd love to see your foundation studies! Share your journey with me using #focused15 on any social media venue.

Foundation Cheat Sheet

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 3

Scene 1: God calls Jonah, Jonah goes.

God approaches Jonah with a command to go to Nineveh and call out against it.

Jonah goes to Nineveh, into the city about a day's journey (all of the city was a three day's journey in breadth) and calls out "Nineveh will be overthrown in 40 days!"

Scene 2: Jonah declares, Nineveh responds

The people of Nineveh believe Jonah, respond with fast and mourning.

Jonah's message reaches the king, who arises, removes his robe, begins to mourn, issues a proclamation throughout Nineveh: "Let everyone fast, be covered in mourning, and call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from evil ways and violence. Maybe God will relent and turn away from his anger, then we will not perish."

Scene 3: God relents

God sees the actions of Nineveh, and relents from His plans to destroy them.

His compassion abounds and great mercy is shown to the broken people of Nineveh. They released their hold on wickedness and took hold of sackcloth and ashes — a sign of sorrow and grief. The Ninevites grieve over their sin and their offense against God.

Week 4 - Day 2: Observation

Discovering the Truths, Promises, and Commands
Jonah 3

Read through Jonah 3 and record the following.

Truths:

1. What is true about God in Jonah 3?
2. What is true about Jonah in chapter 3?

Promises:

3. What truths about God can I cling to?

Commands:

Look for the following in Jonah 3.

4. Actions and attitudes to avoid
5. Actions and attitudes to adopt

Observation Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Truths, Promises, and Commands

Jonah 3

Truths:

1. What is true about God in Jonah 3?
 - Spoke to Jonah a second time, gave him the same assignment. (3:1-2)
 - God saw the actions of the Ninevites. (3:10)
 - God relented of the disaster He said He would do. (3:10)
2. What is true about Jonah in chapter 3?
 - Jonah went to Nineveh this time. He obeyed! (3:3)
 - Jonah called out against Nineveh. (3:4)

Promises:

3. What truths about God can I cling to?
 - God is not angry with me. He relented from his anger when I turned from my sin.

Commands:

4. Actions and attitudes to avoid
 - none seen
5. Actions and attitudes to adopt
 - Jonah followed the instructions of the Lord.
 - The King of Nineveh led his people well into repentance.
 - The people of Nineveh responded well to both their Kings' decrees and Jonah's warning.

Week 4 - Day 3: Clarification

Uncovering the Original Meaning
Jonah 3

Begin today's study with a prayer, asking God to open your eyes to the original meaning of the words you study today.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Quickly read Jonah 3. Look for potential key words and repeated words or phrases and make a list of them.

Now choose which word you would like to study and move to step #2.

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Using an Interlinear Bible, find the original Hebrew word for every instance of your word in Jonah 3.

Step #3: Define that Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Look up your Hebrew word (or words if you found more than one) in a Hebrew lexicon, noting the following:

- Definition of Hebrew word:
- Number of times used:
- Part of speech used (verb, noun, etc.):
- Other words it is translated into:
- Any other notes:

As time allows, continue through these steps for additional words you would like to study. Now that you are more familiar with the process, you may find yourself wanting to look up more words. If you go through each step without writing it all out, you can do a quicker look up of words. As you find anything of note, you can then jot it down. Just make it work for you!

End your time with a prayer thanking God for his mercy.

Clarification Cheat Sheet

Uncovering the Original Meaning

Below are a few examples of a Hebrew word study from this week's passage.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Sackcloth – 3:5, 6, 8

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Sackcloth – *saq* (all three times)

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

- Definition of Hebrew word: sack-cloth, the dress of mourners
- Number of times used: 48
- Part of speech used: noun
- Other words it is translated into: sack, blanket
- Any other notes: Strong's #8242; “worn in mourning and humiliation, either loose garment like sack, or piece of similar material (of rough, dark hair), fastened round body” - The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

reached – 3:6

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

reached – *ng/naga*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

- Definition of Hebrew word: touch, reach, strike
- Number of times used: 150
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: to touch, to touch violently, strike
- Any other notes: Strong's #5060

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

relent/relented – 3:9,10

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

relent/relented – *nhm/niham*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

- Definition of Hebrew word: to regret, be sorry, console oneself
- Number of times used: 150
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: change, pity, compassion, relief
- Any other notes: Strong's #5162; “be sorry, moved to pity, have compassion, for others”²; “to cease a particular course of action, usually with a focus that a gracious act has occurred, with a possible implication that one grieves or has sorrow over an object or event”³

² Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000), 637.

³ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

Week 4 - Day 4: Utilization

Discovering the Connections

Jonah 3

Start today's time with a prayer of dependency on God's Spirit to open your eyes to the threads of redemption in His Word.

Follow the cross-references in Jonah 3 and jot down anything of particular interest in your study notes.

Utilization Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Connections

Jonah 3

3:5 – They called for a fast

- 2 Chronicles 20:3 – Jehoshaphat set his face to seek the Lord through proclaiming a fast throughout all of Judah.

3:6 – he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth

- Job 1:20 – Job's response after the news that his family and property had been destroyed. Similar to the King of Nineveh's response of mourning.
- Ezekiel 26:16 – part of a prophecy, of how kings will respond in mourning over the sins of Tyre.

3:6 – and sat in ashes

- Job 2:8 – Job sat in ashes, after he has lost his health after all the previous losses.

3:8 – let everyone turn from his evil ways

- Jeremiah 18:11, 36:3 – two prophecies to the nation of Judah, pleading for them to turn from evil

3:9 – and turn from his fierce anger

- Psalm 85:3 – This psalm is a prayer for restoration, asking for God to once again withdraw His wrath from His people.

3:10 – God relented of the disaster he had said he would do to them

- Jeremiah 18:8 – a word from the Lord to Jeremiah. God is the master potter of all nations. He can choose to make or destroy the vessel as He sees fit. If the nation set for destruction turns from its evil, He will relent of the disaster He intended for that vessel.

Week 4 - Day 5: Summation

Evaluating the Role I Play

Jonah 3

Identify – Find the main idea of each passage.

Take some time to review this week's study, looking for any places you would like clarification. Consult your commentaries and study Bible to see how your observations line up.

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you. Record your notes.

1. Write out what you think the main teachings in Jonah 3 are.

Do you have any lingering questions about this week's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Modify - Evaluate myself in light of main idea.

Take a look at the attitudes and actions observed in our characters this week (from day 2) and journal through the following evaluations.

2. When given a second chance to obey God's commands, do I take it or do I wallow in the paralysis of failure?

Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.

Lamentations 3:23 NLT

3. How do I respond to the chastening of God?

I know, O LORD, that your regulations are fair; you disciplined me because I needed it.

Psalm 119:75 NLT

4. Do I model well what repentance from sin looks like? With my family members? Co-workers? Friends?

For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

2 Corinthians 7:10 NLT

5. Is there anything I need to do as a result of this week's study?

Glorify - Align my life to reflect the truth of God's Word.

How does my view of God line up with what I've learned in Scripture this week? (See day 2.) Take some time to look at each characteristic and ask yourself if you believe it is true. Journal through them and ask God to renew your mind with the truth about who He is and give you the grace to cling to who He *truly* is.

Spend some time in prayer, thanking God for His Word and His work in your heart.

WEEK 5: *Jonah chapter 4*

One of the hardest roles in parenting is that of corrector. It is a delicate balance of training my children toward appropriate behavior while not leading them into legalism. I long to be used by God and His plan for their lives, and for them to understand both His holiness and great mercy.

We talk a lot about correction. My kids are learning that if they can listen well to mommy's voice and respond to my verbal correction, other forms of correction will not have to be used. There are plenty of days in which my kids are as stubborn as Jonah, running away (sometimes literally like Jonah) from my voice. Other days they turn away from their stubbornness and disobedience and move toward a sorrow over their sin. Their body language changes. The tone in their voice changes. There is a softness in their soul.

And I relent. I may have planned to take away electronics, sweet treats, and any sort of fun thing for a week, but once I see that softness and sorrow, heavy-handed momma goes away. The discipline is no longer needed. They get it.

