



Jonah Series Week 4

Discussion Guide

Icebreaker

If you had the chance to go on vacation anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

Read

Take turns reading Jonah 4:1-11 (Optional: Have your group read each passage in two different versions. Then, have them retell the story in their own words. Follow this up by reading the passage and correcting any omissions or mistakes. This solidifies the story in their minds and lets them realize they can use it in their own words when needed.)

Discuss

Jonah did not want the Ninevites to be forgiven. He wanted them destroyed. Jonah was a recipient of God's grace, but struggled to accept that same grace being given to people he did not like. He did not understand that the God of Israel is also the God of the whole world.

- **Why do you think Jonah was so upset about Nineveh being spared?**
- **How would you describe God's character based on Jonah 4:2?**
- **How does Jonah's response to God's mercy on Nineveh reflect our attitudes when things don't go as we expect?**
- **Have you ever struggled to see someone else receive grace or blessing? What made that difficult?**

God uses the plant to reveal something deeper in Jonah's heart. Jonah is emotionally invested in his own comfort, but completely disconnected from the spiritual reality of 120,000 people. The plant didn't require anything from Jonah, but people do. Sometimes our compassion is strongest where it costs us the least, and weakest where it matters the most. God is inviting Jonah (and us) to examine what we truly care about and why.

- **What do Jonah's reactions in verses 6-9 reveal about what he values most?**
- **Why do you think it's easier to care about personal comfort than about people who are far from God?**
- **When you think about your daily life, where all your time, energy, and attention goes, what does it show you care most about?**
- **What might need to shift in your heart for you to care more deeply about others the way God does?**

The book of Jonah ends with a question. God is inviting Jonah to wrestle with his heart. The same question now sits in front of us. There are people in our lives that are living far from God. Some are easy to love and some are not, but God's heart is the same for all of them.

- **Why do you think God ends the story with a question instead of telling Jonah what to do?**
- **When you think about your community, who are the people that are easiest for you to overlook or avoid?**
- **What would it look like for you personally to take one step toward someone who is far from God this week?**

Application

Jonah's story reminds us that God's grace is for EVERYONE. He struggled with the idea that God loved His enemies. The Gospel reminds us that we were once the enemy, but God love us WHILE we were still sinners (Romans 5:8). Just like the Ninevites, we are invited to turn to Him and receive new life and once we have received that new life we are called to share it.

- **Have you personally accepted Jesus and begun a relationship with Him? If not, what is holding you back?**
- **What would it look for you to take that step today? God's grace is available to you no matter your past.**
- **Invite someone to sit with you on Palm Sunday & Easter.**

Prayer

Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal the people in our lives who we might struggle to see grace extended to and give us the courage and opportunity to share God's grace with them and invite them to church.