

Running From the Throne: *Is Jesus King of Your Life?*

1. Hakuna Matata Isn't a Kingdom Plan

Simba runs from his _____, hiding behind a carefree “no worries” philosophy.

Many of us do the same with God, quietly avoiding His claim on our lives.

Is Jesus truly _____ of your life, or have you simply gotten good at _____ Him?

2. Running: Jonah and the Boat to Tarshish

God calls Jonah to _____, but he flees toward _____ instead — running from a good but costly calling.

Running from God always _____ something, even when it looks like _____.

3. The Storm We Can't Outrun

God sends a _____ to interrupt Jonah's escape, just as Nala's confrontation interrupts Simba's — not cruelty, but _____.

God would rather chase us into a storm than let us _____ quietly in avoidance.

4. Remembering Who You Are

In the fish, Jonah _____ the Lord (Jonah 2:7), just as Rafiki and Mufasa remind Simba who he is.

In Christ, you are not defined by your _____ decision or your _____ season.

5. Coming Back to Pride Rock

God calls Jonah “a _____ **time**” (Jonah 3:1), and Simba returns to Pride Rock — proof that _____ chances are real.

Surrender isn't _____; it's finding the _____ you were created for.

6. Three Challenges: Stop Running, Start Surrendering

1. Name what you're _____ from — be specific with yourself and God; you cannot surrender what you refuse to name.
2. Take one _____ of obedience — even a small one. God asked Jonah to preach **one** _____, not fix all of Nineveh alone.
3. Give Jesus the specific area you've kept _____ **-limits** — identify the locked room in your life and consciously hand Him the _____. Say it out loud if you need to: “*Jesus, You can have this too.*”

Fast Facts About Jonah: Jonah was a real prophet from Gath Hepher (2 Kings 14:25) called to preach to Nineveh, capital of Assyria — Israel's brutal enemy. The book has just 4 chapters, and Jesus later cites Jonah's three days in the fish as a sign of His own death and resurrection (Matthew 12:40).

Scripture References: Jonah 1:1-3, Jonah 1:4, Jonah 1:9, Jonah 1:17, Jonah 2:2, Jonah 2:7, Jonah 2:10, Jonah 3:1-3

Discussion Questions

In what ways have you built your own 'jungle' — a comfortable place to avoid God's claim on your life?

Jonah wasn't running from something evil, but from a good, hard calling. What good but costly thing might God be calling you toward that you've been avoiding?

How has God gotten your attention in a 'storm' moment? Looking back, can you see His mercy in that interruption?

What does it mean to you that Jonah 'remembered the LORD' in the belly of the fish? What helps you remember who God is and who you are in Him during dark or difficult seasons?

Which of the three challenges (name it, take a step, hand over the keys) is hardest for you right now, and why?

What is the one 'room' in your life you've kept off-limits from Jesus? What would it look like to hand Him the keys this week?

Key Takeaways

- Running from God's call doesn't make you free — it makes you hidden and stuck, like Jonah asleep in the storm or Simba hiding in the jungle.
- God's pursuit of runners is an act of relentless love, not cruelty — He would rather send a storm than let us drown in avoidance.
- Your past or your running season does not disqualify you; God specializes in giving second chances ('a second time,' Jonah 3:1).
- Surrendering to Jesus as King is not losing your life — it's finding the life you were created for.
- Practical surrender looks like: naming what you're running from, taking one small step of obedience, and handing over the specific area you've kept off-limits.

Additional Notes

This sermon draws a sustained parallel between the book of Jonah and Disney's The Lion King to illustrate running from calling and coming home to it.

Jonah is a short book (4 chapters) — consider reading it in full this week for further reflection.

The core question of the sermon: 'Is Jesus King of your life, or have you just gotten really good at avoiding the throne?'

Answer Key

1. identity; King; avoiding

2. Nineveh; Tarshish; costs; freedom

3. storm; mercy; drown

4. remembers; worst; wandering

5. second; second; defeat; life

6. Three Challenges

running; step; message; off; keys