Just like this momma heart that melts at the sight of sorrow over sin, though on a supreme and perfect level, God's response to our brokenness is that of mercy, grace, and forgiveness. Again and again and again.

“Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. - Joel 2:12-13

Week 5 - Day 1: Foundation

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 4

Begin your time in prayer, asking God to enlighten and lead you as you study the narrative today.

Read Jonah 4 and summarize the passage through a simple re-write, summary statements, or drawings. Whatever helps you to slow down and enjoy the movement of the story.

Foundation Cheat Sheet

Enjoying the Narrative

Jonah 4

Jonah was displeased and angry that God spared the Ninevites from judgement.

Conversation #1

Jonah prayed to God:

Is this not what I told you at first?

This is why I fled to Tarshish!

I knew you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.

Since you saved them, take my life!

I would rather die than see you give them mercy!

God responds to Jonah:

Should you be angry about this?

Jonah left to the east of the city and set up shelter there.
He sat there to wait to see what would become of the city.

God appointed a plant to give Jonah shade and comfort.
The plant made Jonah very glad.

God appointed a worm to attack the plant.
The plant withered.

God appointment a scorching east wind.
The sun beat down on the head of Jonah, making him faint.

Conversation #2:

Jonah to God:

Asked to die

It is better for me to die than to live.

God to Jonah:

Should you be angry for the plant?

Jonah replies:

Yes, I should be angry, angry enough to die.

The Lord replies:

You pity the plant, for which you did nothing to make it come.

It came in one night, and died in the next.

Should I not pity Nineveh, which is filled with 120,000 who do not know any better?

Should I not even pity the cattle?

Week 5 - Day 2: Observation

Discovering the Truths, Promises, and Commands
Jonah 4

Read through Jonah chapter 4 and record the following:

Truths:

1. What does Jonah 4 say is true about God?
2. What is true about Jonah in chapter 4?

Promises:

3. What truths about God in Jonah 4 can I cling to?

Commands:

4. Actions and attitudes to avoid
5. Actions and attitudes to adopt

Share your observations on Twitter, Facebook, and/or Instagram using #focused15.

Observation Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Truths, Promises and Commands

Truths:

1. What does Jonah 4 say is true about God?

- By Jonah: (4:2)
 - gracious God
 - merciful
 - slow to anger
 - abounding in steadfast love
 - relenting from disaster.
- He asks questions of Jonah's behavior. (4:4, 9)
- God appoints both comforts and distress to Jonah.
 - the plant (4:6)
 - the worm (4:7)
 - the scorching east wind (4:9)
- God is in control over all of nature (4:6-9)
- God used the comfort and the distress to make a point clear to Jonah. (4:10-11)
- God rebukes Jonah for his lack of pity and compassion for the people of Nineveh. (4:10-11)

2. What is true about Jonah in chapter 4?

- Jonah was displeased by God's relenting. He cared more about justice than mercy. (4:1)
- Jonah was angered by God's choice to not bring destruction to Nineveh. (4:1)
- He brought His emotions to God. (4:2-3)
- His true intention for running to Tarshish is revealed through His prayer to God. (4:2)
- Jonah did not want God to show His merciful, patient, forgiving character to the people of Nineveh. (4:2)
- Jonah wanted to die over seeing the Ninevites experience God's mercy. (4:3)
- Jonah left the city, to wait it all out. (4:5)
- Jonah was pleased by physical comforts, like the shade of the plant. (4:6)
- After the plant was destroyed, and the scorching heat came, Jonah asked to die. (4:8)
- He felt it was better to die than to experience the discomfort. (4:8)
- Jonah was incredibly honest with God. (4:9)

Promises:

3. What truths about God in Jonah 4 can I cling to?

- God is completely in control of every part of this world. He appoints and allows what He wills.
- God will provide comforts and even distress for my good.
- God is a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relents

from disaster.

Commands:

4. Actions and attitudes to avoid

- Jonah's disregard for the eternal destiny of the people of Nineveh.
- The utter selfishness of Jonah.
- He was completely self-centered and self-protecting.
- Jonah cared more about his own comfort than the eternal comfort of the Ninevites.
- Jonah approached God without respect.
- Jonah did not want God's glory above else; he did not care for the world to see the character of God as he knew Him.

