

A Gut-Wrenching Prayer

JONAH HAS YOU BEAT:

Jonah 2:1-6

WHY NO ONE LIKES TO SURRENDER:

Jonah 1:1-17, Mark 14:36, Romans 6:6-14, 8:5-11, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:1-10

1st We have to remember that we deserve death.

2nd We have to stop blaming, and take responsibility.

3rd We give up on all other priorities and desires.

4th We give up our freedom and commit to a new owner.

WHAT GOD AND JESUS ARE LOOKING FOR:

Mark 6:1-6, Proverbs 28:9, Matthew 7:21-27, John 14:23, 15:1-10, 1 Corinthians 6:20

▶ People with faith, not just the facts.

▶ People who are willing to be puked on.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 17, 2009

QUICK REVIEW: Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching on *A Gut-Wrenching Prayer*, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we looked at the jam Jonah got himself into. Is there a time in your life that you got yourself into a similar belly-of-the-fish experience and reached out to God in the midst of it? What did you learn from that experience?

2. What challenges or fears could a person face in sharing their belly-of-the-fish story with others?

What kind of people do you find it easiest to share your story with?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. While in the belly of the fish, Jonah finally surrendered to God and committed himself to do His will. Another story of surrender is found in Luke 7:36-50 where Jesus interacts with a woman at a party. How does the woman in this story demonstrate her surrendered heart?

Luke 7:36-50

Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. [37] When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, [38] and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

[39] When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is--that she is a sinner."

[40] Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

[41] "Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. [42] Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

[43] Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

[44] Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. [45] You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. [46] You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. [47] Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven--for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

[48] Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

[49] The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

[50] Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." [NIV]

What encouragement to live a surrendered life do you find in the way Jesus responds to the woman?

What can we learn from Jesus that can help us be more approachable for the "Jonahs" in our lives?

2. Chris talked about people who don't add faith to their facts. Jesus uses the word "lukewarm" in Revelation 3:15-17 to describe this kind of person. How would you define each of the three temperature settings He mentions in this passage?

Revelation 3:15-17

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!
[16] So, because you are lukewarm--neither hot nor cold--I am about to spit you out of my mouth. [17] You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. [NIV]

How do Proverbs 21:3 and Psalm 51:16-17 help your understanding of what it means to be lukewarm?

Proverbs 21:3

To do what is right and just
is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. [NIV]

Psalm 51:16-17

You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
[17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise. [NIV]

After hearing about surrender this weekend, what would you say to someone who described themselves as being lukewarm, but wanted to become “hot”?

3. Jonah’s prayer is very similar to a number of prayers recorded in the Psalms. These prayers are called lament Psalms because they express concern over a difficult situation the author is facing. Read Psalm 28 for a good example of one of these Psalms.

Psalm 28:1-9

Of David.

To you I call, O Lord my Rock;
do not turn a deaf ear to me.
For if you remain silent,
I will be like those who have gone down to the pit.
[2] Hear my cry for mercy
as I call to you for help,
as I lift up my hands
toward your Most Holy Place.

[3] Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with those who do evil,
who speak cordially with their neighbors
but harbor malice in their hearts.

[4] Repay them for their deeds
and for their evil work;
repay them for what their hands have done
and bring back upon them what they deserve.

[5] Since they show no regard for the works of the Lord
and what his hands have done,
he will tear them down
and never build them up again.

[6] Praise be to the Lord,
for he has heard my cry for mercy.
[7] The Lord is my strength and my shield;
my heart trusts in him, and I am helped.
My heart leaps for joy
and I will give thanks to him in song.
[8] The Lord is the strength of his people,
a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.
[9] Save your people and bless your inheritance;
be their shepherd and carry them forever. [NIV]

Lament Psalms provide a great model for how to pray when we're in difficult circumstances. There are at least four elements to each one. Looking back at Jonah 2, write the verses which match each element next to that element below.

- Description of present need

- Prayer for help

- Commitment to offer praise

- Sincere thanks to God

Think of a situation in your life that you are concerned about. Jot down one or two thoughts regarding that situation under each of the elements above.

Now use those thoughts to express your own lament prayer to God.

TAKING IT HOME

1. As you look at your own life, is there any area you see where the facts aren't being translated into faith?

2. Looking back on the situation you used in your lament prayer, is there anything you'd like prayer for from your Growth Group?

Prayer Requests

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