

Growth Group Homework

Reading the week of May 10-14, 2021

Discussing the week of May 24th

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. If you face a problem, do you prefer to face it up to and get it over with or do you tend to put it off as long as possible?
2. If you had a chance to go on a cruise anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

GOING DEEPER/ Dixon First Reads Together

Monday: Amos 9: Good News Finally!

How do you accept critical news, shoot the messenger, pull the covers over your head, grin and bear it, praise the Lord any way, or act on it?

Which area of your life needs a fresh touch of God's spirit today?

Obadiah: Historical Background: The Edomites apparently took advantage of the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon in 586 B.C. They plundered the land and pillaged the homes of survivors. Obadiah speaks God's judgment non Edom for the way they took advantage of "brother Jacob" in his moment of weakness. The term "Edom" is used in the Old Testament for the name of Esau (the brother of Jacob) and for the race made up of his descendants. The area this tribe occupied was originally the land of Seir. It was a rugged, mountainous region that extended from the Dead Sea south to the Gulf of Aqabah. The enmity between Edom and Israel was long-standing. The history of the blood feud between the two peoples can be traced by a study of the relevant Old Testament passages. Edom was known for sitting smugly in her fortified cities atop rocky clefts, and Obadiah prophesies against her for relying on this for her sense of security. In the fifth century the Edomites were driven out of their own land by the Nabateans. After this many Edomites moved into southern Palestine.

Obadiah: Characteristics: Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. While other prophets often announced oracles directed at other nations (along with their words for Israel), nearly the whole of Obadiah consists of the words of a Jewish prophet to another country. In this respect Obadiah is like Nahum, who preached against Nineveh. With respect to language, Obadiah is like Jeremiah (compare vv. 1-9 with Jer 49:7-22), which suggests interdependence or mutual reliance on an unknown third source. The language of this book is characterized by vivid and striking metaphors (see vv. 4, 5, 16, 18)

Tuesday: Obadiah : God's judgment of proud Edom and the restoration of Israel

Upon what rock-like structures, if any, might you be basing your security, an insurance policy, a church, a family inheritance? How do you think might this "pride of your heart" be deceiving you? The Lord says, "Seek me and live" (v.4) What spiritual disciplines help you feel more alive in the Lord?

How would you respond if God called you to share a message like Obadiah's with some people today?

Jonah: Historical Background: Israel had just restored her northern borders under King Jeroboam II (793-753 B.C.), as Jonah had prophesied (2Ki 14:25). At this time, Israel was politically secure, spiritually smug and morally corrupt. Nineveh, the city to which Jonah was sent by God, was the capital of Assyria. Assyria was a ruthless empire which threatened tiny Israel, and eventually conquered it in 722 B.C. Nineveh was 500 miles east of Joppa, but Johan boarded a ship heading 2000 miles west, revealing how far and fast Jonah wanted to get away from a people he dreaded. Israelites had many reasons to hate the proud Ninevites, as Nahum points out in a prophecy dedicated exclusively to the Ninevites. Nineveh's repentance and revival under Johan was short-lived. The second time around for proud, cruel Nineveh resulted in her fall in 612 B.C. she was never heard from again.

Wednesday: *Jonah 1 : Jonah Flees From the Lord*

When have you, if ever, run away from God—refusing to do something you know he's telling you to do? Where can you escape him?

What do you think is the meaning of Jonah's entombment for Jesus (Matthew 12:40-41) and for you?

Thursday: *Jonah 2 : Jonah's Prayer*

When have you, if ever, felt like Jonah—far from God, enmeshed in a situation beyond your control?

Where in your life are you desperate enough to pray with hope, as Jonah does?

Friday: *Jonah 3 : Jonah Goes to Nineveh*

When do you remember God has given you two chances, if any? To be or do what?

When would you consider "fasting" and "putting on a sackcloth," as the Ninevites did? What do you think a "spiritual fast" is?

Prayer Requests:

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Growth Group Community Service Project

We ask every group to take on at least one service project a year (the ideal is two) and to have at least one social gathering (potluck) per half a year. Please consider with your group members of what community service you'd like to participate in. There is a project list made by our church that you can join in and outside the church.
