

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, June 14, 2009

Passage: Jonah 2

Memory Passage: 1 John 1:9

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Jonah 1:17-2:2.** How is Jonah saved from drowning at sea? What is it that swallows Jonah, a whale or a fish? What is the difference between a big fish mentioned in this section and the Leviathan in Job 7:12, Ps 74:13; Ezekiel 32:2?
- (b) What is surprising about *when* Jonah prayed? Does Jonah deserve to be rescued? Why or why not? What is the difference between calling out to God in your distress versus your safety?
- (c) Hebrews 12:7-13 talks about the Lord's discipline. How does it apply to Jonah's situation? Sometime (NOT always) trials and circumstances are because of sin in our lives.
- (d) *Think about it:* Why is it that we often wait until things have gone from bad to worse to turn back to God? What is it about our comfort that keeps us from turning back to God? Is there anything that is keeping you from God?
- (e) *Family:* Read Jonah 1:17-2:2. When should we turn to God for help? Why doesn't Jonah plead for help while he is on the boat? What might have kept him from asking God for help there? Are you eager to turn to God for help in the midst of His discipline? Is there anything that you need to repent of and turn over to God? Sometime (NOT always) trials and circumstances are because of sin in our lives. Take some time and ask God if there is anything that you need to repent of and seek His forgiveness.

DAY 2 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Jonah 2:3-6.** What does Jonah resolve to do now that he is in the heart of the ocean? Why would he do this (1Kings 8:27-30)? Why should Jonah have hope that God would hear his cries (Leviticus 26:11-13)?
- (b) What parallels are there between verses 3 and 5? And 4 and 6? How does the end of verse 6 relate to the end of verse 4?
- (c) *Think about it:* How are we able to have hope that God will hear our cries (1John 1:9)? Why did Jonah not need sacrifices to re-establish his relationship with God (Hosea 6:6; Matt 9:13)?
- (d) *Family:* Read Jonah 2:3-6. What kind of situation do verses 3 and 5 put Jonah in? What would you feel like if you were in this same situation? How would you respond? What does Jonah do? Why is this the right thing for him to do? Who is responsible for saving Jonah? Does Jonah do anything to atone for his sin (Hosea 6:6)? How does Jesus' death and resurrection allow us to come to God (Eph. 2:4-5)? Read 1John 1:9. Take some time to practice this and walk in the freedom of Christ's grace.

DAY 3 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Jonah 2:7.** What does Jonah mean by "I remembered the Lord"? Had he forgotten about God? What role does remembering the Lord play in every Christian's life (Psalm 42:4-6; 63:6; 78:42)?
- (b) How does this understanding of "remembering" help us to understand verses in which God "remembers" (Gen. 8:1; 19:29; Ex 2:24)? Why do you think the word "to remember" is used? Why not just say God did such and such (2Tim. 2:13)?
- (c) *Think about it:* What are you doing to "remember" the Lord? How is what you know affecting your actions? Whenever God "remembered" something He then did something? Do you know a lot but fail to live it out? What is something that you need to begin remembering once again?
- (d) *Family:* Read Jonah 2:7. What does Jonah mean by saying "I remembered the Lord"? What are ways in which we are to remember (Psalm 42:4-6; 63:6; 78:42)? What does it mean for God to remember (Gen 8:1; 19:29)? What always happens when God "remembers"? What is supposed to happen when we remember God? Ask God for faithfulness so that you might remember Him in all that you do.

DAY 4 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Jonah 2:8-10.** How does Jonah perceive the use of idols? What is the result of regarding them? How have you experienced this in your own life? What is an example?
- (b) Who should we regard? Who is Jonah acting like (Jonah 1:16)? How was he like the sailors in 1:5? What was his vain idol?

(c) *Think about it:* The sailors had their gods. Jonah had his prejudices. What do you have? What attitudes towards friends, family, neighbors have become idols? Did you know things like anger, resentment, jealousy, envy, frustration, and even depression are often tell tale signs that idols are in your life? What are you worshipping apart from God?

(d) *Family:* Read Jonah 2:8-10. How did Jonah look at idols? Do you see idols in other people's lives? What are some of the big idols that our culture has? How are they worshipped? Does your family struggle with any of those? How could you forsake our culture's idols? How is God wanting you to seek after Him? Pray for wisdom and conviction to know the idols in your life.

DAY 5 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matthew 12:39-41.** Why does Jesus respond to the Pharisees in such a harsh way? How does Jesus talk about the sign of Jonah? Does Jesus make any correlations between why the Son of man will be three days in the ground and Jonah?

(b) What differences are there between Jonah's decent and Jesus' decent? Why would the sign of Jonah be particularly unfulfilling for the Pharisees who wanted to see a sign?

(c) How ungodly were the Pharisees compared with the Ninevites? What does this say about the evils of legalism versus the evils of license?

(d) *Family:* Read Matthew 12:39-41. How is the story of Jonah treated by Jesus? What does He say about it? What is he responding to? What are the Pharisees compared to? How is Jesus a better Jonah? Why is craving for a sign evil? Pray that you would rightly follow after Christ.

DAY 6 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(e) *Think back through what you have learned each day this week.* Read Jonah 2. What is the proper attitude of repentance? Are you someone who waits until the bottom falls out of your life or are you daily seeking to be penitent? What is something that you have taken away from this week's lesson? What has God laid upon your heart to do and change?

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The Humbled and Desperate

"I called out...out of my distress"