5. Actions and attitudes to adopt

- Jonah did not hide his emotions and displeasure from God.

Week 5 - Day 3: Clarification

Uncovering the Original Meaning
Jonah 4

Begin today's study with a prayer, asking God to open your eyes to the truths in His Word.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Quickly read Jonah 4. Look for potential key words and repeated words or phrases and make a list.

Now choose which word you would like to study and move to step #2.

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Using an Interlinear Bible, find the original Hebrew word for every instance of your word in Jonah 4.

Step #3: Define that Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Look up your Hebrew word (or words if you found more than one) in a Hebrew lexicon, noting the following:

- Definition of Hebrew word
- Number of times used
- Part of speech used (verb, noun, etc.)
- Other words it is translated into
- Any other notes

As time allows, continue through these steps for additional words you would like to study.

End your time with a prayer thanking God for the depth of His Word.

Clarification Cheat Sheet

Uncovering the Original Meaning

Jonah 4

Below are a few examples of a Hebrew word study from Jonah 4.

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

displeased – 4:1

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

displeased – *yera, raah*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

displeased – *yera*

- Definition of Hebrew word: to be evil, bad
- Number of times used: 98
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: evil, harm, evildoer, wicked, hurt (and more)
- Any other notes: Strong's #7489

displeased – *raah*

- Definition of Hebrew word: evil, wickedness, depravity, misfortune, disaster
- Number of times used: 313
- Part of speech used: noun
- Other words it is translated into: disaster, harm, trouble (and more)
- Any other notes: Strong's #7451

The literal translation is, "It was evil to Jonah with great evil."⁴

Step #1: Decide which English word you would like to study.

Pity – 4:10,11

Step #2: Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

pity – *hoos/hasta*

Step #3: Define each Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

4 Billy K. Smith and Franklin S. Page, *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*, vol. 19B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 271.

- Definition of Hebrew word: to be troubled, to look compassionately on, to spare
- Number of times used: 24
- Part of speech used: verb
- Other words it is translated into: spare (12), pity (11) concern (1)
- Any other notes: Strong's #2347; “to pity, have compassion, spare, look upon with compassion.”⁵; “It is to be observed with regard to this root, that pitying and sparing, are more often attributed to the *eye* than to the persons themselves... Hence it may be rightly concluded that the primary signification is in the idea of a merciful or indulgent countenance”⁶

⁵ James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2001).

⁶ Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2003), 266.

Week 5 - Day 4: Utilization

Discovering the Connections

Start today's time in the word with a prayer of dependency on God's Spirit to reveal the important connections in His Word through today's passage.

Follow the cross-references in Jonah 4 and jot down anything of particular interest in your study notes.

Utilization Cheat Sheet

Discovering the Connections

Here are a few of the notable cross-references:

4:2 - gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.

- Joel 2:12-14 – A beautiful description of God's character!

4:5 - made a booth for himself

- Nehemiah 8:15 – they made “booths” out of branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees

Week 5 - Day 5: Summation

Evaluating the Role I Play

Identify – Find the main idea of each passage.

Take some time to review this week's study, looking for any places you would like clarification. Consult your commentaries and study Bible to see how your observations line up.

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you.

1. Write out what you think the main teachings in Jonah 4 are.

Do you have any lingering questions about this week's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Modify - Evaluate myself in light of the main idea.

Take a look at the attitudes and actions observed in our characters this week (from day 2) and journal through the following evaluations.

2. Do I hide my emotions from God? When I do express them, is it done in a reverent manner?

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?
Psalm 8:3-4

3. Do I care more about my own comfort than the eternal comfort of the lost?

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
Luke 9:23

4. Does the idea of God relenting against the evil of my enemies bother me?

For I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose.
Exodus 33:19

5. Is there anything I need to do as a result of this week's study?

Glorify - Align my life to reflect the truth of God's Word.

Ask yourself: "How does my view of God line up with what I've learned in Scripture this week?" (See day 2.) Take some time to look at each characteristic of God in Jonah 4 and ask yourself if you believe it is true. Journal through them and ask God to renew your mind with the truth about who He is and give you the grace to cling to who He *truly* is.

