Community Group Discussion Questions

“A Whale of a Journey”  Jonah  Sept. 29, 2018

Getting Started
Jonah is considered by many as fable, but because we believe it’s factual (Luke 11:30; Matthew 12:39-40) we are able to discover God’s faithfulness.

Jesus spoke of Jonah and his experience as a historical reality. In fact, Jesus spoke of the entire Old Testament as a historical reality. If Jesus confirmed that the Bible of His day was true, what should that do for your view of the integrity of the Bible’s message?

Going Deeper

1. **A Call to Go:** “Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, “Arise, go...” (Jonah 1:1-2)
   a. **To a Place:** “to Nineveh” (1:2) *Capital of Assyria *Mosul, Iraq
   b. **To a People:** “for their evil has come up before me” (1:2)
   c. **To a be a Preacher:** “call out against it” (1:2)


2. **A Place to Run:** “But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish” (1:3)
   a. **Far from the Place:** “He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish” (1:3) *Tel Aviv
   b. **Far from the People:** “So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish” (1:3) *Southern Spain
   c. **Far from His Presence:** “away from the presence of the LORD” (1:3)

If you have ever run away from God’s call on your life, what did that look like?
3. **A Storm that Blows:** “But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea,” (1:4)
   - **Causing Fear:** “Then the mariners were afraid” (1:5)
   - **Creating Faith:** “each cried out to his god” (1:5)

How do you think the almighty sovereign God of all creation responds when one of His own children chooses to do the exact opposite of what God tells them?

4. **A Crew that Knows:**
   - **Roll of the Dice:** “Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us.” (1:7)
   - **Revelation of Defiance:** “For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.” (1:10)

What do you think other people think about you when they know you’re a Christian, but they see you purposely running away from God?

5. **A Fish to Catch:** “And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah” (1:17)
   - **Prayer of Distress:** “I called out to the LORD, out of my distress” (2:2)
   - **Purpose to Deliver:** “And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.” (2:10)

Throughout the Bible, God consistently does one thing when His people repent. What is it? Why do you think He responds this way?
6. **A City that Repents:** “And the people of Nineveh believed God.” (3:5)
   a. **A Second Chance:** “Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time” (3:1)
   b. **A Sermon that’s Concise:** “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” (3:4)
   c. **A Scene of Compassion:** “God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.” (3:10)

When we boldly lean in and live out our faith and calling, how do many respond to our message?

7. **A Preacher that Quits:**
   a. **His Complaint:** “But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry” (4:1)
   b. **God’s Comfort:** “God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort” (4:6)
   c. **His Criticism:** “Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die” (4:9)

Read verse 4:2. What was Jonah’s big complaint? How did God try to teach Jonah a lesson?

8. **A God who Cares:** “And should not I pity Nineveh,…more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle” (4:11)
   a. **God’s Plan**
   b. **God’s Pursuit**
   c. **God’s Patience**
   d. **God’s Provision**
   e. **God’s Pleasure**

As you read the last few verses of Jonah, what does it leave you wondering? (Did Jonah ever ‘get it’? Did he ever develop a heart for the lost, or did he reject God’s heart for others?) What about you?
**Take Away:** Everything detail in the story of Jonah is obedient to God except for Jonah. However, He is a God of second chances that turns what we think are mistakes into miracles.

**Prayer Requests**