



## Study 3: The Revivalist Prophet

### Discussion Starter

What is the best present you have ever received? What made it so special?

### Worship God Together

Our God is often described as a “God of second chances”. In today’s study both Jonah and the people of Nineveh discover this to be true for themselves, but before we come to the study we are going to reflect on the implications for our own lives of this aspect of God’s nature, and worship Him for it.

We are going to use a simple, active prayer in our worship together. If possible, arrange to have some quiet worship music playing in the background, and have a bowl of warm water and a towel available in the centre of the room.

Read 1 John 1:5-10

Spend a few minutes in quiet before God reflecting on the words that have been read and thinking back over the last week. Are we aware of the times we have fallen short, of the occasions when we have let God down? Ask God’s Spirit to reveal to us not only the sins that we have recognised already, but the sins that we have passed over without noticing.

Read Isaiah 1:18 and then invite each person, when they are ready, to come and wash their hands in silence, as a symbol of the forgiveness and cleansing that is ours through Jesus.

Finish by reading Micah 7:18-19 and inviting one or two people to offer prayers of thanks.

### Focus on the Word

Read Jonah chapter 3 and discuss the following questions together:

- Compare the first three verses of this chapter with the first three verses of chapter one. What similarities do you notice? What differences do you notice? What do these contrasts tell us about God, and about Jonah?
- What response do you imagine Jonah expected to receive as he declared God’s word in Nineveh?
- What similarities do you see between the reactions of the sailors to God in chapter one and the reactions of the Ninevites in this chapter?
- Reflect on Jonah 1:2 and Jonah 3:4. What do these verses tell us about God’s dealings with human society? Do you believe that He still acts in this way? Can you think of any contemporary examples?
- The phrase “a very important city” in verse 3 should literally be translated “a city important to God”. Do you think of your town in these terms? How might this affect the way we view our local communities?
- Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-13, where Paul describes the repentance of a group of Christians, and compare the various facets of their repentance with the repentance of the city of Nineveh. Do

you think we have lost something of what true, godly repentance entails in the church today? If so, how can we go about trying to regain it?

## Work it Through

---

Discuss together:

- Thinking both personally and from a church perspective, are there individuals or groups of people that we shy away from sharing the Gospel with? Perhaps we subconsciously see them as beyond the pale, or believe that they would never soften in their attitude towards God.
- Does the story of Jonah have anything to say to the way we view these individuals or groups of people? How about the way we view our mission towards them?

Spend some time praying for the community around us at church, or the community in which you live or work, using the things you have discussed as a starting point for your prayers.