



The Resentful Prophet

RECAP:

Jonah 4 reveals that the greatest storm in the book of Jonah was not on the sea — it was inside the prophet's heart. After Nineveh repented and God relented, Jonah was furious. The very mercy that had rescued him in Chapter 2 now offended him when extended to others. Jonah accused God of being *too* gracious: "I knew that You were a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love." Beneath his theology lay pride, nationalism, and resentment. He wanted a God who would judge others but rescue him.

Jonah left the city and built a shelter hoping to watch Nineveh's downfall. Instead of destruction, God appointed a leafy plant to give him shade — a small mercy that made Jonah "very happy." But the next morning God appointed a worm to destroy the plant and a scorching east wind to expose Jonah's heart. Jonah, again exploded with anger, caring more about the comfort that the plant had given him than about the 120,000 people God had just spared.

God gently confronted Jonah's idols. Jonah pitied a plant that lived one day and died the next; God pitied a city full of men, women, children, and even animals, who did not yet know Him. Jonah's compassion was self-focused; God's compassion was redemptive. The chapter ends not with Jonah's response but with God's final question: "Should I not have concern for that great city?"

The silence that follows is intentional. The story's real target is not Nineveh or Jonah, it is us. God is still asking His people: "Will you care about what I care about? Will you let go of anger, entitlement, and comfort, so that My compassion can flow through you?" Jonah 4 reminds us that anger blinds us to grace, but grace opens our eyes to God's heart. When we align our hearts with His, we then move from sitting outside the city in frustration to stepping into the city on mission — ready to reach *one more*.

1. **Icebreaker:** When was the last time something small made you really angry, only to realize later it did not really matter?
2. What did Jonah's anger reveal about what he treasured the most? How was his anger affecting his thinking and worldview?
3. How can some people have right theology, but a wrong heart? Where have you seen this play out in culture, in the church, or even in your family?
4. What do you notice about God's approach to address Jonah's character and disordered thinking? Why do you think God asks him questions rather than giving him commands?

5. Jonah clearly has an anger problem. What does this anger reveal about him and what he desires? How does anger in your own life expose what you treasure most?
6. How did Jonah's resentment, pride, and superiority blind him from experiencing God's grace? In what ways can these same attitudes blind you?
7. Read vv. 6-7. What "plant" (a blessing or comfort) in your life might be distracting you from God's mission? How has God used blessing and brokenness to draw you towards Him?
8. What does God's final question (4:11) teach about His heart for people? What are some ways that our comfort can keep us from caring for the people God cares about?

9. Jonah was God's prophet who still needed God's grace. He had idols and heart issues. God wanted to change Jonah's paradigm. What lessons can you learn from his story regarding your own spiritual growth and God's strategy to transform your heart?
10. Who is your "Nineveh" — the person or group God is calling you to show compassion to? What is one step you can take this week to let God's mercy move you toward *one more*?

SUPPORT/PRAYER

(15 min)

Ask God to reveal any area where anger, bitterness, or comfort has blinded you to His mission. Pray that He will soften your heart to see people the way He does and give you compassion for *one more* person who needs His mercy.

Encourage the group to pray for one another by name for where hurt or resentment has blocked spiritual growth. Remember that healing and mission often begin in the same place when we release anger and receive grace together.