

## Marinating in God's Word: Jonah

Ask about a favorite book of the Bible, and you're not likely to someone cite the Minor Prophets. And yet we hear God's word through them too. Thus we are focusing this summer on a portion of the Bible we tend not to know very well.

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

- Most of the Minor Prophets have mostly oracle (words they delivered) and little story. With Jonah it is the opposite. Where is his one short oracle? What does the balance of narrative and oracle tell you about the point of the book of Jonah for us?
- Jonah doubted God's wisdom in giving grace to the "unworthy" Ninevites. Can you think of instances when you've seen truly unworthy people come to faith and forgiveness? Is God's grace somehow diminished or accentuated when given to such unworthy recipients? What do the most unlikely recipients of grace tell us about the nature of grace itself? And what does our response to them tell us about ourselves?
- Count the number of first person singular pronouns in Jonah's prayer in v. 2-4. Jonah was being commendably honest about his displeasure, and yet even in his honesty he still could not see how totally self-centered he was. How does God go about breaking our egocentrism?
- The story ends without telling us whether Jonah came around or not. Why? Can you think of other examples of open-ended stories in the scripture? What purpose do they have?

Next week we will focus on Amos.