
ARE YOU A CONTROL FREAK?

STUDY NOTES FOR CARE GROUPS – (Nahum 2:10-13)

The following are resource questions that you can use with your Care Group for discussion. They are based on the sermon preached on Sunday, March 21, 2010, by Elder Tony Chan at the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The sermon is available online at <http://www.gracebap.org.sg/worship/series.html>.

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'*Devastation, desolation, and destruction*' (Nahum 2:10-13) – the repetition of these similar-sounding words is an attempt to reproduce the carefully structured Hebrew with its doom-laden sounds ascending to an ominous climax (*buqah, umebuqah, umebulaqah*). The description of sheer terror and agitation is a literal portrayal of the shock and terror of defeat. The language used is powerful: '*knees tremble, all loins quake, all faces grow pale.*'

All Nineveh's strength has gone. With powerful imagery, the prophet poignantly highlights the contrast between former greatness and imminent disaster.

Nahum speaks of what he knows: his language is militaristic: he tells of war, violence and pillage. But his thought is not limited to the literal and historical. He sees beyond the fate threatening Nineveh to the God whose ultimate triumph overthrows all that is evil and that wars against the good. His words are to be understood in perspective as with sensitivity we enter into their meaning.

Nahum's words are an affirmation of faith, faith in God's power to subdue evil and deliver the helpless. But for faith there is always a tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet'. The Lord is king, yet still we sing:

*Thy kingdom come, O God,
Thy rule, O Christ, begin,
Break with Thine own rod
The tyrannies of sin.*

FROM THE HYMN 'THY KINGDOM COME' BY LEWIS HENSLEY, 1867

Nahum shows the two 'faces' of God—His anger against sin and His care for the troubled. Notice, it is not God's care for the good, as though humans needed to strive hard after virtue in order to secure God's favour.

True, there is no easy comfort for those who deliberately turn from what is good, but the sole qualification for God's protection in time of trouble is that trusting attitude which 'takes refuge in Him' (Nahum 1:7).

Are you in control? Are your enemies in control? Is God in control? Throughout the Bible, it is very clear—only God is in control. But is it easy to trust God and in His promises?

Discussion Questions:

1. Which is easier? To trust in what we see, or to trust in what God's promises? Why or why not?
2. Why is it that we refuse to let others control/subdue us? Is independence a trait that we strive for...for what purpose?
3. How would letting God be in control be the same as allowing ourselves to be under the "rule" of our employer, school principal, parent, or even elder sibling, etc?
4. How should we lead others in ministry, at work, and at home? Rules and Regulations, Punishment and Fines?
5. IS God in total control of your life right now? Why and why not?
6. Discuss the struggles so that we can encourage one another.