

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

Small Group Guide

Week 2: Jonah-Different Shoes

Series: Dare to be Different is a 4-week series where we will look at 4 ways in which students should strive to be different than the culture around them. Our memory verse for this series is Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

Scripture: Book of Jonah

Small Group Goal: To help students understand that they should see the world around them as God sees it.

Do Justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

Sermon Summary:

POINT 1: DO JUSTICE

Jonah is called to delivery God's message of justice to the people of Nineveh but instead he runs the other way. To "Do Justice" is to align our lives to the ways of God.

- In what ways are students running from God?
- This means to walk in harmony with God's desires for our lives.

POINT 2: LOVE MERCY

Jonah is frustrated by God's mercy in response to the repentance of the people of Nineveh. After experiencing God's mercy, he does not want to see that mercy applied to those he dislikes.

- Jonah went through the motions in Nineveh, but his heart was not seeking God or for the good of the people there. In what ways are students walking through the motions of their parent's faith and they need to respond to a call to mature their own faith?
- How would students behave differently if they aligned their hearts to the heart of God for themselves and others? Would they be timid in sharing their faith? Would they remain silent in a world that is self-destructive and far from God?

POINT 3: WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

Jonah sits in judgement of God's heart for people. He is sure that he knows best what God should do and is frustrated when God doesn't respond to problems the way Jonah expects.

- Can students walk in confidence that though they might not understand the reasons for what happens they can be assured of God's love for them?
- Can students see that God stepping into the world in the form of Jesus is the greatest demonstration of God's Justice, Mercy and Love.

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Small Group Questions: Below are some topics to guide your discussion and sample questions. You know your students best. What questions can guide them through these ideas to a better understanding of God and a clear next step for themselves?

Do Justice: Sometimes the right thing, the just thing, isn't the easy thing. Do students understand Justice from God's perspective and are they willing to do the hard things? In what ways are students running from God?

- What are some reasons why Jonah might have run from God?*
- What were the consequences of Jonah's disobedience?*
- How did God pursue Jonah even when he was running?*
- What does Jonah's story teach us about God's love and patience?*
- What are some ways that we might be running from God in our own lives?*
- Are there hard things that are part of obeying God that we are avoiding?*
- How can we overcome our tendency to run from God?*
- What are some practical steps that we can take to obey God more fully?*
- What are some ways that we can show God's love to those who are running from him?*
- How can we grow in our faith so that we are less likely to run from God?*

Love Mercy: Do students understand the heart of God for a lost world and are they living accordingly. If they Love Mercy they will share their faith, they will speak a hard truth, they will seek to grow in their relationship with God.

- What are some reasons why Jonah might have been reluctant to share his faith?*
- How did God help Jonah overcome his fears and reluctance?*
- What does Jonah's story teach us about sharing our faith with others?*
- What are some practical steps that we can take to share our faith with others?*
- How can we show God's love to those who do not know him?*
- How can we be more sensitive to the needs of others when sharing our faith?*
- How can we build relationships with others that will lead to opportunities to share our faith?*
- How can we live our lives in such a way that we are a witness to the love of God to all we meet?*
- How has your faith evolved since you were a child?*
- What are some things that have influenced your faith journey?*
- What are some things that you are still trying to figure out about your faith?*
- How do you balance your own faith with the faith of your parents?*
- What are some ways that you can grow your own faith apart from your parents?*
- What are some resources that can help you grow in your faith?*
- How can you be a witness to Christ to your parents?*
- How can you avoid living out the faith of your parents simply because they do?*
- How can you be confident in your own faith?*
- How can you make a difference in the world for Christ?*

Walk Humbly with your God: Can students have confidence in God when they can't understand all His ways and reasons.

- Have you ever had something happen where you questioned why God allowed it?*
- What does it mean to have confidence in God?*
- What are some ways that we can develop confidence in God?*
- Is it wrong to have doubts and fears when it comes to our faith?*
- How can we overcome our doubts and fears when it comes to trusting God?*
- What are some practical steps that we can take to have confidence in God in difficult circumstances?*
- How can we trust God's timing when things don't seem to be going our way?*
- How can we find peace in the midst of chaos when we know that God is in control?*
- How can we create a world where everyone knows the love and power of God?*