

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS (2/12/17)

WARM UP: Let's dream of the summer. What are you looking forward to most when the snow melts?

RECAP: Sunday's sermon was week two of our series, "Running from God." This week Collin talked about how **"it's never too late to call out."** Though it's a simple and even obvious thought, for some reason we continue to see people isolate themselves in the midst of their sin like Jonah. We see people get cast out from society like Jonah. It's important for the church to spread the message of the hope of the gospel to each other, and to the world.

1. What are your initial thoughts from Sunday's sermon?
2. Do feel like this message (*it's never too late to call out*) is clear and consistent from the church to the world today? Have you heard this message preached at all? Positively? Negatively?

The sermon was on Jonah chapter 2, take a moment to read through the whole chapter: ¹Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the stomach of the fish, ²and 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. ³**"For You had cast me into the deep**, Into the heart of the seas, and the current engulfed me. All Your breakers and billows passed over me. ⁴**"So I said, 'I have been expelled from Your sight. Nevertheless, I will look again toward Your holy temple.'** ⁵**"Water encompassed me to the point of death. The great deep engulfed me, Weeds were wrapped around my head. ⁶"I descended to the roots of the mountains. The earth with its bars was around me forever, But You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. ⁷**"While I was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple. ⁸"Those who regard vain idols Forsake their faithfulness, ⁹But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the LORD."¹⁰Then the LORD commanded the fish, it vomited Jonah up onto dry land.****

1. What an intense experience! What stands out to you the most about Jonah's prayer here?
2. What "vain idols" did Jonah regard? What sort of idols do you/our culture tend to regard?

Read Hebrews 12:5-6 *"Do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you're reprovved by Him; For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, He scourges every son whom He receives."* **It's a sobering thought that in response to our disobedience, God "casts us into the deep". Though it looks different for everyone, we learn in Hebrews it's because God "LOVES" us.**

1. Take a chance and share a time in your life you felt "cast into the deep". Share what lead to it? What got you through it? Did you feel the love of God?
2. **Jonah running from God was pretty much Jonah saying no to God, and we see what that leads to.** Is there anything in your life, faith or even a biblical command that you feel God asking you to do, but you struggle to say yes in that area?

APPLICATION: Verse 9 says that Jonah **"will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving"**. Take some time this week to reflect on the love of God described in Romans. Find ways to sacrifice to God with a voice of thanksgiving. A time of prayer, praise, sharing that love with someone who, etc.

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37-39)

CLOSE IN PRAYER: Be encouraged to share any prayer requests you have as well as any specifically about a circumstance you're facing

THINGS YOU SHOULD DO: West Michigan's got Talent → February 18th @ Freshwater 7-9pm
Men's Chili Cook-Off → February 25th @ FW in the Commons 12-2pm