

March 9, 2008

GOING GLOBAL

(Heart for the World)

Opening Prayer, Confession of Faith & Worship

Big Idea:

God's heart is for the world. Do our hearts reflect the heart of God or, like Jonah, do we decide to go our own way?

Summary:

"For God so loved the WORLD that He gave His one and only Son." God's heart is global and he has called us to be global by commissioning His followers to carry out the most important task of sharing His message of salvation through Jesus Christ to all nations. But are we willing to go global and fulfill this great commission? Let's take a look at what can happen if we say no to this high calling by examining the story of Jonah. Thousands of years ago, God asked a man named Jonah to go global, but Jonah wasn't willing to share God's message of repentance and salvation to anyone outside of his own people group – especially not to his enemies. Jonah ignored God and then disobeyed Him by going the opposite direction. Finally, after a near drowning and an encounter with a big fish, he reluctantly delivered the message. However, his heart was still not global and still not the heart of God. Jonah liked God's blessings and forgiveness when it was in his favor to the point where his self-centeredness and self-righteousness caused him to be more concerned for a mere plant, and his own comfort, than for the souls of an entire city. Instead of obeying God's directions, Jonah went his own direction. Don't let Jonah's story be your story. Remember, we are all called to go global with the good news of Christ. For some of us the global call is to our own family, neighborhood, or city. For others, the global call is to a foreign country on the other side of the globe. Bottom line: the call has been clearly made so let's GO!

Discussion Questions: (read the Scripture & discuss)

Jonah 1:1-3

Discuss things God wants us to do both individually and as God's people that we haven't done. What kind of things can happen in our lives if we don't go God's direction? Discuss.

Jonah 4:5-11

What are the "shady plants" (the temporary pleasures and perceived "needs") in your life? How do you keep your focus off the "shady plants" and instead direct your concern to knowing, loving, and sharing Christ? Give examples of how we can improperly elevate the blessings that God has given us to enjoy, above God himself. How do we prevent this from happening?

Matthew 28:16-20

Why should we not be afraid to live out the great commission and go global? Where is Jesus when we follow God's heart and go to the nations with His gospel?

Taking Action: Individually, determine two things you are willing to give up for the sake of others knowing Jesus? Share with the group. Next week, ask each other for progress reports and testimonies.

Ministry Time

LifeGroups