

# NAVIGATING A TURNAROUND

## NAVIGATING A TURNAROUND, PART 3: NOT LEARNING

If the student doesn't learn, you can always expect the teacher to repeat the lesson. That's what God's doing when He repeats Himself to Jonah. Why? Because Jonah still isn't learning.

**BIG IDEA: Legalism whispers, "They don't deserve a turnaround." Grace shouts, "Neither did you."**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time when someone did something good for you when you didn't deserve it.
2. As you look back, have you ever resisted doing something for someone else because they didn't deserve it? Do you ever feel resentful when something good happens to someone else? Where do those feelings come from?
3. Why do some people want God to extend his goodness towards them, but not towards everyone?
4. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 3:1-3](#).*

*<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Jonah a second time. <sup>2</sup> "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh, and deliver the message I have given you." <sup>3</sup> This time Jonah obeyed the LORD's command and went to Nineveh.*

*[Jonah 3:1-3 \(NLT\)](#)*

5. Where might God be reaching out to you again? How are you going to respond?
6. What is God trying to show you? Is there a sin He wants to save you from, or an opportunity He's calling you to explore?
7. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 4:1-11](#).*

*<sup>1</sup> But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup> He prayed to the LORD, "Isn't this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. <sup>3</sup> Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live."*

*[Jonah 4:1-3 \(NIV\)](#)*

8. According to verse 2, why did Jonah run away to Tarshish? What did Jonah know about God's character?
9. How does the final chapter of this book sit with you? Why do you believe Jonah's heart never turned towards God? What is God trying to teach us through this ending?
10. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 4:4-8](#).*

*<sup>4</sup> But the LORD replied, "Is it right for you to be angry?" <sup>5</sup> Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. <sup>7</sup> But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. <sup>8</sup> When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live."*

*[Jonah 4:4-8 \(NIV\)](#)*

11. What three things did God provide Jonah? Are you surprised with Jonah's response to God's kindness? Did Jonah have a right to be angry about God sparing Nineveh? When have you experienced anger towards God? How did this affect your outlook? How can we resolve our anger towards God?
12. What do the plant, worm and hot sun reveal about God? About Jonah? Did Jonah have a right to be angry about the plant? What lesson was God trying to teach Jonah, through the plant? What do you think God meant when He said the Ninevites couldn't tell their left hand from their right?

13. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 4:9-11](#).

<sup>9</sup> But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?” “It is,” he said. “And I’m so angry I wish I were dead.” <sup>10</sup> But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. <sup>11</sup> And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?”

[Jonah 4:9-11 \(NIV\)](#)

14. Paraphrase God’s response in verses *Jonah 4:9-11*. What message is God trying to convey to Jonah?
15. Jonah is one of the few books of the Bible that ends with a question. Since chapter 5 does not exist, we have no way of knowing how Jonah responded. From the picture we have of Jonah, how do you think the events unfolded afterwards? Did Jonah repent or remain stubborn?
16. How can you keep yourself from becoming uncaring about others, especially those outside the faith?
17. Like Jonah, we all want to receive God’s forgiveness, but we are not always willing to give forgiveness. To whom are you unwilling to extend God’s grace and forgiveness? What can result when we hold on to anger, even when it seems justified? Why do we struggle with giving forgiveness more than receiving forgiveness? What are some reasons (or excuses) we use for not forgiving? How do we benefit from forgiving?

#### THINK ABOUT IT

We have all messed up and disobeyed God, but the good news is that God gives us a second chance. He calls us to repent, turn away from our sins, and turn toward Him.

#### WHAT WILL YOU DO?

It’s easy to celebrate God’s blessings when they happen on your terms. But what about when He doesn’t respond the way you think He should? When we have a bad attitude, it damages our relationships with God and the people in our lives.

#### CHANGING YOUR MIND

*But the LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”*

*Jonah 4:4*