

Chapter 4

Introduction:

If a person does something and hopes it doesn't work, what conclusion about them can we make about them and their attitude in their work?

Jonah has finished his preaching ministry in Nineveh. And unlike what you would expect- he isn't looking for the city to repent. He was hoping they would ignore or reject his message.

1. Jonah's Response to Mercy (4:1-3)

A. Jonah's Displeasure (4:1) Jonah is deeply angry because God spares Ninevites after their repentance. He thinks it is wrong for God to be merciful. This was a symbol of rebellious Israel. God intended for His people to be a blessing to all nations- not just unto themselves.

Remember God's promise to Abraham? Genesis 12:1-3

The God's people were and are to be a shining light on a hill for the rest of the world. Matthew 5:14-16

B. Jonah's Complaint (4:2-3) Jonah reveals his frustration, knowing God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in love. God is patient and desire to relent in his plan for destruction. Jonah feels his prophetic mission is undermined by God's compassion. Jonah should be happy that they have repented- but he is not- Somehow, he thinks they are not worthy of mercy, but no one is worthy of God's mercy- even Jonah Mercy and grace from God cannot be earned or it would be grace and mercy. He's so angry he wants to die!

What is so amazing is that he knew what God was like- and that is why he didn't want to obey to begin with!

In what ways can Christians act similar to Jonah. For example, when guests visit our church? _____

2. God's Response to Jonah. (vs. 4-8)

A. God's Questioning (4:4) God asks Jonah if he has a right to be angry, challenging his attitude. Much like the LORD asked Cain! Genesis 4:4-7

How can we be tempted to act like this in our life? What is at the core of Jonah's anger and perhaps our anger?

B. Jonah's Withdrawal (4:5) Jonah leaves Nineveh and waits for the city to be destroyed. Hoping it will be! He builds a shelter to observe what will happen. He is stewing. He is saying to himself- Why should people like that get blessed by God? Ironically, the king of Nineveh sat in the dust out of remorse over sin. Jonah sits in the dust angry over God's compassion.

C. God's Provision of the Plant (4:6) God provides a plant to shade Jonah, bringing him relief and happiness. The LORD is attempting to make Jonah see that all he has in the way of blessing is from God. No one deserves mercy from God. But all Jonah is worried about is his little universe. It's all about Him. He has no care or compassion for his fellow man. How does a person end up so self-centered?

D. God's Removal of the Plant (4:7-8) God sends a worm to destroy the plant, exposing Jonah to the scorching sun and wind. Jonah again expresses a desire to die due to his discomfort. God sent the whale, the worm, the plant the heat, the wind, the waves and he sent Jonah. May we never forget that what we have is only because of God's grace. Do you think we lose blessings from God like Jonah did when we behave similarly? Why or why not?

3. God's Final Lesson to Jonah (4:9-11)

A. God's Second Question (4:9) God asks Jonah if he has a right to be angry about the plant's destruction. Jonah insists he is angry enough to die. Three times now Jonah has told the LORD he wished he were dead. Do you think he meant this statement? Why or Why not?

B. God's Rebuke and Teaching (4:10-11) God confronts Jonah and teaches him what is most important. What should Jonah and we be concerned about? The spiritual condition of people. Their eternal destination. Not our temporal self-centered comfort.

Jonah and His Jewish Brethren had so many spiritual advantages (See Rom 3:1) Yet Jonah and the nation were rebellious. The Ninevites received one message from God- and they repented, Jonah received blessing after blessing and yet still has a bad attitude! Let us all be careful to have our priorities line up with the Lords. The souls of men, women boys and girls.

What is our answer to God's final question? How then should we live?
