



LIFE GROUP NOTES

Week Beginning: 26th May 2024



Jonah 1:4-17

Jonah's problem is our problem too

Warm Up

If someone asked you to describe the main qualities (or failings) of the mainstream church in the UK, what would you say?

Background and context

Jonah is running away. He is trying to avoid the call God has placed on him. The consequences of that choice are potentially disastrous for those around him. He has placed people in danger because of his failure to obey the word of God. The passage contrasts the response of the pagans and the response of Jonah. It also points us to Jesus, the one who is called "greater than Jonah" by Matthew (ch12:41).

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity



READ Jonah 1:4-17. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

Can you see the structure and pattern of this story?

Look at v4,19 what is the repeated word?

Look at v5,16 what has changed about the prayers the sailors offer?

The story centres on **v 9-11**. What changes the flow of the story?

1. **v4.** How did Jonah's disobedience to God cause danger for those around him?
2. Could the Church, in recent generations, have caused danger to people by being disobedient to God's word?
3. Jonah's relationship with God clearly had an impact on those around him. Have you ever considered how the quality of your faith impacts your friends, colleagues and neighbours?
4. **V5-6.** Jonah appears to be indifferent to the suffering of those around him? Why do you think this is? What does he fail to do that the sailors are doing?
5. In what ways can we be indifferent to the concerns of others?
6. **V9.** How is Jonah's hypocrisy revealed here? Have there been times when this could be true of you?

Discipleship and Application



How does this story point us to Jesus? (Matthew 21:41) Jonah was disobedient, how was Jesus obedient? Jonah was indifferent, how was Jesus compassionate? Jonah was a hypocrite, how did Jesus show integrity? How else does this passage mirror Jesus?



Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

We want to encourage the development of prayer, to help everyone grow in confidence in praying. There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.