Spend some time in prayer, thanking God for His Word and His work in your heart.

WEEK 6: *The Character of God in Jonah*

I sat at the back of the church to watch a union of bride and groom. As the pastor began his sermonette leading into the vows, he began to talk about the honorable characteristics of the bride and groom but he made a big mistake while doing so.

He used the wrong name for the groom.

Instead of saying Dan, he said Ben ... the best man's name! Of course, the pastor meant nothing by it. It was a simple slip, but it caused a ripple of giggles throughout the church from those who caught the mess-up. In the pastor's attempts to honor the bride and groom he caused a distraction to the listeners, possible anxiety and doubt to the wedding party, and it most certainly did not honor the groom.

An often ignored application of Scripture is evaluating how our view of God lines up with Scripture. We've all heard bad sermons and wrong teachings. Unfortunately, we don't always recognize they are false because we don't know the Word well enough to recognize the bad theology.

We're calling God by the wrong name without realizing it.

With a view toward knowing God better and better each day, we will spend our last week together looking at the character of God displayed in the book of Jonah. By now, I hope you feel comfortable enough with the study method to use it on any passage you come across once our time together is done. This week we will use our study method a bit differently. Instead of staying in the same passage for a week, we will look at a smaller group of verses each day and go through each part of our FOCUS method in one day.

Oh, that we might know the LORD! Let us press on to know him. He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring.

Hosea 6:3

Week 6 - Day 1: Experiencing God's Presence

If we are in Christ, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of God. God is with us always and forever. There is *nothing* we can do to lose our right standing before God, assuming we have a true, regenerate faith in Christ. God's grace cannot be outdone by our sin.

Though we may be forever in His grasp, we certainly have influence over our experience of God's presence—His transforming, empowering, life-giving companionship—in our moments.

Ask God to provide an openness of heart as you study today.

Read the following verses and go through the **F O C** and **U** of our study method, one verse at a time. Once you've observed all the verses, move on to **S** at the end of your study time.

If you are short on time today, start with reading each verse then choose one verse to apply the FOCUS method to.

- 1 Chronicles 16:11
- Psalm 16:11
- Psalm 27:8
- Acts 3:19-20

F - Foundation

Write out the verse.

O - Observation

Truths: What is true about God's presence?

Promises: Are there any truths about who God is that I can cling to?

Commands: What commands are given?

C - Clarification

Since we're working quickly through these verses, just do a quick lookup of a word or two in each verse, to catch a glimpse of the original word and its definition.

U - Utilization

Follow any cross-references you have time for and note your discoveries.

S - Summation

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you. Do you have any lingering questions about today's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Identify: Consult your commentaries and/or study Bible to see how your observations about God's presence line up. Summarize what you learned today about God's presence.

Modify: Ask yourself: Is there anything I need to do as a result of today's study?

Glorify: Spend some time in prayer, asking God to make these truths take root in your heart and mind.

Bonus Study:

FOCUS on Psalm 24:3-7.

Week 6 - Day 2: God's Sovereign Provision

God brought the storm and its calm, the fish and dry land, as well as the plant, worm, and scorching wind into Jonah's life. He appointed each with purpose for Jonah's growth and sanctification (a big fancy word for becoming more like Jesus).

Our God is the creator, ruler, and sustainer of all we see and experience. From the ground we walk on to the air we breathe, it is all of God. God holds great power over nature—even when it seems out of control—and He uses His creation to fulfill His purposes in our lives. We see this truth clearly in the story of Jonah, as well as many other passages in Scripture.

After you begin your time in prayer, read Job 37:10-12 and apply the FOCUS method to these verses.

F - Foundation

Write out the verses.

O - Observation

Truths: What does Elihu say is true about God?

Does this line up with the rest of Scripture?

Promises: Are there any truths about who God is that I can cling to?

Commands: What commands are given?

C - Clarification

Since we're working quickly through these verses, just do a quick lookup of a word or two in each verse, to catch a glimpse of the original word and its definition.

