



- 1 **Have you ever tried to run away from God?** You may not have fled literally, but you ran nevertheless? You may have avoided church or your friends who followed Jesus? You may have quit praying or reading the Bible?


 *Share what you did and what happened to bring you back to God.*

- 2 **Jonah tried to get away from God's presence (verse 3).** Is this possible? (Genesis 4:16, Job 1:12, Psalm 139:7 - 12)

 *How can we as Christians push away God's presence? (Psalm 51:11)*

 *A sense of the presence of Christ in your life should be the prayer of your heart—what can you do to get back into God's presence after running away or pushing God away?*


- 3 **Most of us know the way to Tarshish.** Like Jonah, we've paid the fare at one point or another. The escape to Tarshish for some people takes the form of shopping, where the temporary fascination with something new takes your mind off of Nineveh. For others there is the workplace—going to work or bringing work home keeps them from having to ever really be home. Others retreat inside; they escape by isolating themselves from everyone around them, keeping everyone at arm's length. Some fill their lives with busyness to ignore their inner dissatisfaction with life; some escape in pornography, a sense of intimacy without any strings. But the truth, Eugene Peterson says, is simply this: "Tarshish is a lie." The release, the distraction, the satisfaction of escape is only a temporary and fleeting fix.

 *How do you escape? What is your Tarshish?*

- 4 **Rebellion against God's plan was obviously one reason Jonah ran.**

 *Do you ever get mad at God for his obvious will for your life? Why?*

 *Why do believers rebel against their Father? What does God say about rebellion in 1 Samuel 15:23?*

 *What do we need to do when our hearts want to rebel? Someone defined "Obedience" as "responding to the initial promptings of God's Spirit"—when you make God wait on your obedience, you are in danger of the hardness of rebellion. What in your life have you been waiting to obey God in—delaying—putting off—until you're ready?*

