

## Small Group Discussion Questions - Winter Semester // Week Nine

*Remember, these questions are just tools for discussion. You don't need to 'get through them all'. Use the questions that are helpful, skip the questions that are not. And let the conversation flow naturally.*

### Optional Ice Breaker(s)

- a) What is your favourite season? What do you love most about that season? What is your least favourite season?
- b) If you could have dinner with any person alive in the world today, who would that be? What are a few questions that you would want to ask them?
- c) What is the best fort / clubhouse / hangout spot that you have ever built or created? How old were you when you spent your time there? Who did you share it with? What made it so great?

### Passage and Discussion

#### Read Jonah 4:5-9

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading of this passage? What is a theme, verse, or word that you find encouraging? What do you find challenging in this passage?
- b) In **v5**, Jonah left the city to see what would happen to it. What does this tell us about Jonah's mindset? What are your overall thoughts towards Jonah as you continue to read through this book?
- c) On Sunday, we were reminded that the Church can sometimes become 'spectators'? How do you see this happening today? How do we work against this tendency?
- d) What does God providing the leafy plant (**v6**) tell us about God's provision and kindness?
- e) What is an example of a 'leafy plant' that God has provided in your life, especially when you have walked through difficult circumstances? What are a few examples of kindness that God has shown to you during different seasons in your life?
- f) On Sunday, Cam pointed out that Jonah was "very happy" with the gift of the leafy plant, but he was not happy with the giver. Tell us about a time in your life when you took a gift from God for granted. What are a few gifts from God that you can thank Him for today?
- g) Through providing the leafy plant and then taking it away, God is showing mercy towards Jonah by teaching him an important lesson. Why do you think God sometimes uses difficult circumstances or situations to teach us? How have you grown through these kinds of lessons in your own life?

- h) On Sunday, Cam said that “your salvation and your growth are more important than your comfort”. What do you think about this teaching? How have you struggled with this statement in your own life before?
- i) The book of Noah shows us that there is nothing that is outside of God’s sovereignty. However, Jonah’s response to God’s actions changes based on his own preferences. How can you relate to this? How have you struggled with only trusting God when you like what He’s doing in that moment?
- j) Read **Isaiah 45:5-10**. What does this passage say about God being God, and our acceptance of that? What do we learn about God from this passage? What does this passage say our role is, in judging God’s actions?
- k) **Read Job 1:20-21** (or all of Chapter 1 for a deeper look). How does Job’s response contrast with Jonah’s response to God’s sovereignty? How do we learn to praise God in all seasons, even when we don’t understand or like what He is doing?
- l) This passage reveals that we have a tendency to become so “self-focused that we become outwardly useless”. How do you see this happening in the world around you? How do you see this happening in your own life? How can we work against this tendency?
- m) Was there anything else in the message on Sunday that stood out to you as impactful or challenging?

### **Take it Home (Optional Ideas for Response this Week)**

- a) This week, take time each day to thank God for the ‘leafy plants’ that He provides to us in our everyday lives. What are a few gifts that He has given to you that you may have taken for granted?
- b) This week, pray that God would help you to grow in praising Him for His sovereignty in all seasons, even when you are walking through a hard season. Reflect on whether or not your thankfulness towards God depends on your current circumstances.

### **Optional Ideas for Prayer Time**

- a) In this season, it is important for us to be intentionally praying for each other. This also means that we must each choose to be honest and vulnerable with our prayer requests. Take time to ‘check-in’ about how each person is doing, and pray for them.
- b) As a group, pray that God would help each person in your group to trust God in all seasons in our lives, even when we don’t understand or like what He is doing.