

## **September 22, 2013 Sermon Application handout**

Jonah, Chapter 4

“120,000”

1. Before you begin, take time to pray and ask God to help you dig out any heart attitudes that show contempt towards others and contempt toward the grace of God (Jonah 4:2).
2. Review your lesson for Jonah 3. What was one specific teaching that you understood from this section and applied to your life?
3. Now read Jonah 3:10-4:11. How is Jonah 3:10 connected to Jonah 4:1? What is Jonah reacting to and how does he respond (cf. 3:9)?
4. According to verse 2, what did Jonah pray to God? Based on his prayer what do you think Jonah thought the Ninevites deserved?
5. What have you discerned Jonah knew theologically about God (cf. Deut 34:6)? What do you think he anticipated God would do based on His character?
6. Do you believe God's grace and compassion should have borders? Are there certain people that you have a hard time believing God “should” save? Do you ever “burn with anger” like Jonah when you consider the fact that God might choose to forgive them should they repent? How might you reconcile these heart attitudes biblically and begin to trust God in these matters? (See Isaiah 55:9; Rom 11:33 to help formulate your answers).

7. What is the theme of the book of Jonah according to Jonah 4:2? How does this give you encouragement and hope?
  
8. When you consider the attributes of God that are expressed in verse 2, do you find a total lack of appreciation for what you learn about God like Jonah did or does this realization cause you to give Him praise? Give some examples of your struggle and/or your praises!
  
9. The Hebrew word for “compassion” is *raham*. It has the idea of tender mercy or pity. Look up the following verses and describe how God extends his compassion toward people. How does this give you encouragement and hope?

Deuteronomy 4:6

Nehemiah 9:17

Psalm 78:38

10. As you consider the story of Jonah, do you believe that God extended compassion toward him? Explain your answer based on 2 Kings 14:25-27 and what you have learned in your study of Jonah thus far. What do you believe Jonah deserved based on his disobedience? Do you believe that God responded to Jonah better than he deserved? Why or why not?

11. Does it seem bizarre to you that the very grace of God that Jonah experienced in his rescue from the sea, Jonah now resents God extending to other sinners? Look up the following Scripture references. What heart attitude was Jesus bringing to light that was similar to Jonah's? Do you see yourself in any of these parables? How should you respond in light of what you've learned?

Matthew 18:21-35

Luke 15:11-32

Luke 18:9-14

12. Compare Jonah's statement he made to God in verse 3 with Elijah's prayer in 1 Kings 19:4. Why did Elijah pray this prayer (cf. 1 Kings 17:8-24)? Why did Jonah wish to die?
13. How did Yahweh (the Lord) respond to Jonah's request in verse 4? What was the question designed to do? What was God leading Jonah to see? Again, did Yahweh respond to Jonah better than he deserved? Why or why not?
14. Did Jonah answer God's question according to verse 5? Was he humble? Was he excited and hoping with anticipation to see the 120,000 in Nineveh repent that day?

15. According to verses 6-8, what was God determined to do for Jonah a second time? What are some attributes of God you observe in these three verses?
  
16. What is the first way God “delivered” Jonah from his discomfort (v. 6)? How did Jonah react?
  
17. Despite God’s efforts to comfort Jonah, how was he continuing to respond (v. 8)?
  
18. What was the second “probing” question God posed to Jonah? How did Jonah answer (v.9)? What does this tell you about our hearts when they are simmering in self-pity and contempt? How are we tempted to treat others? How are we tempted to treat God? Has this ever been your situation? Explain your answer below.
  
19. Think of one way this week you might extend compassion to another person. Who are the ones that are hard to love? Who are the ones you are tempted to show contempt toward? Write their name/s down and pray that God would give you the courage to follow through. If you struggle with this, seek to meditate carefully on Jonah 4:2 and ask God to grow in you a heart that is gracious, compassionate, loving, and slow to anger. He will give you the grace to act!
  
20. The most amazing truth to point to in the book of Jonah is despite Jonah’s irreverence towards God and hatred toward the Ninevites, God did not give up on Jonah. How did Yahweh point out the inappropriateness of Jonah’s anger (4:11-12)? Was Yahweh’s response toward Jonah better than he deserved? Why or why not?

21. According to verse 11, what was another reason that motivated our gracious, compassionate, loving God to act with compassion toward the 120,000 in Nineveh? Would you say based on that response, that people are more valuable to God than plants? How does this encourage your heart?
  
22. How might the book of Jonah help you to counsel someone who is questioning God's care? What truths might you glean for your own heart when it seems like circumstances and people are difficult?
  
23. The book of Jonah ends abruptly with verse 11. Hopefully it has left you not only to ponder what became of the "prejudiced" prophet but also how easy it is for all of us to fall into the same trap. Take time right now to really consider the 3 types of sinners presented in this story—Jonah, the Sailors, and the Ninevites—all sinners who are in need of God's grace, compassion, and love. Do you see it? Don't miss how this book underscores God's willingness to extend grace and mercy to the sinner who doesn't deserve it? How about you? What's your story? When did God stoop down and extend His grace toward you, a sinner? Was God's response toward you better than you deserved? Why or why not?

*Remember that even Jesus' most scathing denunciation – a blistering diatribe against the religious leaders of Jerusalem Matthew 23 – ends with Christ weeping over Jerusalem. Compassion colored everything He did.- **John MacArthur***

## **RESOURCES**

### **Specific Resources for Jonah**

*Jonah* by Hugh Martin

*Jonah* by R. Reed Lessing

### **General Resources for the Minor Prophets**

*The Minor Prophets* by James Montgomery Boice

*The Minor Prophets* by Charles Feinberg

*The Prophets of Israel* by Leon Wood

*Major Points from the Minor Prophets* by John Blanchard

*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* by Gleason Archer

*Interpreting the Minor Prophets* by Robert Chisholm Jr