

Friday 25th September

<https://www.easternbaptist.org.uk/news/what-might-god-be-saying-collation-of-zoom-discussions/>

Discipleship means still listening to God and going deeper with God

When taking into account all of the other areas of discipleship we have considered, we need courage, vulnerability and honesty moving forward and to continue to ask questions. We need leaders who are prepared to let go and release disciple-making disciples. At the very core of this, is the need to continue to listen to God and to go deeper with God, potentially being taken to the risky places which may be uncomfortable. One person in our discussions mentioned Jonah's call. Jonah knew where he should be going, he knew what God was asking him to do, but he didn't want to go there. It was going to be uncomfortable and costly to him personally. Does this speak to us and our congregations? We have a sense of what God is asking of us for the next season, but in order to go there, we as the leaders will need to dig especially deep with God and lead in the way that he directs, which may well be uncomfortable and challenging. A further passage which was mentioned was the parable of patches on new clothes and old and new wine and wineskins. (Luke 5:33-39). Nick has expanded this theme in a sermon which he has recorded and is taking to a number of churches, it can be found on the [EBA YouTube channel](#). Some of the thoughts shared this week will resonate with you, some may challenge you and some may not be at all where you think God is leading. However, we would encourage you to keep listening to God and seek to go deeper with Him choosing to move forward with courage and honesty, for the glory of His kingdom.



Biblical Reflection

God doesn't always do things the way that we expect or even the way that we desire. We cry out to him to bring about change, to renew us, to make a new way and then something like this pandemic comes along which does change everything and we are not sure we like it. I am not saying, by the way, that God caused the pandemic, but I believe he can use all things for his glory when we listen to him and seek to walk in step with him. The reflection above alludes to Jonah, someone who really didn't want to listen to God or go where he was sent, you may like to re-read this brief book. Jonah was a prophet, so we would assume that he was attuned to hearing God and generally thought it was a good thing for people to obey God. However when the word of the Lord came to him, to go to the most powerful and evil city of the known world and tell them about their wickedness, he ran in the opposite direction. Listening to God is one thing, putting into practise what God says is often quite another. Jonah had a sharp awakening by way of an encounter with a large fish, and while in this place, he recognises the sovereignty of God and that only God can rescue him. In the end he is obedient to what God asks him to do, but his understanding of God's sovereignty and his own gracious obedience is short lived. He ends the book still grumpy!!

Questions for Reflection

God will always give us choices, can you recall a time when God gave you a choice about a decision, how did you react and how did it work out?

If you sense that God has asked you or your church to do something different, new, perhaps risky, yet exciting, what is your reaction?

What are the hinderances which stop you moving forward? Pray for The Holy Spirit's boldness and discernment for the future both for yourself and your church.

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Link to Interview

Jeniya Gwendu – Listening to God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHfohSiE38s&list=PLkJ0iVHAOGVtthpEfkiyRrdDIAwu6miaB&index=3&t=10s>