

The Life Challenge

Title: Jesus and Jonah
Text: Matthew 8:23-27; Matthew 12:39-41
Matthew 20:1-15
Speaker: Matt Ewert
Date: June 28, 2020



WARM-UP

Can you think of a time when you received less pay than another person for essentially the same work? OR maybe a time when you received the same pay as another person, when you clearly accomplished far more than they did (and maybe even worked more hours)? Describe the situation. How did it make you feel?

DISCUSSION

In the teaching this week, Pastor Matt said that if you think about the Jonah story and replaced the character of Jonah with someone who was aligned with the heart of God and lives according to His will, you would be left with the story of Jesus' life and work in a nutshell.

- In what ways are the stories of Jesus and Jonah similar?
- In what ways do the characters of Jesus and Jonah diverge?

Matthew 12:28-31 is the passage in which Jesus evokes Jonah as a sign of His coming death and resurrection. Jesus says that at the judgement, the Ninevites of Jonah's day would be in a position to condemn the Pharisees of Jesus' day.

- In what ways were the Ninevites more righteous than the Pharisees?
- Why were the Pharisees so unable to hear and respond to Jesus' message?
- In what ways are Christians today susceptible to falling into the pattern displayed by the Pharisees?

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DISCUSSION

Read Matthew 20:1-15

- In this parable, what kind of people do you think the first who are hired represent?
- What kind of people do the last who are hired represent?
- When you read this parable, where do you tend to naturally "place" yourself? In the shoes of the people hired to work before 9:00 AM or in the shoes of the people hired at 5:00 PM (or somewhere in between)?
- In reflecting on the parable more deeply, where SHOULD you see yourself in the parable?
- Does changing where you see yourself in the story change your perspective on the parable (and, ultimately, on God's indiscriminate mercy)?