

Jonah

Extending Our Reach

What if you were asked to share your future and inheritance with the very people who had cruelly hurt you and those you love? Would you run in the opposite direction, stubbornly asserting that they were unworthy and undeserving of such privileges? Jonah did.

This question was once asked of me. When I was a young woman, a man hurt me; he hurt me so deeply that it changed the trajectory of my life.

In our minds, love has limitations. We may partially concede to Christ's instructions—love our enemies from a distance and be mad about it—but offer them the opportunity to escape the consequences and punishment they deserve? The problem is that some of us would rather die. We'd rather sail to the ends of the earth, alone, separated from all that is familiar, than extend mercy and grace to our offenders.

While I can relate to Jonah, I have come to understand that I am no more deserving of God's mercy and grace than the man who assaulted me. Now it is my hope that he has found forgiveness in Jesus Christ and will praise Him for all eternity, next to me.

My desire for you is that you will not fail to extend God's message of love to all people, no matter who they have been or what they have done.

Dependent on His Grace,

Julie West

Lesson 1: Chapter 1, Verses 1-17

Lesson 2: Chapter 2, Verses 1-10

Lesson 3: Chapter 3, Verses 1-10

Lesson 4: Chapter 4, Verses 1-11