



***Jonah: Surrendering to the Supremacy
of God in the Struggles of our Day***
Date: 10/02/2016

Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your time together to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Read Together

The Assyrian Empire, once a great and ancient power, had entered into a period of decline during the time of the prophet Jonah (786-746 B.C.). While not an active threat to Israel, recent history still loomed large in the lives of the Jewish people. Tensions toward Assyria, and her greatest city Nineveh, were strong and visceral. Indeed, these lingering concerns would soon be realized. By the close of the century, the Assyrian Empire would become the strongest political force the world had known. Their reign of cruelty would overtake the Northern Kingdom of Israel (722 B.C.) and send its people into exile.

The book of Jonah spans one episode in the life of the prophet. God commissions Jonah to go to Nineveh and call out to the people “for their evil has come up before Me.” The book contains an outrageous message for faithful Jews: Yahweh sovereignly bestows gracious acts of compassion on whomever He will. God’s mercy and compassion extend even to the heathen nations on condition of their repentance. Israel’s obligation is to “go there” with God’s message.

It is this scandalous command that fills the prophet with reluctance and rebellion. In a world that said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” Jonah received an advanced lesson on what it means to “love your enemies...that you may be children of your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:44-45).

Outline

1. Jonah 1:1-2:10 – Act 1
 - a. Jonah 1:1-3 – God’s commission to Jonah is rejected
 - b. Jonah 1:4-17 – Jonah’s flight and God’s pursuit
 - c. Jonah 2:1-10 – Jonah’s prayer and God’s deliverance
2. Jonah 3:1-4:11 – Act 2
 - a. Jonah 3:1-10 – God’s commission renewed and discharged at Nineveh
 - b. Jonah 4:1-4 – Jonah’s grief at Nineveh’s repentance
 - c. Jonah 4:5-11 – God’s rebuke of Jonah

Discuss Together

Use these questions to engage in an informative and impactful discussion.

- As you study Jonah, identify the most significant questions you need to answer to better understand its message.



- The Triune God is always the main character of Scripture. What does the book of Jonah teach us about God?
- Knowing what Jonah teaches us about God, what does the book teach us about humanity?
- Jonah is the most well-known of the Minor Prophets; one could argue the most well-known of the entire Old Testament. Because readers connect with his conflicted emotions, the person Jonah is incredibly relatable, even if his actual experience is not. Discuss how you empathize and connect with Jonah in...
 - His rebellion in Chapter 1? What might this type of rebellion look like in your life today?
 - His conviction in Chapter 2? What might this type of conviction look like in your life today?
 - His obedience in Chapter 3? What might this type of obedience look like in your life today?
 - His anger in Chapter 4? What might this type of anger look like in your life today?
- Despite all that he knows about the supremacy of God, Jonah, because of his obsession with justice as *he* perceives it, is unwilling to carry out Yahweh's commands. How has an understanding of the supremacy of God confirmed a calling in your own life? How has this understanding served to rebuke and convict you of disobedience?
- Like Jonah's, our world says, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." Jesus says, "love your enemies...that you may be children of your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:44-45). Discuss what Jesus' command means to the struggles of 21st century America. How does the Gospel overcome hate? In what practical ways can you join God's mission and proclaim victory in these areas?
- How should the Body of Christ "go there" with the message of Jonah? How do you personally need to "go there" with this message?

Do Life Together

These questions are designed to be asked in a smaller group of 2-4 people. The smaller setting will provide better opportunity for authentic responses. In your smaller group time, take notes to help others remain accountable to their answers. Grow together!

- How is God calling you to exchange doom for everlasting hope?
- How has Jesus already provided hope in this area?
- Who do you need to share this hope with this week?

Pray Together

Take time to pray that God will allow you to see with His eyes, feel with His heart, and cooperate with His will to fulfill His missional mandate in this world.



Warren Baptist Church or Warren Grovetown



WarrenBaptist_Augusta

©Warren a Way of Life 2016