



STUDY GUIDE

WEEK 5: 11.05.2017 “REALIGN”

[set up]

Think back on when you were in high school, what you liked, your dreams, your personality, your preferences. In what ways have you changed? In what ways have you stayed the same?

Why is change hard? What makes it hard/why do we resist? What is the hardest form of change?

[digging deeper]

Read Jonah chapter 4. Verses 1-4 are very ironic, almost sad and humorous. How was Jonah shown grace and mercy in the same way the Ninevites were?

Look back to 2:7-9 and to 4:1-4. What are the similarities of Jonah and Nineveh’s salvation?

God gave Jonah a plant to shelter him from the scorching heat. When God took away the plant and Jonah’s comfort was taken away, it was just too much for Jonah. It is easy to love our comfort instead of the often painful work of being realigned with God’s purposes. What areas of your life are you most at risk for settling for comfort rather than God’s purposes? How can you stay aligned with God’s call and purpose in your life?

Read Psalm 139:23-24. The psalmist encourages God to test him to see if there are any dark places in his heart. What keeps us from praying this sort of prayer?

Why is it important to accept our imperfection? What happens when people realize their own sinfulness in comparison to Christ’s perfection? How can that help the people we are trying to reach out to actually embrace our message of Christ?

Jonah is in major need of realignment in his heart. Jonah’s issue was a heart issue. His mouth said what God wanted him to say, his body went to Nineveh, but his heart was certainly not in it. How has your life been realigned in the past? What heart issue has God dealt with in your life? What brought you back to a place of realignment?

What is the relationship between the internal integrity and the external evidence when we are aligned with God?

Read this article. <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/lord-align-my-heart-with-yours>
What was said that helps you understand alignment with God? Is there anything you disagreed with or think could have been stated stronger?

What is said in Romans 12:2 that helps us know how to align ourselves with God?

What principles can we draw from James 4:7-8 to help us align with God?

Scholars note how bad Jonah looks throughout this book. Even at the end Jonah is pouty, weak-willed, and emotionally uncontrolled. But, everything within the book points to Jonah as the author of the book. This may have been on purpose, for this may be Jonah showing his own sinfulness in light of God's goodness. We see this pattern throughout the Bible. For example, the Bible is careful to mention that Paul used to arrest Christians, Peter denied Jesus and battled with racism later in his life, Thomas doubted, Moses was not permitted to enter the promised land due to sin, Abraham was not a good husband, and many, many other examples. Do you think Jonah eventually repented of his sin and submitted to God? What would be true of Jonah if he did?

What is the biggest area of sin in which God has given you freedom and newness? How can you use this area of growth to point others to Christ?

What is the most significant attitude or action that has been keeping you out of alignment with God?

[living it out]

As you reflect on the last five weeks of study, on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), how aligned do you feel your heart is with the Lord's purposes currently? _____

What prayer will you pray to increase your alignment?

What action step will you take to increase your alignment?

What question can your LifeGroup members ask you to test alignment?

Related to UNLEASH, using the same 1-5 scale, where would you place yourself in these categories?

- __Neighbors
- __Nations
- __Next Generation
- __Praying for these initiatives
- __Serving in the areas of these initiatives
- __Generously giving to UNLEASH to increase resources for these initiatives
- __Being a champion of these initiatives for others in our body

On November 5, we will all be submitting commitment cards for our commitment to unleash CVC to greater reach our neighbors, the nations, and the next generation. Spend some time during group in private prayer about it. If you are married, you and your spouse spend time praying together.