U - Utilization

Follow any cross-references you have time for and note what you find.

S - Summation

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you.

Do you have any lingering questions about today's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Identify: Consult your commentaries and/or study Bible to see how your observations about God's

presence line up. Summarize what you learned today about God's presence.

Modify: Ask yourself: Is there anything I need to do as a result of this today's study?

Glorify: Spend some time in prayer, asking God to make these truths take root in your heart and mind.

Bonus Study:

FOCUS on Proverbs 3:19-20 and/or Jeremiah 10:12-13.

Week 6 - Day 3: God's Patience with the Perishing

No one rejoices when a guilty man gets away from the punishment he deserves. A good judge convicts the guilty, and you and I are as guilty as can be. We've offended a holy, righteous God—the eternal, righteous Judge. Christ paid the penalty for our sin, so we could have a chance at a restored relationship with God. Through repentance and faith in Christ's work on the cross, we can stand before our holy Judge, and be declared innocent.

It is a glorious truth I cannot fully comprehend, but I understand enough to realize the weight of God's holiness and the absolute wickedness of my sin. God has been patient with me to allow the chance of redemption through Christ. God was patient with the Ninevites and their great transgressions. God continues to show Himself patient to those in our world today who are perishing without Christ.

Open your time in the Bible with prayer. Read 2 Peter 3:9 and Matthew 9:35-38. If you are short on time, just pick one to observe today.

F - Foundation

Write out 2 Peter 3:9.

O - Observation

Truths: What is true about God?

Promises: Are there any truths about who God is that I can cling to?

Commands: What commands are given?

C - Clarification

Since we're working quickly through these verses, just do a quick lookup of a word or two in each verse to catch a glimpse of the original word and its definition.

U - Utilization

Follow any cross-references you have time for and note your discoveries.

S - Summation

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you.

Do you have any lingering questions about today's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Identify: Consult your commentaries and/or study Bible to see how your observations about God's presence line up. Summarize what you learned today about God's presence.

Modify: Ask yourself: Is there anything I need to do as a result of today's study?

Glorify: Spend some time in prayer, asking God to make these truths take root in your heart and mind.

Bonus Study:

FOCUS on Isaiah 30:18 and/or Numbers 14:18-19.

Week 6 - Day 4: God's Patience with Jonah

At first glance, Jonah seems like an average guy who just didn't feel like preaching. So he ran. He was a naughty boy who needed correction, but in the end he did what he was told. But that's really not the story here, is it?

There are deep, wicked, heart-level issues in Jonah that are revealed through the story. God was certainly patient with the people of Nineveh. He sent a warning and gave them a chance to repent. But, wow, He was also patient with Jonah. Jonah may have been a well-behaved Hebrew (minus the whole running from God part) who “feared” Yahweh, the Lord of heaven and earth, but his heart was far from emulating the heart of God for the people of Nineveh.

It is easy to view “external” sins as worse than “internal” ones. Jonah was able to manage his external obedience, but his heart was a wicked mess.

God didn't have to use Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. He could have used another prophet to do the work needed. The moment Jonah ran, God could have left him to his “safe,” new life in Tarshish. But God didn't. He pursued Jonah. God had a plan to show mercy and grace to the people of Nineveh, but He also had a plan to show mercy and grace to Jonah.

God has a plan for you and me as well. That is why He continues to show mercy and grace to us, even when our hearts are a wicked mess.

Today, open your time with God in prayer, then spend some time reading through Romans 8. Select a passage (3-5 verses) within the chapter to FOCUS on.

If you are short on time, study verses 1, 31-35.

F - Foundation

Write out a few of your favorite verses from Romans 8.

O - Observation

Truths: What is true about God?

Promises: Are there any truths about who God is that I can cling to?

Commands: What commands are given?

C - Clarification

Do a quick lookup of any words you want to learn more about.

U - Utilization

Follow any cross-references you have time for and note your discoveries.

S - Summation

As you search the commentaries, ask God to make clear the meaning of any passages that are fuzzy to you.

Do you have any lingering questions about today's verses? Ask a trusted pastor, mentor, or friend what they think about the passage.

