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# Courageous Faith

## Choose the Truth

World Outreach Church  
Sermon Discussion Guide  
From Services of February 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>

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### Ice Breaker

- What is a favorite memory of your teen years? Who had the most positive influence in your life?

### I. Jonah, lessons in responses to God

Jonah 2:1-2, 10 (NIV<sup>®</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> From **inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.** <sup>2</sup> He said: "In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry. . . . <sup>10</sup> And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

1. What are some reasonable responses Jonah could have had to the Whale experience? What would have been the outcome if Jonah had not prayed? When did you learn the value of prayer?

Jonah 3:1-3 (NIV<sup>®</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: <sup>2</sup> "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." <sup>3</sup> Jonah **obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh.** Now Nineveh was a very important city--a visit required three days.

2. Why do we teach our children to obey the first time? What are the benefits and what are the consequences? What is the invitation of scripture when helping us know how to respond to biblical truth?

Jonah 3:4 (NASB<sup>®</sup>)

<sup>4</sup> Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

3. Was the Nineveh message a difficult message to deliver? Why? Discuss. Can you imagine walking through Nashville with a similar message?

Jonah 3:5-9 (NASB<sup>®</sup>)

<sup>5</sup> Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. <sup>6</sup> When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered *himself* with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. <sup>7</sup> He issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. <sup>8</sup> "But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. <sup>9</sup> "Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish."

4. The Ninevites had a stunning display of humility. Why is this obedience rare/important? In what way do we desperately need this same repentance in our nation? Why does it matter that the repentance started from the leader of the nation?

Matthew 12:41 (NASB<sup>®</sup>)

<sup>41</sup> "The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

5. Jesus believed in Jonah & the fish...the history of the Old Testament, the power of repentance. Why does He emphasize the importance of the Jonah story to the people of His day and to us?

### II. Courageous Faith

**courage** def. = the ability to do something that frightens, strength in the face of pain or grief.

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**coward** def. = person who lacks courage cowardice is not permanent, if you have lacked courage you can change!

6. Why does our culture demand our courageous faith? Why is it different than 50 years ago?

### **A. The Invitation**

Jeremiah 12:5 (NIV<sup>o</sup>)

<sup>5</sup>“If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?”

7. Why does what you aspire to matter? Has your vision been limited to what you have believed about yourself? Who have you allowed to define your worth?

### **B. Jeremiah’s Complaint**

Jeremiah 12:1 (NASB<sup>o</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> Righteous are You, O LORD, that I would plead *my* case with You; Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with You: Why has the way of the wicked prospered? *Why* are all those who deal in treachery at ease?

8. Why does Jeremiah’s focus not please the Lord? What is in our own heart when we look at the temporary circumstance of the wicked?

## **III. Responding to Truth (there is truth & it can be known)**

### **A. Given**

- *Life is more difficult than I prefer*  
2 Corinthians 11:24-25 (NIV<sup>o</sup>)

<sup>24</sup> Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.<sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

9. 40 lashes is believed to kill a man. What lessons can we learn from his tenacity?

- *Help is available*  
Romans 8:1-2 (NIV<sup>o</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup> because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

10. When in your life has this principle been proven? Discuss

### **B. Variables (we have choices to make, beyond conversion decision)**

- *overcome or overcomer*  
Revelation 2:7 (NIV<sup>o</sup>)

<sup>7</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life,** which is in the paradise of God.

- *faith and learning*  
Colossians 1:10 (NIV<sup>o</sup>)

<sup>10</sup> And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, **growing in the knowledge of God,**

11. Faith is not static we either are growing/seeking or we are shrinking/walking away. How do you encourage yourself in growing in the faith? How do you practice encouraging others?

Prayer: Almighty God, I cry out to you today. You and you alone can bring deliverance to my life. You are righteous in all you do, teach me to walk uprightly before you. Forgive me for my rebellion and stubborn refusal to cooperate with you. I turn away from all ungodliness, I lay aside every idol. I choose to honor you with my whole heart. I choose Jesus as Lord of all that I am. May my life be pleasing in your

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