

NOTES TO LEADERS: Our focus for this week is taking on the character of God who gives second chances and who was intentional to reach out to this world. Todd's statement is, "Choose to be an intentional influencer in your people's lives, expecting God to work."

SHARE

Other than a parent, who was intentional about influencing in your life?

NOTES TO LEADERS: Note that this does not say what kinds of influence. We want this question to be open enough that all can share something.

LEARN

Read chapter three in the book of Jonah. Who are the main characters and their roles in this scenario?

NOTES TO LEADERS: While this might seem obvious, the purpose is to see that God is the main one being intentional, Jonah is a reluctant ambassador, and the king and people of Assyria are responding to God (not just Jonah).

Jonah is given a "second time" to fulfill his role. People have said, 'Ours is a God of second chances.' How is this seen here? What do we learn about the character of God in Exodus 34:6-7?

NOTES TO LEADERS: Jonah, the king, and the people of Nineveh have all been given a second chance. All of these people had rebelled, resisted God, and were in a state of condemnation and on the road to destruction. In Exodus 34, God tells us about his own character: He is "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin."

What do we know about God's desire and our role from Romans 2:3-4; 1 Timothy 1:15-16; 2 Peter 3:9?

NOTES TO LEADERS:

- **Romans 2:3-4 – God is intentional with kindness, tolerance and patience. His desire is repentance, which leads to righteousness by faith in Jesus and therefore eternal life with God. (Cf. Luke 15:7)**
- **1 Timothy 1:15-16 – Jesus came with the intention of saving sinners. He did this with patience so that people might enter into eternal life with Him.**
- **2 Peter 3:9 – Again, the Lord is "patient" towards people because of His desire "for all to come to repentance." These actions are our example of how we are to live.**

We are often concerned with our role in people's lives. What do we learn from John 16:7-11?

NOTES TO LEADERS: We learn that it is the Holy Spirit's role to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Holy Spirit points out sin for the purpose of leading them to repentance. This means that while we are Christ's ambassadors, and hopefully representing Him well (kindness, patience, intentional), we do not have the role of the Holy Spirit.

What were the results of Jonah's message? How could this be?

NOTES TO LEADERS: The Ninevites had a rare response of humbling themselves before God. As above, the Holy Spirit pressed home the warning of impending danger - they were condemned and about to be judged. But God offered them mercy and they responded.

DISCUSS

How has God been 'the God of second chances' in your life?

NOTES TO LEADERS: Please allow time for this to be a time of thankful review.

Someone said, "I don't know the names of the people who shared Christ with me, but God does." Discuss the idea that God is doing more than you know.

NOTES TO LEADERS: It was I (Steve) who made the first statement. So often we don't get to see the invisible and powerful working of God in people's lives. I (Steve) have heard hundreds of baptism stories wherein God's people loved, served, and shared with people and didn't get to see how God was using them. In so many cases, God uses multiple people to point to Jesus. Then one day, they receive Jesus and find eternal life in Him. While we don't always get to 'see the results,' we can have the joy of pointing people to the Lord Jesus. (See John 3:29)

What holds us back or spurs us on to be an intentional influencer?

NOTES TO LEADERS: God has empowered and encouraged us through the Holy Spirit, given us gifts and abilities, surrounded us with the support and encouragement of His people, and given us all the message and commissioning of Christ. It is our choice to be like God, an intentional influencer of people as his ambassadors.

LOVE YOU ALL,
STEVE