

<b>Series:</b> Purposeful	<b>Reference:</b> Jonah 2:1	<b>Title:</b> Jonah: Living as God's Missionary	<b>Date:</b> 3.10.19
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## Community Group Questions

### Take time to pray through the Six:Eight Prayer Foci for 2019

*If the Holy Spirit gives anyone a specific word for the church  
share them with the other Community Group Leaders.*

1. **FREEDOM:** Pray against spiritual attack on our church body & its members, so that kingdom ministry goes unhindered.
2. **SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION:** Pray we'd abide in the Presence of Christ, honoring the Word & Spirit of God, being transformed & becoming more effective in witness. That we'd be drawn deeply into worship & prayer in powerful ways this year.
3. **LEADERSHIP:** Pray for leadership to be filled with the knowledge of the Word & power of the Spirit, operating out of the two as gracious strong servant leaders.
4. **MINISTRIES:** For all 8 church ministries to run smoothly, having all current & future resources provided for them to thrive (*Kids, Community Groups, Kingdom Opportunities, Stewardship, Impressions, Worship Arts, Prayer, Missions*).
5. **LOCAL EVANGELISM:** That we'd preach the Word boldly & minister in the power of the Spirit to see people come to faith & publicly declare that through baptism. - for divine openings with neighbors, coworkers, friends & Community Partners.
6. **CROSS-CULTURAL MISSION:** To be a 'House of Prayer for all Nations' (Isaiah 56:7), obedient to the Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20), overflowing to our Kinship Network relationships reaching Arab world Muslims, and other mission endeavors of the church.
7. **GIVING:** Pray that we'd be stretched in faithful giving of our financial resources in order not to be hindered in our kingdom ministry as a church.

### Study Questions

1. **ICEBREAKER:** One person gives their testimony! Listen to their story quietly, then spend a minute in silent prayer before the Holy Spirit about it. Allow the Spirit to speak into what was said, then share anything of encouragement with that person.
2. **Group members *prayerfully* read through & meditate on the book of Jonah (only 4 short chapters) before the meeting in the days leading up to your meeting.** You may also need to read it out loud in the round at the beginning of group too. Group leaders- forward these to your group now & allow them to think on the questions here.
  1. Ask the Holy Spirit to identify words & phrases which stand out. Highlight them & jot down thoughts & questions.
  2. Identify Jonah's disobedience throughout the text *both in action & attitude.*
  3. Is Jonah a racist? Can God use, or change a racist?
  4. How did this influence the men on the ship? Is that too part of Jonah's witness?
  5. What is the significance of v1:17? What does this remind you of, and what does it mean in this story?
  6. Focusing on Jonah's prayer, if your Bible allows you to cross reference other verses, look these up & think of what a prayer like this means in a person's life - what does it mean in yours? Have you prayed prayers like this? If yes, when & what were the circumstances?
  7. What do you think of chapter 3, the restating of the command, and Jonah's subsequent obedience - is he fully changed?
    1. What does that mean to us, when we do something in obedience even when not fully onboard with the idea of it?
    2. What do you think of the Assyrian response?
    3. Are there people you'd think in your life who'd never respond rightly to God as Jonah did with these people?
  8. What is your reaction to 4:1-4?
    1. In 4:2, is Jonah's understanding of God as consistent with your image of God in the Old Testament? Why does Jonah have that image in mind? And why would he not want to share that loving God with Israel's longtime enemy, the Assyrians?
  9. What was God teaching Jonah with the plant? Do you think Jonah's heart ever changed towards the Assyrians & God's purposes?
  10. Reverend Snow identifies Christians in 2 ways, the Carnal & Spiritual Person (see below). Loosely adopting these terms for our purposes, which one was Jonah & what does God want for Jonah, and consequently for us?
    1. ***The Carnal Person*** may believe & be saved, but are held back by their sinful nature, influenced by Satan, live by their own mind, will & emotion, are plagued by doubt, fear & unbelief, are dominated by fleshly desires & appetites, and are still attracted to the things of the world & are disobedient. Baby Christians demanding their own way & needs to be met. They have received the basic knowledge of the gospel, but are not able to apply the deeper truths of Christ. Not knowing who they are & whose they are, their identity in Christ has not been fully established. They often feel defeated & discouraged. They are distracted, disturbed & deceived by Satan. They may have knowledge of Scripture, be able to preach & have spiritual gifts, but lack spiritual power. (1 Cor. 3:1-4, Heb. 5:12-14, Gal. 5:16-18, Rom. 7:14- 20 NKJV)

2. ***The Spiritual Person*** does not live from the soul, but by the Spirit, having the mind of Christ enabling them to examine & discern the world. Knowing good from evil. They crucify the flesh relying on the Word & Spirit. More than personal comfort they long for constant intimacy with God, have moved past basic teaching & into deeper truths. They're able to digest & appropriate teachings on righteousness, seeking to glorify God in all things, being humble & relying on God's grace, they live a life-style of repentance. Able to combat Satan's schemes & restore sinners gently, they abide in Christ & bear fruit such as: soul winning, holy living, Christ-like character, sacrificial giving, serving others, sensitivity to Christ's presence, operating in spiritual gifts & celebrating God in worship. Overcomer's, turning away from temptation & persevering through hardship. His life is characterized by faith, hope & love. (1 Cor. 2:15, John 15:5, Gal. 6:1)
11. How does this whole story impact your life? What is God saying to us as individuals & the local church in our current context through this story?
12. Choose the next person for testimony (conversion story) the following week.

***“If someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle & respectful way.” (1 Peter 3:15-16)***

Sharing your testimony (your conversion story) is one of the most powerful & influential evangelistic tools you have! It's worth taking the time & effort to think it through well. Work through the following questions to help you prepare your story. Save this, and review it, since it is something you might use in everyday life if someone should ask about your faith in the future. Although we don't want to be *rote*, we do want to be *ready* to share the story of God in our lives. Remember as you are preparing, pepper your story with relevant verses from Scripture to illustrate what God has done, is doing, or will do in your life.

Some of us have very definitive moments when we came to Christ, others stories are more evolutionary, than revolutionary - we've come to Christ in a slow bake, or have come to Christ overtime in a slow arch of change. For the latter, the question below may seem too limiting, but simply use them as a loose guide to formulating your story. Both are very valid, and speak to different people. Be confident of your story, it is unique to you.

### **My Life Before Christ**

1. What about my life before Christ will relate to those who've not met Jesus yet?
2. What did my life revolve around? Where did I get my security, identity or happiness from then?
3. How did those things begin to let me down?

### **How I Came to Christ**

1. When was the first time I heard the gospel? What were my initial reactions?
2. When & why did my perspective begin to change toward Christ?
3. What were the final struggles that went through my mind just before I accepted Him? Why did I finally decide to accept Christ (give Him complete control)?

### **My Life After Coming to Christ**

1. How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude & perspective on life.
2. What motivates me now? What do I live for?
3. Even though my life still isn't perfect, how does knowing Christ help me deal with that fact?

### **Vital Hints**

- Pray before you develop & share your story, asking God for wisdom & words.
- Write out your story in light of your answers to the questions above. Write honestly, as if you were telling someone, and in the way you would normally speak.
- You want to boil your story down to it's essence. The goal is to keep it to no more than 3 minutes; a length of time in conversation which doesn't feel overwhelming, or like a monologue. You'd be amazed at how this helps clarify details. Like cooking off the fat you get to what is really nutritious.