

SEVEN DEADLY SINS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK 4: WRATH

Read the Text

Jonah 4: 1-11

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly,[a] and he was angry. 2 And he prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. 3 Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” 4 And the Lord said, “Do you do well to be angry?”

5 Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. 6 Now the Lord God appointed a plant[b] and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort.[c] So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. 7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” 9 But God said to Jonah, “Do you do well to be angry for the plant?” And he said, “Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die.” 10 And the Lord said, “You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. 11 And should not I pity Nineveh, that great

city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?”

Main Point

The story of Jonah is a powerful example of how unholy wrath strains our relationship with God and others. And the unique thing about this deadly sin is that it's the only one God possesses in a perfectly redeemed form. ***Whereas God's wrath is perfectly just and righteous, our wrath is vengeful anger that seeks punishment for an offense.***

So what does wrath look like in our day-to-day lives? Some of us carry our anger and allow it to consume us. We may lash out, explode, rage, and get big and loud. Others of us bury our anger. We become passive aggressive, self-righteous, and judgmental. We may gossip or delight in other's failures. ***Whichever side of the coin we're on – anger carried or anger buried – our anger tends to be unrighteous, temperamental, uncontrolled, and creates distance between us, others, and God.***

There is hope for us though. God doesn't leave us alone in our anger. Instead, ***He invites us to explore what's going on beneath that anger so that He can redeem it.*** This can be hard but very redemptive work. It means facing past wounds, taking responsibility for our sin, repenting, and then offering mercy both to ourselves and others. It is only through this process that we can finally reach a point of letting go of wrath, and experiencing healthy anger.

Reflect Together

- 1. *Who is God?***: God has perfect wrath. What does that mean to you? What do you think of the fact that He has wrath?
- 2. *What has He done?***: How does God's wrath bring perfect justice to His creation? What does it look like to have hope and peace in that wrath?

3. **Who are you?:** How do you carry or bury your anger? Which side of that coin do you relate to most, and how does it play out in your life?
4. **What are you to do?:** A great antidote to wrath is exploring our past wounds, taking responsibility for and repenting of our sin, and then showing mercy to others. What has that process looked like for you? Where could the Spirit be calling you to participate in that process?

Abide Together

As an MC, pray together about what was revealed during this discussion. Pray that the Spirit would move you to explore your wrath and grow in mercy.

Mission Together

Who has been on the receiving end of your wrath? What would confession and repentance look like towards that person, and what is a step you can take towards that?