

GENESIS

begin. belong. believe.

Jonah... the second chance

(part V of the 'Jonah' series – 6/17/12)

Big Idea...

The story of Jonah does not end as one might think. Rather than seeing Jonah celebrate the grace and kindness that God demonstrated towards the great City of Nineveh, Jonah expresses his displeasure and anger towards God. In many ways, Jonah plays the part of a young child throwing a temper tantrum because he did not get his way. We don't know if Jonah ever repented of his selfish and self-centered ways, but we do know this, despite Jonah being Jonah, it did not alter one bit who God is, namely that:

- God is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
- God is committed to teaching us all that He wants us to know so that we can live lives that are pleasing to Him,
- God is committed to demonstrating without prejudice His love to all He created.

Discussion Questions...

1. When you see God at work, whether in your life, or the lives around you, how do you react? Do you celebrate what God has done, or do you quietly complain about what God has done? Our reactions to the activity of God is telling of what resides in our hearts towards God, so what does your response towards the activity of God reveal about what's in your heart?
2. As you read [Jonah 4:1-3](#), we clearly see that Jonah is angry towards God. One would think that after all that Jonah had witnessed and experienced, he would be filled with gratitude towards God, so how is it possible that his heart could be filled with so much anger towards God? Jonah's anger went beyond what God did not do (destroy Nineveh), but Jonah actually took issue with who God is – His character. Why was Jonah struggling so much not only with what God did not do, but with what God is like?
3. Jonah reminds us by way of example that there are those who could tell you what God is like, but the God they describe is not the God who has taken up residence deep within their hearts. Someone once said – *"The longest journey a man must take in his lifetime is the eighteen inches from his head to his heart."* Where are you on that 18ⁱⁿ journey? Do you just have a good testimony of what God is like, or is the God you describe actually transforming all of who you are (attitudes, decisions, choices, desires, etc.)? What are some practical ways in which you can begin to grow in not just being all 'head' but having what's in your head transform your heart?
4. God used a plant, a worm, and an easterly wind to teach Jonah a heart lesson. What was God ultimately trying to teach Jonah? How about you, in this season of life, what is God trying to teach you? Are there things (plants, worms, winds) or people that God is using to instruct and mature you?
5. Jonah's heart could not be filled with the things of God – namely His grace because His heart was filled with anger. As D.L. Moody once said: *"I believe firmly that the moment our hearts are emptied of pride and selfishness and ambition and everything that is contrary to God's law, the Holy Spirit will fill every corner of our hearts. But if we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God. We must be emptied before we can be filled."* What is your heart filled with today? Is what's filling your heart helping you grow closer to God, or is preventing you from cultivating intimacy with God?
6. Jonah ends with an unanswered question – *"And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh?"* How do you answer that question? What does this question reveal about the questioner? If we answer 'Yes', then how should our answer shape how we live?

Announcements...

- **Testimonies** – this Sunday, June 24th during the GENESIS Worship gatherings, you will have the opportunity to share your testimony of 'This is our God.' Be praying as to what God would have you share at this gathering. It will be a powerful time of celebrating together as a community who God is an what He is doing in our lives and the life of our community.
- **Beginnings Brunch** – this Sunday, June 24th at 10:30AM, the GENESIS Connections Team will be hosting a brunch for all the new (or newer) people to GENESIS over the past month. If you've brought a friend to GENESIS recently, please invite them to join you this coming Sunday for the beginnings brunch so they can learn more about GENESIS and how to connect within the community.

sunday worship gathering at 9am & 11AM www.genesisjourney.com