

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Think About His Love, Amazing God, 10,000 Reasons

WELCOME

Radical Love. What is the most radical expression of love you have done? Briefly share it to the group.

WORD

JONAH 2:1-2

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the stomach of the fish, and he said, "I called out of my distress to the Lord, and He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; You heard my voice."

PRACTICE RADICAL LOVE

To love those who love us is normal (**Luke 6:32-33**). But God calls us to love those who are not easy to love, including our enemies; to do good to those who hate us; to bless those who curse us; and to pray for those who mistreat us (**v.27-28**). Now, this is a revolutionary calling. This is radical love.

In giving a new commandment to His disciples, Jesus raised the standard of what it means to truly love people — His own love for the world (**John 13:34-35**). If we practice this revolutionary kind of love, our lives will never be the same again. For if we love each other as Jesus did, we will not cheat, we will not gossip or take advantage of people. Because radical love is other-centered and not self-centered, we will not be selfish but instead be happy for others.

The best way to evangelize the world is to love one another. People are brought to Christ many times because of the loving relationships of His followers.

"Love is not affectionate feeling, but a steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good as far as it can be obtained." - C. S. Lewis

Love may involve affection but it is not just affection. It is more than that. It is a commitment towards imperfect people to seek what is best for them. Radical love seeks not what is comfortable, expedient or popular, it seeks what is best. Sometimes this kind of love will compel us to say no.

In chapter 2 of the book of Jonah, God showed that while His radical love seeks what is best for us, it can also be tough at times. More so, it shows that His radical love always listens and it transforms those touched by it.

TOUGH LOVE

Jonah tried to flee from God's mission for him but God would not allow it (**Jonah 1:3**). He sent a storm in the middle of the sea and scared the sailors. God used them to throw Jonah into the water.

Then God appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah for three days and three nights (**Jonah 1:17**). He was in deep anguish to the point of death inside the belly of the fish. At this point, he cried out to God for help (**Jonah 2:2-6**).

Death has a way of altering our values. When face to face with death like Jonah, our priorities change. All of a sudden petty things and arguments no longer matter to us. God's love can be tough. He can use trials, problems and even a near-death experience to wake us up (**Proverbs 3:11-12**).

Tough love can sometimes be God allowing us to discover the consequence of the actions we insisted on taking just like what happened to the prodigal son in the Bible (**Luke 15:16-20**). We may run away from God but it will not be successful if we belong to the Lord. God's love pursues.

This tells us that true love can be tough at times. God allows trials because through them He develops our character. His love is not pampering, it is perfecting. This is the nature of God's love, it is tough because it is after our best interest.

ALWAYS LISTENS

Notice that when Jonah cried out and called unto God in his distress, God answered (**Jonah 2:2**). Yes, God's love is tough, but the good news is He always listens.

Radical love always listens. God always has the time to listen to us no matter how often and how far we run

WORD (cont'd)

away from Him. The moment we humble ourselves and turn to Him, He is always ready to listen. He will never give up on us.

TRANSFORMING

Jonah, amidst his distressful situation, discovered that the root cause of sin is idolatry (**Jonah 2:8**). Anything that takes the place of God in our life is an idol. Idols can be money, other material things, relationships or even our self.

But idols are not always physical. In the case of Jonah, it is something that lurks deep in the heart –his own self-will. Inside the belly of the fish, Jonah realized that his idol is himself. How about us, how do we discover our idols?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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

- 1. Jonah's Prayer.** What did Jonah do in the belly of the fish according to **Jonah 2:1-2**? What have you learned?
- 2. Destination Compass.** If North is the direction toward doing God's will, what is the direction of your life today? Share what God has been teaching you from this week's message.
- 3. Express Love.** In what ways can you express radical love to your family members? How will you start applying them this week?

WORKS

ATTENTIVE LISTENING

Listening is love in action and it builds relationships. This week, practice intentional and attentional listening to people. Start with your family. Make time and create opportunities to listen mindfully to your parents, children, spouse or sibling. When you listen:

1. Drop your cellphones, or any gadgets when you listen to any of them.
2. Look them in their eyes when they speak.
3. Listen with openness and non-judging.
4. Pay attention, do not advise or rehearse what you would say.
5. Do not interrupt and let the person speak.

Observe how this intentional listening exercise can show love to the other person.

First we must admit that we have an idol. Believe it or not, all of us have idols. One author once said that the process of a Christian life is breaking one idol at a time.

As soon as Jonah admitted his sin to God, his perspective began to change (**Jonah 2:9**). He came into his senses. He remembered his vow to God.

Sometimes, we also make vows to God but like Jonah we also tend to forget them. Thankfully God is patient with us and never gives up on us. We are given second chances to go back to Him (**Jonah 3:1-2**).

Have you made promises to God which you have forgotten? Do not wait until you find yourself "in the stomach of the fish" before you come back to God. Do not settle for anything good, seek what is best!

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