

Jonah
“Jonah’s Outrage”

Jonah 4:1-11

September 24, 2017 / Pastor Shawn

Having good theology doesn’t mean you have a good heart .

¹ But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the LORD, “Isn’t this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? This is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. Jonah 4:1-2

Pay Attention to your anger because it reveals your heart.

³ Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

⁴ But the LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

⁵ Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. ⁶ Then the Lord God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷ But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, “It would be better for me to die than to live.”

⁹ But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?” “It is,” he said. “And I’m so angry I wish I were dead.”

Jonah 4:3-9

Our lives ought to be about our Nineveh .

¹⁰ But the Lord said, “You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. ¹¹ And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left — and also many animals?”

Jonah 4:10-11

Discussion Questions

1. When you were a kid, how did you usually express your anger or react when you didn’t get your way?
2. Which do you think was Jonah’s biggest problem: anger, pride, selfishness, depression, prejudice, or something else? Which of these issues do you struggle with personally? About what situations do you sometimes find yourself angry at God? What does this story reveal about God? His ways?
3. Share a time when you, like Jonah, became angry at God and depressed over what seemed like an unjust situation? How did you get over these feelings and how long did it take? How do you resolve your anger with God? Is there anything currently going on in your life that you are angry or depressed about? (Pray for those in your group who are struggling with anger.)
4. What percentage of your anger comes from not getting what you want? How do you generally express your anger? (pout, yell, punish, withdraw, stuff it, take it out on others, become irritable, silent, etc.) How comfortable are you telling God when you are angry? Why is this important? What can happen when we deny or stuff our anger? What is God’s cure for our anger?
5. Life is *not* about us. Only God has the right to judge others (or a nation) and the power to control outcomes. How was Jonah’s anger related to his *trying to be* God, concerning Nineveh? How was he judging and trying to control the outcome? Why do you think Jonah was angry and depressed about the Ninevites repenting and turning to God? How would you have felt in Jonah’s situation?
6. Like Jonah, we all want to receive God’s forgiveness, but we are not always willing to *give* forgiveness. To whom are you unwilling to extend God’s grace and forgiveness? What can result when we hold on to anger, even when it seems justified? Why do we struggle with *giving* forgiveness more than *receiving* forgiveness? What are some reasons (or excuses) we use for not forgiving? How do we benefit from forgiving?
7. If you were Jonah, what ending would you like to give this story?
8. To which country or people group is God calling you to pray for them, or possibly to personally deliver, the good news? What steps will you take to become more involved in reaching others with the message of Jesus Christ?