

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Your Love Never Fails, Your Love Awakens, Till I See You Jesus

WELCOME

Escape Boat. Fold a paper boat. Write on it your excuses for not doing what God has called you to do.

WORD

JONAH 1:1–5

The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me." But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. The Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up.

LOVE RADICALLY

To love those who are good to us is normal. Loving difficult people isn't. Loving our enemies is extremely strange and abnormal to many. But Jesus commanded His disciples to have a new radical way of thinking – to love radically by loving their enemies and praying for their persecutors (**Matthew 5:43–44, Luke 6:27–28**).

Radical love can only come from God, because God is love (**Luke 6:35**). This love is the proof that we are indeed His children because those born of God love all kinds of people. (**1 John 4:7–8**)

PEOPLE

Radical love is loving all kinds of people including our enemies.

The Ninevites were known for their wickedness. But God called prophet Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach so that they may repent. Apparently, Jonah did not want the Ninevites to be saved (**Jonah 4:1–3**) because they were enemies of Israel. So he decided to go the opposite direction to Tarshish to run away from the Lord.

It is extremely difficult to love our enemies if we have not experienced the love of God in our lives because we cannot give what we do not possess.

Our family may actually be the hardest people to love but they are also the first people who should experience our practice of radical love.

We may struggle to love difficult people, but when we have the Lord in our lives, He is able to give us the

power to love them. If we learn to practice loving people radically, we can make a radical change in our society and even in our country.

PROACTIVE

Love is an action word. Radical love is not passive lip service but proactive action.

God loves the Ninevites. Nobody compelled Him to love them despite of their sinfulness, He wanted them to repent from their sins and be saved. But Jonah did not love the Ninevites nor the people who were with him in his 'escape boat' to Tarshish. In the face of a storm, he was asleep while the rest on the boat were afraid for their lives and crying out to their gods. Such picture of Jonah — spiritually asleep and apathetic — tells us that peace is not always a gauge that one is walking right with the Lord.

When God clearly tells us to do something, we should obey. Delayed obedience is disobedience. God loves Jonah and so God took action to pursue Jonah despite his disobedience.

Soon, Jonah woke up and instructed the people in the boat to throw him into the sea to spare them from the consequences of his disobedience to God.

Do not wait for the storms to catch up to you for you to change and go back to God.

PURSUE

Radical love will not give up easily but will instead pursue its object.

WORD (cont'd)

Sometimes, we are like Jonah, we think we can run away from the Lord especially when we have found “our boat to Tarshish.” We think that this must be a sign for us to go. But we know the rest of the story of Jonah. Favorable circumstances are not necessarily signs that it is God’s will. Sooner or later, disobedience will have its toll.

Our sovereign God knew that Jonah will try to run away. But why did He still call Jonah to do His plan? This is to show that many of us are like Jonah. Though he was a prophet and servant of the Lord, he tried to escape from God. Sometimes, we think we know the Lord. What we don’t realize is that we’re running away from God using excuses to go our own way. But He will always pursue us. Such is the radical love of God.

God chased Jonah with a storm that almost broke the boat (**Jonah 1:4**). God used the unbelievers in the boat to rebuke Jonah (**John 1:10**) to bring him back to God. God did not give up on him until Jonah learned his lesson.

God loves us enough to discipline us (**Hebrews 12:6**). A true follower of Jesus who is disobedient will experience the discipline of the Lord sooner or later because He loves us like a father to His children."

We cannot change the laws of God. Disobedience of the laws is costly. You may get away from it for a while, but the consequences will sooner or later catch up with you. God commands us to love radically and the byproduct of loving people is a blameless life. It is the best way to prepare for the second coming of Jesus (**1 Thessalonians 3:12-13**).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

- 1. Arise and Go.** What did God call Jonah to do according to Jonah 1:1-4? What did Jonah do instead?
- 2. Escape Boat.** Go back to your folded “escape boat”, read your excuses and ask yourself what you will do to go back to what God is calling you to do?
- 3. I Don’t but I Do.** Is there anyone in your life who you find difficult to love? What must you do to be loving towards him/her?

WORKS

PRACTICE RADICAL LOVE

Write down specific actions you will do to practice radical love to the following people:

People to Love	Proactive Actions to Love	Pursue to Love Them
Parents	I will not lie to them...	I will obey them even when I don’t feel like it...
Spouse		
Children		
Siblings		
In-Laws		
Etc..		

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends