

**God's Greater Purposes**

Pastor Gregg Brenes

Jonah wasn't afraid of what the Ninevites would do *to him*; He was afraid of what God would do *for them*.

But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup> So he complained to the Lord about it: "Didn't I say before I left home that you would do this, Lord? That is why I ran away 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." Jonah 4:1-2

**Jonah was surrendered to the law of God, but Jonah had never surrendered to the purposes of God.**

"Just kill me now, Lord! I'd rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen." Jonah 4:3

**Keys to becoming a judgmental person...**

- Never surrender
- Have no compassion
- Forget

**Have you ever surrendered to God's purposes in the world?**

But the Lord replied, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Jonah 4:4

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." Jonah 4:9

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 4:10-11

**What are you concerned about?**

**Connect**

- When you were a child, how did you usually express your anger or react when you didn't get your way?

**Word and Reflection**

The book of Jonah gives us a humbling, honest look into our own hearts. While Jonah had surrendered to the law of God, he hadn't really surrendered to the purposes of God. In his heart, Jonah was angry at God for extending grace and compassion to the Ninevites. Jonah's pride caused him to become judgmental and unconcerned about God's concern.

Jonah 4:1-11; Matthew 5:13-16

- Which part of the message made an impact, caught your attention or challenged you?
- Read Jonah 4:1-4. What does this story tell you about God? Describe a time when someone did something good for you when you didn't deserve it? As you look back, have you ever resisted doing something good for someone else because they didn't deserve it?
- Read Jonah 4:5-11. Why do some people want God to extend his goodness towards them, but not towards everyone?
- Jonah was surrendered to God's moral will, but was unconcerned with God's purposes in the world. When an individual surrenders to God's moral will, but not his purposes in the world, what is the result?
- What or who are you concerned about? How does your time, skills, passions, money, etc. intersect with God's purposes in the world?

**Action**

- Many people are content with just being "good" people. But God is concerned with all people. Somewhere along the way you've intersected with someone who made their time, talent, and money available for God's purposes in the world - and you are better for it. As you consider what you've heard, where will you take a step to surrender fully to God's purposes in the world?

**Prayer**

- Pray for your group and for those to whom you're inviting to Easter services.