

WELCOME: (15 minutes)

Sometimes the things that really get under our skin, are not major crisis but tiny irritants. What small things can really make you mad?

WORSHIP: (15 minutes)

Use whatever means possible to turn the group's attention to the wonder and majesty of our God- including music, prayer, meditation on the Psalms, and other art forms.

WORD APPLICATION: (45 minutes)

Briefly read or paraphrase the following sermon summary and discuss the application questions interspersed!

Jonah 4 draws a sharp contrast between how God viewed people and how Jonah viewed them. That sharp contrast can be instructional for us...

There were 4 things that Jonah and God were agreed on...

1. **Nineveh was wicked.** God said it in Jonah 1:2 and the king of Nineveh said it in Jonah 3:9. Jonah had a firm grasp of the holiness and justice and wrath of God.

Read Nahum 1:2-8 and discuss how this might be offensive to you or to others. **Do we feel apologetic about the justice and the wrath of God?** We need to understand God's wrath because...

- It impresses us with God's hatred of sin...**how is sin generally viewed today?**
- It gives us a true fear of God...**is the sense of accountability to God alive and well today?**

2. **God saves rebels.** Jonah 2:9-10 made clear that God delivered Jonah, the rebel from the fish's belly. He responded to a cry of repentance...an expressed desire to do the will of God. **If you were to choose someone that would typify a rebel from God, who would that be and could God save them?**

3. **God is gracious and merciful.** Jonah 4:2 tells it from Jonah's lips...*you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.* But his comments were made in a judgmental accusatory way. He so embraced the holiness, justice and wrath of God against sin that he was offended by God's grace, compassion, love and forgiveness. How could these truths be offensive? **Like Jonah, Is there anyone that you know of that you would not want these truths to apply to?**

4. **God is consistent.** Jonah 4:2...O Lord, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God. God is unchangeable...He is the same yesterday, today and forever. His justice and holiness are unchangeable and His compassion, love and patience are unchangeable.

But Jonah and God did not have the same heart for Nineveh...They understood the same truths but had radically different hearts. God is incredibly patient and merciful...

Read Jonah 4:6-10 and note the worm factor. Jonah became attached to a plant that provided him some comfort. He was angered when the plant was taken away from him. Consumed with self-pity over the loss of a day-old plant, he was blinded to a city of people facing imminent destruction. **Do you see yourself in Jonah? Do personal petty losses blind you to God's heart for the people around you?**

Read Jonah 4:10 **How important are cities to God? How does this information impact you?**

- Today North America is 89% urban
- 100 years ago North America was 20% urban
- In 1900 only 8% lived in cities
- There are 410 world class cities of 1 million or more
- One zip code in New York has 133 nations represented
- Cities are mentioned 1250 times in Scripture
- In Genesis life begins in a garden and in Revelation it ends in a city

Read Jonah 4:11 and note the phrase that implies moral confusion (cannot tell their right hand from their left). What do you think it means? **What did it stimulate in God and by implication how should it move us?**

WITNESS: (15 minutes)

Who are your neighbors? Can you name them? Can you list three things about them? How many generations are they away from the truth...in other words, did their parents or grandparents know the truth of the gospel? Take some time to share information about your neighbors.