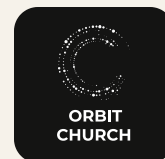


Look Again

2024-04-29 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



Jonah 2:1-10

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

Jonah prayed from inside the fish, and God heard him there. Think about that location. Pastor Matt's observation is that distress is what finally makes most people call out, and God answers anyway. He put that next to Isaiah 53, which says the Messiah had nothing in his appearance to attract anyone to him. At first glance, plenty about this faith, and plenty about church people, looks unappealing too. Pastor Matt's own marriage started because someone told him to look twice. That is the invitation of the whole message: take a second look.

To get started

- What did you write off the first time and later come back to?

Looking back at the message

He told the story of how he and his wife got together only because someone told him to look again.

- 1 Pastor Matt said he and his wife would not be together if someone had not told him to look twice. Where has a second look changed something for you?
- 2 Most people do not show up at church because life is perfect. They show up on their last leg, after trying it their own way first. How close is that to your story?
- 3 Pastor Matt quoted the common line: I love Jesus, but I do not like his people. When have you been there? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Jonah 2:1-10. It is a psalm from inside a fish, and it is worth reading aloud.

- 4 Read Jonah 2:1-2. Where exactly is Jonah when he prays, and what does the text say God did?
- 5 In verse 4 Jonah says he has been banished, and that he will look again toward God's temple. Was he actually banished, or is that how it felt?
- 6 Read Isaiah 53:1-3. What does it say about the servant's appearance and how people treated him?
- 7 Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. What kinds of things does God choose to use, and what reason does Paul give? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

He warned against searching for a way out rather than a way up. That is the honest distinction.

- 8 Be honest: have you been searching for a reason to leave, or a reason to stay?
- 9 What have you decided about God based on one bad experience?
- 10 Jonah prayed from inside the fish, and God heard him there. What have you assumed you cannot pray about, or pray from?
- 11 What would looking again actually cost you? OPTIONAL

The group together

Some in the group have church hurt. Let them say so without being talked out of it.

- 12 What experience with church has been hardest for you?
- 13 How do you stay in community with people who are difficult?
- 14 Who in your life has written the church off, and what happened to them?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What are you going to look at a second time?

You might pray about

- For people who prayed from a hard place this week
- For those carrying hurt from a church
- For willingness to look again rather than write off