

Sermon-Based Small Group Preparation

For the week of January 22, 2012

“Living Out of Your Mind”

Sermon Series: *Flow* (week 2 of 7)

Romans 8:6

» Please look over these questions *before* your Small Group meeting «

Getting Started

- 1) Our shopping habits, movie viewing and Internet activity preferences create a consumer history for each of us. In light of this, what are the typical kinds of junk mail, pop-up Internet ads, and movie suggestions that you think most folks probably receive?

Into the Bible

Read Romans 8:6

⁶The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace. (NIV1984)

- 2) What does the following statement mean to you: “When you can have it all, faith says, ‘God is better.’ When you lose it all, faith says, ‘God is better’”? What distractions tend to affect your relationship with God most, with your ability to remain in the flow of the Holy Spirit?

Read Jonah 2: 1-10

¹ From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. ² He said:

“In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. ³ You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. ⁴ I said, ‘I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ ⁵ The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. ⁶ To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit. ⁷ When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. ⁸ Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them. ⁹ But I, with shouts of grateful praise,

will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’”

¹⁰ And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land. (NIV)

- 3) Jonah’s perspective on being swallowed by the fish is revealed in his prayer from inside its belly. What do you notice about this prayer?
- 4) Was Jonah really banished from God's sight? What caused Jonah to look to God again?
- 5) What did Jonah mean when he said, “from the depths of the grave I called out for help?” Jonah despaired for his life. Why would God allow Jonah to feel such terror?
- 6) Re-read vv. 5-6. Jonah describes the events that led to the spiritual and emotional state in which he found himself. Have you ever had similar feelings? How have you seen God respond to you in these dark moments?
- 7) Jonah declares: “Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them” (v. 8). How do we turn away from God’s love when we seek comfort, security, and acceptance in things other than the gospel? What are you prone to cling to instead of God’s love?

Digging Deeper

- 8) Jonah ends his prayer with the promise of “a song of thanksgiving.” How can thankfulness help us to combat spiritual disappointment? How does acknowledging God’s grace and blessing affect us spiritually?

- 9) What do you think about most on a daily basis? How would you describe your basic thought patterns? To whom or to what do you look to provide yourself with comfort? What do these answers reveal about where you look for salvation?

- 10) Have you ever felt God’s call and then refused or only obeyed to a limited amount? How did this affect your relationship with God?

- 11) Jonah’s thankful prayer from “the pit” revealed his unwavering assurance of God’s intervention. Can you think of a time when your confidence in God not only sustained you but also showed others that you were living in “the flow” of the Holy Spirit?

Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

Sermon Notes

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- 1) I can learn to monitor my mind.

- 2) I can learn to direct my mind.

- 3) I can learn to feed my mind.