

NOTES & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CHANGE OF PLANS

SERMON SUMMARY

This sermon explores Jonah 4 and the tension that arises when God's plans don't align with our expectations. Through Jonah's anger over Nineveh receiving mercy, we see that moments of disappointment often reveal what is truly in our hearts—whether we value God's compassion for others as much as we value it for ourselves. The message challenges us to examine our own "Nineveh" and remember that God's greatest miracle is not judgment, but His relentless mercy toward spiritually lost people.

KEY POINTS

- When God's plans don't match our expectations, our hearts are revealed.
 - Jonah's anger wasn't really about Nineveh; it exposed what was already in his heart. Disappointment often uncovers attitudes, motives, and beliefs we didn't realize were there.
- God's mercy extends to people we may not think deserve it.
 - Jonah wanted judgment for Nineveh, but God wanted repentance and restoration. The story reminds us that God's grace is available to everyone, including our enemies.
- It's easy to receive mercy for ourselves while resisting it for others.
 - Jonah celebrated God's mercy when he was rescued from the fish but resented that same mercy when it was shown to Nineveh. We can fall into the same double standard.
- God cares more about people than our personal comfort.
 - Through the plant, worm, and scorching wind, God exposed Jonah's misplaced priorities. Jonah grieved the loss of comfort more than he cared about the salvation of an entire city.
- A heart that reflects God's heart will have compassion for the spiritually lost.
 - The book ends with God's question: "Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?" The challenge is whether we share God's concern for people who are far from Him, even when it's difficult or uncomfortable.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What stands out to you most about Jonah's reaction to Nineveh's repentance in Jonah 4? Why do you think he was so upset by God's mercy?**
- 2. Have you ever experienced a situation where God didn't do what you expected or wanted Him to do? How did that reveal what was in your heart?**
- 3. Jonah gladly received God's mercy for himself but struggled to extend it to others. Why do you think it's often easier to accept grace for ourselves than for people we dislike or disagree with?**
- 4. God asked Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry?" What do you think God was trying to teach Jonah about himself? What might God be trying to teach us through our frustrations and disappointments?**
- 5. The sermon asked, "Who or what is your Nineveh?" Is there a person, group, or situation where you struggle to want God's blessing, mercy, or redemption? What would it look like to align your heart more closely with God's heart toward them?**