

Life Group Study Guide- April 22nd – Jonah Chapter 2

“I Remember”

Today's study guide is going to begin at the end of Chapter 1 with verse 17, *“Now The Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”*

Three days and three nights must have felt as though it were an eternity in the pitch black darkness of that big fish. Look at some of the descriptive details from Chapter 2 that Jonah used to describe that experience:

- **Belly of Sheol**
- **The floods surrounded me**
- **Waves passed over me**
- **Deep closed around me**
- **Weeds were wrapped around my head**

As you read Chapter 2, think about if there has ever been a time in your life when you felt as though “the deep” was closing around you? Perhaps a time when you ran from The Lord and it caught up with you?

My dad used to say, “You cannot outrun or out give The Lord.” A statement that I have found to be very true over the past 41 years of my life.

Notice a few things from this chapter as you and I prepare for Sunday's life group and worship service.

Jonah PRAYED (verse 1)

Notice the first three words of *Jonah 2:1*, *“Then Jonah prayed to The Lord his God....”* **Then. Jonah. Prayed.** That is the first thing that he felt compelled to do from the belly of the fish. He didn't whine, grumble, or complain. He may have done those things, but they are not accounted for in God's word. He prayed. He knew that he needed to start his journey back in the other direction- running to God instead of away from him. That journey always begins with prayer. I can remember my mom talking about when she was first diagnosed with cancer at the age of 32. I was five years old and my sister was fourteen. A teenager and a kindergarten- times when her two daughters desperately needed their mom. She recounted this part of her testimony by saying, “Oh how I wanted to run. I wanted to hide from everyone. The church family. My family. I wanted to go into

deep hiding so I didn't have to look at the sad faces that mirrored the pity of my prognosis. However, that was not my calling through the cancer. My calling was to pray that God show me how I could glorify him through this sickness."

Then. _____. Prayed. I want you to write your name in the blank .

What are you praying for in April of 2018?

At my home church I had the blessing of participating in Tuesday night prayer meetings. It was a small group of three to seven people who gathered each week, however, we witnessed God move in some amazing ways as a result of that prayer time. We would simply just pray for God to work and move in our church for one or two hours each Tuesday night.

When you look over your current prayer list ask yourself are you talking about it more than praying about it? I am guilty of this. However, one thing that my home church taught me was to believe in the power of prayer. We are to expect great and mighty things when a request is bound together in prayer. I think one of the greatest compliments any person or church can be paid is that it "he/she is a praying person or a praying church."

Jonah PRAISED (verses 7 & 8)

Verse 7, "*When my soul fainted within me, **I remembered The Lord;** and my prayer went up to You into your holy temple."*

I remembered The Lord. How often do you and I forget The Lord when things are going our way? Many times it is when we find ourselves in the pit of despair that we turn back to him. It could be through an unexpected diagnosis, loss of a family member, termination of a job, marital strife, or financial crisis that sends us running back to The Lord. In Jonah's case it was the belly of the whale that focused his attention back to the original calling of The Lord.

Do you find yourself today in need of remembering The Lord? Have you forgotten how dependent you are upon His mercy and grace?

Jonah agreed to PAY what he had vowed (verse 9)

Jonah 2:9 states, "...what I vowed I will make good. I will say; salvation comes from The Lord."

Jonah accepts his assignment by agreeing to make good on what he has promised. Acceptance can be hard, especially if you had another plan or

choice in mind. My mom would often say, "We do not sit where God sits. There is a reason for this. You may not see it now, but hold to the knowledge that He knows best." This has been true in many times in my life. I can look back and see God's hand at work in the bigger picture when I was ensnared in the details.

Immediately in the following verse it states, "*And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.*"

At the Lord's command and direction, Jonah found himself back on land. He was ready to begin his trek in the right direction.

I want to close today with some verses of encouragement. Accepting the assignment God is given you will look different for all of us. With your calling you may be experiencing season of newness and excitement, or one of weariness or defeat, or one of comparison where you see greener grass on someone else's "field." Remember that God has a plan for giving you this assignment. You may not see it now, but rest in the fact that He has a purpose and a plan for entrusting it to YOU!

Chose one of the below verses to commit to memory this week- personalize it and place it somewhere you will see it this week!

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

1 Thessalonians 5:24

²⁴ "The one who calls you is faithful, and He will do it."

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

***"Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you."***