



Your Greatest Concern

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Today's Text: Jonah 4

But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. 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. Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live." But the LORD replied, "Is it right for you to be angry?" 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. 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. But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. 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." 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." 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. 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?"

Notes:



Study & Discussion for Your Next Small Group

Theme: The sad irony of inner anger that leads to missing God's compassion

Share Together: Where is your favorite place in Whatcom County to escape?

Look back together: What impacted you most from

Sunday's message?

Read Together: Jonah 4

Discuss Together:

Based on verses 1-2...

- What do you think is Jonah's reason for his initial reaction to God sparing the people of Nineveh? What was he showing about how he felt, not only about the Ninevites, but about God himself?
- What are your thoughts about Jonah not praising but actually complaining about the very character and nature of God's goodness?
- How does getting upset about God's plans really reveal our lack of knowledge and maturity in understanding of the character of God?
- Jonah had much hatred toward his enemy, who God spared. Why is it so hard to picture someone we don't like, and who has hurt us, being forgiven of their sins by God?

Based on verses 3-4...

- It seems that Jonah is being over dramatic in his reaction to what God has done. What is going on in his heart, and why does he react this way saying that it would be better for him to die?
- What is God's point in asking His question in response to Jonah's fatalistic outcry?
- Why does Jonah not respond to God, but instead goes and sits to look over the city? How can we do the same in ignoring God?

Based on verse 5...

- What do you imagine Jonah is waiting for while looking out over the city? If you were Jonah, what would you be thinking?

Based on verse 6-11...

- Even after Jonah complains, God does not give up on him but provides him with what? How is provision a pattern in Jonah's life?
- From the vine, worm and wind, what is God's message to Jonah? How about to you personally?
- How does God show great concern for the people of Nineveh? How is the same concern to be our concern?
- What is the greatest concern in your life, for which you need prayer?

Pray Together: Take time to share the good things God is doing in your life, as well as prayer requests you have.