



The Fish Timeout – Message 2

Announcements

SERVE Day 2018 // Saturday, July 14 // This week discuss with your group a project for SERVE Day this summer. Then register your project at Churchoftheking.com/serveday.

Warm-up

What is one mischievous thing you did as a child or a teenager?

Word and Application

Together we are learning key life lessons from Jonah and learning about the character of God who gives us another chance. We started last week in Jonah's story learning about a man who ran. As strange as Jonah's story is, it isn't much different than any of our stories. All of us, at some point in our lives, have run from God or attempted to do so. Let's dive into God's Word to learn and discuss the lessons Jonah learned and how we can apply them in our everyday life.

Four Lessons from Jonah's Fish Timeout

1. God listens to the prayer of the runner.

This is quite an amazing concept if you think about it. If we are running away from God, does He really have any reason to listen to the prayer of a runner? But in those times, that is where we can discover God's love and mercy for us. God still hears our prayer. In our distress, when we hit rock bottom, our Father hears our cry. When we think we have no other option, He tells us that we always have the option of coming back to Him.

Read Jonah 2:1-2.

Discuss as a group the emotions Jonah must have felt when he realized that, despite his rebellion, our merciful God was still there for him through answered prayer. How does forgiveness open communication with God?

2. God often uses circumstances we create to bring us to the end of ourselves.

Sometimes we find ourselves in a difficult situation and we can't see what God is going to do through the pain, because we are in the midst of it. Yet when we look back at that time, we can clearly see how God used those negative circumstance for our own good and for His glory.

Read Jonah 2:3.

Share a time when you were in a hopeless situation, only to later discover that God was really working out something incredible for you. What were some practical things you did in that trial that brought you closer to God?

3. To run from God is to run from His provision and protection.

The little word "mercy" is the Hebrew word "cheched", and it's translated *love and grace*. It refers to

God's unconditional *covenant* love. Jonah came to the realization that He realized he focused on what he wanted to do instead of what God wanted him to do. He realized in doing that, he forfeited and turned his back on God's covenant love. The thing that would have ultimately fulfilled me where I would find my purpose in life, the healthy relationships I could have had, I've turned my back on all of them. Chasing those kinds of idols ends up being nothing down the road. We missed out on what God had for us.

Read Jonah 2:7-8.

Long before Jonah ran outwardly from God, he had already run away in spirit and soul. What are ways you may have run from God's will in your life? After we've turned away from our rebellion, how does making the choice to praise God become a game changer?

4. Salvation and help come from the Lord.

Salvation can be described as *deliverance, being set free, or restoration*. Salvation from guilt, a broken heart, fear, and lack of purpose, all come from the Lord. The good news in the midst of the decisions and consequences in your life is that God can leverage all things for good... if you allow Him. Do you know that God is not done with you?

Read Jonah 2:9-10.

How can gratitude and repentance change our perspective? How does the Lord's salvation change your purpose in life?

Life Challenge

In which area(s) do you need to stop running from God?

1. Spend time alone with the Lord and ask Him to reveal any other areas of rebellion of which you may not be aware.
2. Make a decision to confess those areas and surrender them to the Lord.
3. Get with someone you trust and share those areas you have surrendered. Share any next steps for a fresh start.

Prayer

Thank the Lord for His incomparable love for us. Ask the Lord to show you areas that you lack complete trust in His provision. Pray for specific needs of the group.