



"I Fear God, Kind of..."

Community Group Study Guide: Jonah 1 – Week of April 23, 2023

1. The Compassionate Commandment of God

In the passage, God comes to Jonah an Israelite, and commands him to go to the Gentiles. The Lord instructs him to preach against the Ninevites evil, and about their need for repentance. This command from the Lord was in a sense uncommon. Most prophets were sent to their own people, namely the prophets of Israel were sent to Israel. We see in this story God's heart for more than the simple biological line of Israel. Jonah, who had seen God's compassion for his own people, was called to preach that same compassion to his cultural neighbor. The compassion of God is what initiates and facilitates our salvation. So, we should look upon ourselves and others with the compassion that God view us. It is God's compassion that calls His people away from evil, and into obedience. It is the compassion of God that sends Jonah and all His people to sinners, calling them to repent.

2. The Stiff-necked Rebellion of a Religious Man

Jonah, a man given grace by the compassion of God, responds to the Lord's command by doing the opposite. He sinned by not doing what the Lord had commanded. Furthermore, we see that the messenger of God (Jonah) isn't any more righteous than the people that God is sending him to. Jonah 4:1-4 gives us insight to Jonah's motivation. He refused to obey the Lord, because he did not want the people of Nineveh to repent. He knew that the Lord would be merciful. In his religious state of mind, Jonah was satisfied with the grace given to him, while wishing that justice would be poured out of others.

3. The Relentless Pursuit by the Hound of Heaven

We see in this passage that the Lord does not sit idle by as Jonah rebels against His commands. The Lord pursues him, and brings a storm upon his ship. God often uses

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

God's compassion is poured out on us. While we were sinners, He saved us. He did so out of His compassion on us. Therefore, we should see the compassion of God, and use that as the measurement for our compassion for others.

Heart

Are calling for compassion extends beyond those who are familiar. Like Jonah, we have been instructed to love our neighbors, with no exemptions to that calling. Just like Jonah, we are to humbly submit to the Lord, and love even the Ninevites in our lives.

Hands

Praise the Lord for His great compassion on us. In response, we should compassionately call everyone to repent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members Meeting
5/7 @ 1pm

storms to secure our attention. The hope is that in moments of trial, we would turn to Him. We see in this moment, that Jonah confesses his guilt, and request to take on the punishment for his transgression. But even in the moment of assured demise, God's compassion provides for Jonah. The sailors throw Jonah overboard, and the Lord appoints a great fish to swallow him. Ultimately, God uses both Jonah's rebellion and relenting to accomplish His will.

Read Jonah 1

1. The title of the sermon was “I Fear God, Kind of...” How was this presented in the story of Jonah? What does it tell us about the condition of Jonah’s heart? How can/should we apply this to our own circumstance?
2. Why is it important for us to remember that we owe our salvation to the compassion of God? What are the sinful consequences of not fully understanding God’s compassion on us?
3. What is meant by “stiff-necked?” How does/How has this heart position been present in your own life? How has the Lord convicted you of your rebellion?
4. Pastor Jan asserted that it was compassionate for the people of Nineveh to be told that their conduct was evil. Why/How is calling out sin compassionate? How do we apply this principle in our daily lives?
5. What responses do we see in the passage to the storm? What can we learn from the response of the characters in the story? How does God use storms in our lives? How can our response inform us of the condition of our hearts?
6. In verse 14, why do the sailors cry out to the Lord before throwing Jonah overboard? What can this tell us about the change they have experienced even since the beginning of the storm?
7. Why was it strange that Jonah claimed to worship and fear God? What can we learn about how he responded to the crew of the ship?