



Dgroup Discussion Guide for September 24, 2017 Radical Love

Scripture: 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)

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 Ninevah 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 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.

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 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 law is costly. You may get away from it for a while, but the 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)

APPLICATION:

Patiently listen as God reveals where you can apply the passage’s lesson in your life. Write down specific action points to what He has revealed to you.

1. Is there any member of your family that you’re finding difficult to love radically? Spouse? Parents?, Children?
2. Is there any member of your Dgroup or church family that you’re having difficulty loving radically?
3. What acts of humility and selflessness can you take this week to show these people that your love them radically?

PRAYERS:

Lift all the things that you learned back to God. Share your thoughts to Him. If He is impressing a sin in your life, confess it to Him. He is always ready to forgive.