Identify: Consult your commentaries and/or study Bible to see how your observations about God's presence line up. Summarize what you learned today about God's presence.

Modify: Ask yourself: Is there anything I need to do as a result of today's study?

Glorify: Spend some time in prayer, asking God to make these truths take root in your heart and mind.

Bonus Study:

Select another passage from Romans 8 to FOCUS on.

Week 6 - Day 5: Study Summation

Well, you made it! Our study of Jonah is over. I pray you have experienced a fresh look at the presence, provision, and patience of God through your time in His Word.

Today is a great day to look back and celebrate all we've learned and solidify our application in response.

Take some time to glance through each week's summation day. Pay special attention to the “Modify” sections. Write out each of the application points you recorded when you answered the question, “Is there anything I need to do as a result of this week's study?”

See if there are any themes in God's calling toward obedience.

It can be overwhelming when I think of all the “work” that needs to be done in this heart of mine. I fail every day. Oftentimes, in the same sin again and again. It is incredibly discouraging and I don't think I am alone in that defeat.

Thankfully, God has given us His word with the truths we need to cling to.

Read 2 Peter 1:3 and observe what is true about God.

1. What does this passage say is true about you and me?
2. Now read Galatians 3:3 and look for the attitudes and actions Paul is calling “foolish.”
3. Lastly, read 1 John 5:14-15 and note the promise we are given.

We have everything we need for life and godliness. Everything. God does not call us to something on our own. We have His empowering, indwelling Spirit within who gives us the desire to obey and the power to do what He calls us to (Philippians 2:13). And when we feel like we just can't do it, even when we read these truths? We pray. And we pray with confidence, because God's will for us is to live an obedient life. We are charged with this over and over again. Abide in Christ (John 15). Walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5). Worship God through holy and pleasing lives (Romans 12:1). We can pray confidently to that end because we know that it is God's will for us to abide in Him, walking by the Spirit, and worshipping Him with all that we have. He will answer that prayer!

Spend some time in prayer, asking God to clearly show you the step of obedience you need to take today. Ask Him to enable you to obey. Thank Him ahead of time for His patience, provision, and presence as you walk this journey of obedience.

Immersed in His grace, walk in confidence that your prayer to be more like Jesus will be answered.

Appendix

Here are several quick reference guides for your study:

- At a Glance: Jonah
- At a Glance: Old Testament Timeline
- Tutorial: FOCUSed15 Study Method
- Tutorial: Hebrew Word Study

Author:

Jonah

Though the author does not state himself directly from the text, the book is most likely to be Jonah's own testimony of God's work in his life.

Audience:

Jonah prophesied in the Northern Kingdom (Israel) from 782-753 BC. The particular prophecies in the book of Jonah are to Assyrians in the city of Nineveh.

Aim:

The book of Jonah examines the difference between the attitudes and actions of God and His prophet. A marked contrast is evident between: Jonah's hatred and God's compassion for Nineveh, as well as Jonah's unfaithfulness and God's faithfulness.

Any reader of this short book should learn about God's goodness, sovereignty, and patience. A careful reader will also find her heart challenged by how she views others in light of God's call to be salt and light.

Attributes of God:

God has great compassion for those who are yet to come to faith. (Jonah 1:2, 3:10, 4:2-3, 4:11)

God shows great mercy toward the repentant. (Jonah 3:5-10)

God is patient with His unfaithful servants. (Jonah 1:17, 2:10, 3:1)

God rules over nature and uses it to accomplish His will in our lives. (Jonah 1:4, 1:7, 1:15-17, 2:10, 4:6-8)



