

Jonah 1 & 2

Small Group Discussion Guides

Read Jonah 1:1-5, 17; 2:1-10 from a Bible version of your choice.

1. What is procrastination in general? Is it really that serious of a behavior? What are the potential consequences or dangers of procrastinating?
2. A proverb is distilled wisdom garnered from observing life over a long period of time. They are timeless truths. Here are two proverbs about the consequences of procrastination, one comes from the Bible and another from a statesman, economist and philosopher:

“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a thief.” Proverbs 6:10-11

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” — Edmund Burke

React to both.

3. What is procrastination in relation to God? How serious does God take procrastination? Here are two passages you can use for your discussion.

“I prefer obedience more than sacrifice.” 1 Samuel 15:22

“To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.” Proverbs 21:3

4. Read the passage below and discuss it.

For you created my inmost being;

you knit me together in my mother’s womb.

14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

your works are wonderful,

I know that full well.

15 My frame was not hidden from you

when I was made in the secret place,

when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

16 Your eyes saw my unformed body;

all the days ordained for me were written in your book

before one of them came to be.

17 How precious to me are your thoughts, God! Psalm 139:13-17

5. Do you think God created us for one overarching life mission or do you think God has created us to accomplish many missions/purposes?

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6. In light of Psalm 139, do you know what God created you to be and do? Have you found your calling/purpose(s)? If so, what is it? How do we discover what God has called or is calling us to do?
7. React to this statement: *“Your purpose is found at the intersection of who God created you to be, your life experiences, your wounds and the opportunities that emerge in your life.”*
8. How have you used what God’s given to you for heaven’s sake?
9. What did God have to do to get your attention and move you from using what he’s given to you entirely for yourself to using them for his purposes?
10. After 31 years as a Pastor, I’ve found this proverb to be true: *“20% of the people do 80% of the work.”* Why is that? What reasons do people give for not volunteering to serve, whether it is within the church or in the community?

How did God move you to overcome your reason(s) for delayed obedience? How long did it take? What were the results? After the fact, did you find that your reasons for not serving were legit or overblown in your head?
11. What costs have you born for serving the Lord and what have been the benefits?
12. We can’t do everything but we can do something. What is God stirring in you now? Is there a need that is persistent that you are agitated about, that you wish you could do something about? What is it? What gifts, talents, aptitudes, education, and life experiences, do you have that can be used to address this need?

Is there a mission that your small group do together once a month?

For Personal Reflection Only (NOT for group discussion): If you aren’t involved in any form of service, if you are using all the resources God has given you for yourself, ask yourself why? Why aren’t you serving? What would it take for God to get your attention? What are you waiting for?

God created you for several purposes. One, to know him: *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* John 3:16

Have you said Yes to God’s offer of salvation? If so, then God has another purpose for your life:

“Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’ As the Father has sent me so I send you.” John 20:21-22

Like Jonah, God has sent you to bear witness to Jesus to those who do not know him. What can you do to get involved in the Lord’s ministry? Ask God what he wants you to do and do not delay. Don’t be like Jonah or you may find yourself in the belly of your own personal “fish.”