

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of October 10, 2021

Let's Get Serious: Becoming a World Christian- The One That Got Away, Jonah 1:1-2:1
Pastor Temple- 8:30 & 10:30 Traditional, Pastor Conway- 10:30 Contemporary

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?
- Are there joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)
- **Opening Discussion Question-** Do you know any Christians whom you never would have predicted as ones who would repent of their sin and turn to God in faith in Christ? Care to share about it?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week's sermon message and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows. There are more questions than you will have time for, so it is ok to be selective.

Jonah 1:1 – 2:1

The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: ²“Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.” ³But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD. ⁴Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. ⁵All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. ⁶The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.” ⁷Then the sailors said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸So they asked him, “Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?”

⁹He answered, “I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” ¹⁰This terrified them and they asked, “What have you done?” (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.) ¹¹The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?” ¹²“Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.” ¹³Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. ¹⁴Then they cried out to the LORD, “Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased.” ¹⁵Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. ¹⁶At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him. ¹⁷Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. ²¹From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.

1. If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
2. How do verses 1-3, provide a setting for this story?
3. Why do you believe Jonah was so opposed to preaching God's message in Nineveh (capital of Assyria)?
4. In a way, how were the people on the ship messengers of God to Jonah and a positive example to follow?
5. In the belly of the great fish, Jonah has a change of heart and change of direction (AKA repentance). Where do you see the grace of God at work up to this point in Jonah?
6. In the end (chapter 4), how does the mercy of humans (Jonah) compare with the mercy of God?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

1. Would a volunteer please read aloud parable of the good Samaritan as it is found in Luke 10:30-37?
2. Why did the religious people, the priest and Levite, not render aid to the beaten man in the street?
3. How as the Samaritan the hero of the parable and why would Jesus name him as a Samaritan?
4. How did the feelings toward the Ninevites/Assyrians in Jonah's time compare with the feelings toward Samaritans in Jesus' time?
5. What social boundaries among people groups today are obstacles that at times prevent God's people from sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed?
6. How does 2 Timothy 2:25-26 present God's will for us and for those we perceive as our enemies?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

1. As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
2. Do you believe the wickedness of our world today is rising up to God (verse 2)? If so, what do you believe God is doing about it?
3. This week, how might our words and deeds highlight both the need for repentance and the quickness of God to forgive, to the people around us?
4. How can we lean in towards the mission of God to the world this week, and not isolate ourselves from it?

Witness and Closing (10 minutes)

- The Christ Church missions focus of this month names four particular sponsored ministries- the Life Center Houston (from Sunday), Habitat for Humanity, Uganda water well mission, and Haiti health clinic. How does this outward focus of the church embrace the great commission of Christ in word and deed?
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting