



Message Series – JONAH

Week of February 1, 2009

Jonah: Part Three

Tailor the following questions to fit the needs of your group. Start with a BREAKING THE ICE question, then get real with two or three CONNECTING questions and end by challenging one another to TAKE IT HOME. For those who want to explore God's Word further, use the DISCOVERY QUESTIONS.

Jonah's obedience influenced the Ninevites to:

- 1. Believe God**
- 2. Call on God**
- 3. Repent of their evil ways**
- 4. Receive God's mercy**

BREAKING THE ICE:

- Name a famous person or people group that you seriously doubt will ever become followers of Christ. Share your reasons for thinking this.
- What is the best "second chance" story you've ever heard, outside of the Bible?

CONNECTING:

- 1. Describe a time when God gave you a second chance.** Why do you think God gave Jonah a second chance to go to Nineveh? How do you think Jonah felt about it the second time? Why did God give Nineveh a chance to repent? What can we learn about God through the story of Jonah?
- 2. Why do you think the Ninevites were so quick to repent and believe God?**
What has God shown you that you need to do, but you have not yet done? Commit to your Connect Group to obey God immediately.
- 3. We can all identify with the ongoing battle with indwelling sin that Paul speaks of in Romans 7:15-17.** Repentance means to turn from sin; to change one's mind and actions so that they agree with God. How does true repentance transform a person, inside and out? For what do you think our country needs to publicly repent? **Doing what God says not to do is called a sin of commission. Not doing what God said to do is called a sin of omission. What is your greatest sin of commission or omission?**
- 4. In what situations would you consider fasting and/or giving up physical comfort, like the Ninevites, in order to seek God?** Have you ever fasted and prayed for the salvation of another person or people group? How long did you fast and pray? Did you see any results? Did the Ninevites change God's mind or did God give them the opportunity to change *their* minds?
- 5. Someone once said, "God does nothing on earth except in response to believing prayer."** Do you agree or disagree? Give your reasons. Why didn't God just speak directly to the Ninevites

instead of sending Jonah? Why does God choose to use *us* to accomplish His will on earth? How willing are you to be God's messenger and take the good news to undeserving people? With whom is God asking you to share the good news?

TAKE IT HOME:

- 1.** What will you do to obey God's call this week to take His message to the lost? Who will you begin praying for? Ask God to reveal to you the message you are to share (be sure it includes His grace and mercy). Deal with any personal doubts or unbelief that would prevent you from doing your part or trusting God to do His part.
- 2.** For what sins of commission or omission do you need to repent? Ask God to reveal His grace and truth regarding these sins. (John 8:31-34) We sin because, in some area of our thinking, we are not believing God's Word and relying on Christ. Sin is defeated when we agree with God concerning sin and its remedy— Christ! So, acknowledge the sin(s), thank God for His forgiveness, and trust Christ to empower you and live through you. Believe that Christ lives in you and that you can "do all things through Christ who strengthens (you)" (Philippians 4:13). Bring every thought captive regarding this sin and make them obedient to Christ.
- 3.** What has God shown you that you need to do, but you haven't yet done? What will you do to obey God immediately? Share this with your Connect Group so they can pray for you and hold you accountable.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS:

Read the third chapter of Jonah.

- What evidence do you see in this story that God is a God of second chances? Do you think Jonah heard God speak audibly or in his thoughts? What was Jonah's response to God's word? How do you know when God is speaking to you? Why do you think Jonah was quick to obey the second time God spoke? What thoughts do you think went through his mind? How do you think he felt about going to Nineveh?
- What kind of physical scars do you think Jonah had from being inside the fish for three days? When people asked him what happened, what do you think he told them? How would Jonah's appearance and/or his story encourage the *fear of the Lord* in the Ninevites?
- What message did God tell Jonah to preach? (v 4) How did the Ninevites respond to Jonah's message? (v 5) How do you account for this? What did the Ninevites believe God was going to do? How is God's message similar or different today? Who is God wanting you to speak to about His grace?
- Repentance is changing our mind and actions to agree with God. From what did the Ninevites repent? (v 8) What was the king's main concern? (v 9) What was God's response? How does this story of God's love and mercy compare to the New Testament message of His love and grace? What can we learn from God's dealings with Nineveh? How will you apply this to your life?

VERSES FOR FURTHER STUDY: Nahum 1:1, 3:1, 19; Matthew 5:43-48; Acts 10:1-35, 26:14-20; Romans 2:1-11; 10-11; 2 Corinthians 7:10; 2 Peter 3:9