

## WORSHIP

### SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Your Love Awakens, You Came to My Rescue, Halleluiah to the Lamb

## WELCOME

**The Wait.** Briefly share your longest waiting experience. What happened after you waited?

## WORD

### JONAH 4:1-4

<sup>1</sup>But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. <sup>2</sup>He prayed to the Lord and said, "Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life."

<sup>4</sup>The Lord said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?"

### BE PATIENT

Many of us struggle with patience. Nowadays, we want everything fast and instant — fast food, instant coffee, express lane, high-speed internet, speed dating and even our spiritual maturity. Oftentimes, we do not want to wait and we like to take shortcuts. But shortcuts can be costly.

Our problem is that we think that there is a shortcut to spiritual maturity. We are all in the process of becoming more and more Christ-like but the process will take time for us to grow and mature just like the growth process of a butterfly, a flower or a Chinese bamboo. Therefore, throughout the process we must be patient.

To be patient is to allow time for people to grow and not get easily irritated. It means not giving up on our relationships and allowing people to be transformed based on God's timing and not on our own. To practice radical love is to be willing to wait because love is patient and kind (**1 Corinthians 13:4**).

Patience and kindness are connected, they go together. Once we learn to be patient, we also learn to be kind. God speaks to us about this through the story of Jonah.

Jonah chapter 4 is about God's patience. When Jonah finally obeyed God to preach the Word of God to the Ninevites, they repented. But Jonah was displeased and angry when they did (**Jonah 4:1**). Apparently, Jonah did not want the Ninevites to be saved. This was the reason why from the beginning Jonah did not want to obey God because he knew God would be merciful and save them if they repented. Here we see

God is gracious and forgiving to Jonah, but Jonah did not want God to do the same to the Ninevites.

Jesus teaches us to treat others the same way we want them to treat us, and to be good not only to those who are good to us but even to those who treat us badly. The radical love of Jesus calls us to pray for our enemies and even to love them (**Luke 6:27-28; 31-33**).

Oftentimes, we get impatient with difficult people and tough circumstances in our lives that we want to change them. But God wants to change us first because He wants us to grow in Him. We do not know how long, but one thing is for sure: God is always at work in our life.

### GOD IS AT WORK

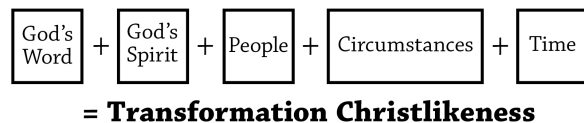
*"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."*

- **Philippians 1:6**

The word 'perfect' in this verse does not mean sinless, it means completion and maturity. All of us are in the process of becoming more and more like Jesus. God is at work in us and in due time, He will perfect His work. The only decision we need to make is whether we cooperate with God or go against what He is doing in our life.

God uses His Word, the Holy Spirit, challenging people and circumstances over a long period of time in order to transform us into Christlikeness.

## WORD (cont'd)



It is always the love of God that transforms our hearts. God accepts us as we are, but because He loves us, He will not allow us to remain as we are.

God showed Jonah that He was not finished with him yet. God was after the transformation of Jonah's heart. Despite Jonah's stubbornness, God was kind to him (**Jonah 4:4**). He appointed a plant to give shade to Jonah when he was lamenting over God's grace to the Ninevites. He also appointed a worm to eat the plant and appointed the scouring east wind and the sun to beat down on Jonah (**Jonah 4:7-9**). God was

showing Jonah how He can use anything to lead people toward spiritual maturity.

In the same way, the kindness of God leads us to repentance and the transformation of our hearts (**Romans 2:4**). God will not give up on us, but He will also not give in. He will not say yes if He knows it will not be good for us. This is because God's desire is always to transform our hearts. He is always at work whether we see it or not. Our response should always be to cooperate and be patient to see God's work unfold.

Do you see God's hands at work in your life? You may have been praying to God for something. Even though you don't know when He will solve the problem, one thing is certain: that He knows what is best for you. Just be patient, God is at work.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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

- 1. Heart Problem.** How did the passage from **Jonah 4:1-4** reveal the heart of Jonah? How did God answer him?
- 2. Patience Quotient.** Describe your level of patience. How are you growing in your patience towards God and others?
- 3. Under Construction.** Who are the challenging people in your life? In light of being patient and acknowledging that God is at work, what will you do significantly different to practice radical love to them?

## WORKS

### BEYOND OR BEHIND

Do not be left behind, but go beyond with CCF Beyond's challenge to: Go, Pray, Send.

#### GO

- Go on a short mission trip to reach internationals
- Volunteer as Skypleship Mentor
- Volunteer to be part of the Beyond Media Team

#### PRAY

- Join the Beyond Prayer Team

#### SEND

- Give financial support to missions, missionaries and partners abroad

The world is waiting. Take the first step beyond. After you pray about your response to this challenge, you may send an email to CCF Beyond via: [beyond@ccf.org.ph](mailto:beyond@ccf.org.ph)

### 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