

STORIES of STRUGGLE

the pathway through



New International Version is used for questions

1. What are the four ways we run from God? Have you ever had a time in your life where you ran from God? What happened?
2. Read Jonah 1:1-4. Jonah decided to run from God. This is actually a ridiculous concept, do you think Jonah knew this? Why do people run from God when they know it is impossible to do so? What did Pastor Rick say that avoidance does? Read Psalm 139:7,8. What does this passage teach us?
3. Read Proverbs 28:13. What is the first step to start coming back to God? What did God allow to happen to Jonah to get him to be willing to come back to God? If Jonah had not been willing to confess to his shipmates why the storm had come, what could have happened? What does that show us? What warning should we take from what happened to Jonah?
4. Read Jonah 3:4-4:3. Why was Jonah angry with God? Considering how God had just treated Jonah, why was this so wrong? Does it make you angry when God does not punish people that you feel deserve to be punished? Why? Read Psalm 73:1-20. What concerned the writer of this Psalm? What was his conclusion? How should this affect our actions toward unbelievers who deny God?
5. Read Jonah 4:5-10. What was Jonah angry about in this section? What does it show about Jonah's priorities in his life, what he valued? What does God tell Jonah is His priority?

- run from conviction, and d. We hide in guilt and shame.
2. *Pastor Rick said that avoidance doesn't resolve anything, it delays the inevitable. Psalm 139 is the Biblical statement that tells us that there is no possibility of running from or escaping God.*
 3. *The first step to coming back to God is to be honest about running from God and why we are doing it. God allowed him to be cast into the sea and swallowed by the fish. If he had not been honest, his shipmates could have also been harmed from the storm, so that shows us that others close to us can suffer when we run from God. The warning we should take is that God will do whatever is necessary to get us to stop running and turn back to him and it can be very dramatic if need be.*
 4. *Jonah was angry because he was prejudiced against the Ninevites and felt that they should be destroyed and God saved them instead. In Psalm 73 the writer was upset because it seems many times the ungodly prosper and have nothing bad happen to them. He eventually realized that their end would be eternal destruction so we should pity them and try to reach them for Christ.*
 5. *Jonah was angry because the vine that had shielded him from the sun had died and he was uncomfortable. It showed that Jonah was totally self-centered and cared more for his own comfort than the eternal destiny of thousands of people. God says His priority is the salvation of souls, not our physical comfort.*