WOODVALE
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Connect Group Sermon Aligned Discussion Guide.

Series Title: Jonah in July
Key Scripture: Jonah chapter 3
Recorded Sermon: www.woodvale.ca/pastservices/v/jonah-in-july-part-3
Date + Speaker: July 21, 2024 Pastor Matt Schmid
Topic: Running 'with' God (Part 1=Running from God; Part 2=Running to God) →Partnership

The Big Idea: God desires that all would REPENT and we must PARTNER with that.

Starter: Share about a time when you found yourself in a completely new and unknown environment. How would you describe the environment and how did you react to it?

Discussion questions (observation):

1. Read the entire chapter aloud. Invite group members to share words, phrases and images that stand out.

2. In your opinion what characteristics make an effective evangelist (one who proclaims the Word of God)? Does Jonah measure up? Why or why not?

Discussion questions (interpretation and application):

3. Pastor Matt issued this challenge: Wherever we find ourselves at any given moment is where you were sent. Reflecting on the story of Jonah so far AND your own life – respond to this.

4. Jonah preached an 8-word (5 in Hebrew) sermon, and the entire city repented. Read 2 Cor 7:10. Invite the group to define repentance. How does it differ from regret or shame? Why is it a fundamental ingredient in turning to God?

5. While reviewing the Steps of Repentance, invite group members to ask any questions they may have or observations they have made in their own lives regarding any of the steps.

6. Pastor Matt's first two steps to partnering with God's heart are to act today and announce boldly. Ask group members what prevents them from sharing the Good News with their family, friends, neighbours and coworkers?

7. The third and fourth steps are to ask for open hearts and to 'practise what we preach' by being personally repentant. Invite group members to open a note on their phone and write down the names of those they are in relationship with who need Jesus. Then, take turns praying that God would fill them with a godly sorrow that produces a repentant heart and leads to salvation.

Leader's tips and Additional Resources:

Question 1: Consider reviewing some facts about the city of Nineveh:

- *Modern day Mosul, Iraq on original site*
- *60 miles in circumference (based on 3-day journey at walking 20 miles per day)*
- *Perhaps as many as 600,000 inhabitants*
- *65-foot-high walls*
- *15 gates – each named after one of their gods e.g. Nosh the Assyrian fish goddess or perhaps Dagon the Philistine fish god*
- *Known for their brutality*

- *Would become one of the largest and most affluent cities in all of antiquity*

Question 2: This is an opinion question. No real right or wrong answers per se. The point here is that God uses imperfect, in process people to carry His message to the lost. Including you and me.

Question 3: Pastor Matt shared 2 stories about astronauts connecting their faith to their unique environment in space. And at the start of the meeting members shared how they 'handled' a new environment. We want the members to take this further and respond to Pastor Matt's challenge.

Question 4: Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. Check out the NIV, the Good News, and NRSV translations to identify the key ingredients. Key here is to be reminded that repentance <u>leads to</u> salvation.
P. Matt also pointed out that while repentance is not explicitly mentioned in this chapter it is possible to say you repent and NOT and to repent and NOT say anything.

Question 5:
<u>Steps of Repentance:</u>
Receiving God's Word (v.4)
Recognition of sin (v. 5)
Response in prayer (v.5-8)
Renunciation of evil (v.8)
Reformation of behaviour (v.8)
Reconciliation with God (v.9-10)

Question 6: Jonah was in process (spoiler alert – he's NOT happy in chapter 4). And so are we. That doesn't exempt us. An honest reckoning

of the challenges we face in acting and announcing may help some of us overcome them.

Question 7: Remember God used a sorry sermon and a reluctant, cranky prophet to bring about the greatest revival ever recorded in history!

 For those members/groups interested going deeper personally: RightNow Media study The Book of Jonah with David Platt - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHli9lPx0oU

 For any members looking to 'run with'/partner with others in the workplace who are seeking to partner with God: https://onewayministries.ca/workplace-network/

 For those wanting to study more about the historical context: https://www.worldhistory.org/nineveh/