Grace Group Study Guide

Jonah Week 3

Jonah Chapter 3

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time….

You know what is beautiful about that statement? It implies a third time. And a fourth time. And a fifth time. Etc.

Have you ever wondered what would have happened to Jonah if he had fled a second time? I’m guessing that God would have sent another storm and then another fish.

J. Vernon McGee points out several people in the scriptures that benefitted from a second, third or fourth chance.

1. Jacob failed again and again until he became a disgrace and a source of embarrassment to GOD, but GOD did not let go. At Peniel He tackled this man directly and brought him to the place of decision. After this, Jacob was different. Let us rejoice that GOD did not reject Jacob after the first mistake, and the second, and the third. “He is faithful.”

2. David committed an awful sin and men have wanted to stone him for it. But GOD never did give him up. He made David give up the sins. David wrote the 23rd, the 32nd and the 51st Psalms after his awful failure. Are you not happy that GOD did not reject David?

3. Peter stumbled and fell, getting himself dirty, but he got up and started out again. He failed his LORD, but his LORD never failed him, and Peter was restored.

4. John Mark failed on the missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas. Even Paul refused to take him on the next venture, but GOD never refused him, and we read that even the great Apostle Paul changed his mind regarding Mark, “Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry” This appears in the "swan song" of the Apostle, his final letter to Timothy, his death-bed statement. Mark made good. Paul admitted he was wrong - GOD was right.

What other characters come to mind when you stop and think about second chances?

Failures in the Christian life are not easy to go through, nor are they encouraged. We will never get back the time we waste in sin and disobedience; nor will we escape the consequences. BUT, through the grace of God when we repent we get to begin again and hopefully, we begin again with a little more knowledge as the result of our mistakes, and we will know Jesus better. Our God is a God of redemption. He delights to take what Satan intended to use to ruin us and our testimony, and use it for good in our life and the lives of others.

Can you think of a time when God did this in your life? How were you able to help someone else through their troubles because of your own failures? What verses can you think of that supports this idea?

I can’t verify the accuracy of this story but it’s been circulated in many different circles and it goes like this:

A young man working for IBM made a decision that most warned would be unwise. However, he was convinced that he knew best and went along with his plans.

That mistake cost the company 10 million dollars.

Needless to say the young man was immediately called to the office of IBM founder Tom Watson Sr.

I can only imagine what was going through the mind of this young man. Sweaty palms, trembling, fear.

Upon entering Mr. Watson’s office, the young man looked down and said, “Well I suppose you want my resignation.”

“You can’t be serious!” Mr. Watson exclaimed, “We just spent 10 million dollars educating you! I can’t afford your resignation!”

Have you, in your walk with the Lord made a “10-million-dollar mistake?” What did you come away learning from that experience?

It feels good to be the recipient of grace, doesn’t it? To know that you were once a lost sinner, destined for hell but then to realize that you have been redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God.

Have your encounters with grace caused you to look differently on the lost and other who are caught in a storm of sin or disobedience?

What is our expectation in terms of how people might respond to the message of grace? Do we write off certain groups of society and look down on them with contempt?

I’ll tell you what, folks – if God can use a prejudiced prophet to reach an entire city of wicked heathens, then we better keep our eyes open because there’s no telling when he’s going to call on us to share with someone else the message of His judgement but also of His grace.