- c. 5000 BC **Creation** – God creates all things culminating in making man in His own image.
The Fall of Mankind – Mankind sins and rebels against God.
Noah and the Flood – The corruption of mankind increases, is judged by a global flood.
Tower of Babel – Mankind attempts to build their way to God. God separates people into distinct languages.
- c. 1800 BC **Call of Abraham** – God chooses a family through which He will bless the world, tells them to go to Canaan.
Era of the Patriarchs – Abraham, his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob/Israel.
Twelve Tribes Established – Jacob's named changed to Israel. Jacob's sons become the fathers of all twelve of Israel's tribes.
Israel to Egypt – Jacob's son Joseph is sold into slavery, ends up second in command in Egypt and rescues his family from a major famine. All of the Hebrews move to Egypt.
- c. 1440 BC
or c. 1260 BC **Israelite Bondage** – The Israelites become captive to Egypt, are subjected to forced labor.
The Exodus – God calls Moses to lead the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt.
The Desert Wanderings – The Israelites fail to trust God to deliver them into the Promised Land and are forced to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.
The Law Given – God gives Moses the Law by which Israel is to live, including the Ten Commandments, sacrificial system, and how to build the Tabernacle.
The Conquest of the Promised Land – After Moses' death, God calls Joshua to lead the people into Canaan by driving out the Canaanite inhabitants.
The Period of Judges – God raises up judges to rule, and deliver Israel from foreign enemies.
- c. 1043 BC **The Monarchy Established** – Israel demands a king. God calls Saul to be the first king of Israel.
- c. 1000-931 BC **The Golden Age** – After Saul's disobedience, God anoints David king. David and his son Solomon lead Israel into prosperity and peace from its enemies.
The Temple Built – Solomon builds a permanent structure for the presence of God to dwell.
- c. 931 BC **The Kingdom Divided** – After Solomon's death Israel divides into two kingdoms. The northern tribes form Israel, the southern tribes form Judah.
- c. 722 BC **The Destruction of Israel** – The northern kingdom of Israel fails to obey God, becomes increasingly wicked. God judges Israel by allowing Assyria to invade.
- c. 586 BC **The Exile of Judah** – After the Babylonians overthrow the Assyrians, they invade Jerusalem, destroying the Temple and taking Judah into captivity.
- c. 516 BC **The Return of the Jews** – Persians defeat Babylon, Jews allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.



F
O
C
U
S

FOUNDATION

Enjoying the Narrative

WRITE OUT THE STORY

OBSERVATION

Finding Truths, Promises, & Commands

TRUTHS: About God, characters of story

PROMISES: Truths about God we can cling to

COMMANDS: Actions & attitudes to adopt or avoid

CLARIFICATION

Uncovering the Original Meaning

DECIDE which English word to study.

DISCOVER the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

DEFINE that Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

UTILIZATION

Discovering the Connections

CROSS-REFERENCING

SUMMATION

Evaluating the Role I Play

IDENTIFY the main idea of each passage.

MODIFY my life in light of main idea.

GLORIFY God by aligning my life to reflect the truths I've discovered.



Decide:

Decide which English word you would like to study.

Do a quick read of your passage and note any **potential key words** and/or repeated words. Choose a word to look up.

Discover:

Discover the Hebrew word in an Interlinear Bible.

Using an **Interlinear Bible**, find the original Hebrew word for each instance of the word in the passage you are studying. There may be more than one Hebrew word present.

An Interlinear Bible is a translation where each English word is linked to its original Hebrew word. There are many free interlinear Bibles online, as well as great apps you can download to your phone or tablet. Check out KatieOrr.me/Resources for current links.

Define:

Define that Hebrew word using a Hebrew Lexicon.

Look up your Hebrew word (or words if you found more than one) in a **Hebrew Lexicon**. A Hebrew Lexicon is a dictionary and thesaurus for the type of Hebrew used in the Old Testament.

Note the following:

- **Definition(s)** - Many Hebrew words will have multiple meanings. It is often helpful to see all of the ways that word is used in the Old Testament.
- **Number of times used in the Old Testament** - Most Lexicons will include the number of times a word is used in the Old Testament. Many will also give the verses where you can find these additional uses.
- **Part of speech** -(verb, noun, adjective, etc.)
- **Special Notes** - Many Lexicons will include information that will be helpful in providing additional understanding.

Continue through these three steps for each word you would like to study.



About the Author



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truthspeaker

Thanks for taking this journey with me through Jonah! I pray you have drawn closer to our Lord through it, and feel more equipped to dig into the Word for yourself.

I hope you'll stop my website. I'd love to meet you! Just click the link below to visit.

katieorr.me



... so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus ...
Philippians 1:26 ESV