



Preparation for the Siege of Boston

Community Group Study Guide: Jonah 3 – Week of May 7, 2023

1. Persistent Calling

God's word continues to persist, even after we do not heed it as we should. God again gives Jonah a calling to fulfill what he was already instructed him to do. Despite his disobedience, his circumstance, and his less-than-ideal disposition... The Lord prompts him again toward call out a message against the city. This grace and blessing of the persistence from the Lord is not merely for our own benefit. God blesses us so that we might be a blessing to others. God's grace has saved Jonah from his proper death, and he has given him this blessing so that he might in turn bless the people of Nineveh. Praise God that even in our reluctance and shortcomings, He continues to call us persistently to mission.

2. Generous Grace

God chooses to work through the insufficiency of men. He always uses broken vessel, prone to failure. All throughout scripture, we see God using flawed men and women to enact His perfect plan. He gives His grace generously to those He calls. We see this played out in the story of Jonah. Jonah's previous actions were in opposition to God, yet the Lord generously extends another chance for Jonah to obey. This is the kindness of God, that is contradictory to the world. For us, we can put our faith in the fact that it is the Lord's grace that allows us to accomplish what He has called us to. We can look to that grace and the favor of God as we move forward in confidence.

3. Strategic Planning

The strategy that the Lord gives Jonah for his deployment is to directly engage with the city. He is to go and declare the Lord's message to the city itself. We see this strategy throughout the New Testament, in which the Apostle Paul also engages directly with cities for the kingdom of heaven.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

God is using circumstances to prepare His people for the work they are called to. This calling is persistent, filled with grace and power, for the strategic purposes of God.

Heart

The calling God places on us often requires us to endure suffering. This process is designed to humble and prepare us for God's work. Thankfully, God uses suffering for great and good purposes.

Hands

We have to focus our hearts and our minds on God's purpose. We have been given this moment, within the city of Boston, to pursue the salvation of the city by it following the example of Nineveh. It falls on us to preach as Jonah did.

The strategy seems to be to influence the influencers; to impact the hubs of culture and commerce. As we adopt this mindset, there are two things that we must remember. First, it is important that we do not grow disgruntled with the city. We must extend grace to the city in the same way the Lord has given grace to us. Secondly, we must not allow the city to distract or discourage us from the mission. It is easy to become caught up in our own pursuits, and forget our purpose.

4. Giving of Power

When Jonah preached the message that the Lord had commanded, the entire city repented. This was not because of anything that Jonah accomplished himself, but by the power of God poured out through the obedience of His servant. God sends His servants in their weakness, equipped in His power, to do His will. This is what should give us confidence, and what we should remind ourselves of .

5. Suffering

God gives suffering, so that we might be prepared and built up for the work that He has called us to. God specializes in turning hardship into beauty. We see this in the story of Jonah, who suffers in a belly of a fish so that he might humbled toward God and be used to help save a nation. Furthermore, God used the greatest suffering in Christ to bring about the greatest good... His glory and our salvation.

Read Jonah 3

1. What is the great cause in your life that you are focused on? Where/How does your kingdom mission interact with the area of focus? What are the costs of this focus? What are the benefits?
2. Where in the passage do we see God's persistent calling? What encouragement is found by understanding this idea? When have you seen this principle play out in your own life?
3. What can we learn about God from this passage? What does this passage teach us about His relationship to us? What comfort/encouragement comes from that knowledge?
4. Often people respond to God with a demonstrable act of repentance (sackcloth and ashes, etc.). How should we as Christians respond when we are called into repentance? What, if any, should be our external conduct in response to our internal repentance?
5. What is the strategy that God gives Jonah? What is the wisdom of this strategy? How can/should we implement it in our own lives?
6. How does God use suffering to equip us of for the good works that He has called us to? How can we be encouraged during those times of suffering?
7. Salvation belongs to the Lord, and comes by His power. How does this change the way we should view salvation? When we consider His power, how might it encourage us to look at opportunities to preach the Gospel? How does God's ownership and authority over salvation change the way we view our personal redemption?