

Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

"THE STORM IN THE HEART OF A PROPHET"

Discuss

In Jeremiah 17:9, we are told that the "heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" The answer to this rhetorical question is clearly that none of us is able to understand the hearts of others or really to understand even our own hearts.

In the next verse, however, we are reminded that there is one who searches the hearts and examines the minds of everyone, someone who understands every heart. The LORD knew the heart of Jonah, and he knew the hearts of every man, woman, and child in Ninevah, from the greatest to the least. The end of the story of Jonah is at times both surprising (he's angry?) and mysterious to us (we don't really know the final outcome for Jonah or the Ninevites). To God, it was neither.

- 1) No doubt to the bewilderment of many first-time readers of this book, Jonah apparently felt not a speck of joy that his preaching had been so successful. Instead, we are told, Jonah was "hot" with anger.
 - Why was Jonah so resentful? What prejudices did he have?
 - What might fill us with similar bitterness and resentment? What prejudices do we have?
- 2) During his earthly ministry, Jesus told the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1-16). In this story, the workers who worked an entire day grumble aloud when they and a group of one-hour workers get the exact same wages. The landowner is generous, and the full-day workers are jealous.
 - Take a few moments and consider the idea of "just desserts." Do you generally think people should get only what they deserve? Why or why not?
 - What did Jonah think he deserved, and what (probably) did he think the Ninevites deserved? (see vv. 2-3, 6-11)
 - Read Rom. 5:8, and if time, Eph. 2:1-5. Has God given us what we deserve? Even if we say we believe that God has been gracious and merciful to us, his undeserving children, do we ever demand either openly or secretly that other people must somehow merit God's favor?
- 3) The second half of Jeremiah 17:10, tells us that God, the searcher of hearts, rewards "a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve." The book of Jonah ends, however, with God expressing his concern for the great city of Ninevah, where people "cannot tell their right hand from their left." (v. 10)
 - How can God be both a God who judges everyone equitably and a God who is compassionate and "relents from showing calamity?" (v. 2) (If time, consider Luke 23:34.)

DATE: February 24, 2019

SPEAKER: Chad/Joe

SERIES: Jonah

PASSAGE: Jonah 4:1-11

Pray

Father, we praise you as the great God who had compassion for the people of Ninevah and for Jonah and now has compassion for us. We praise you as a gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in love.

We praise you for bearing us in your hands gently, for the care that you show our weak and feeble frames. Thank you for patiently teaching us the same lessons over and over again until we begin to catch your vision for this world.

We praise you, Jesus, for being the greater Jonah, the one whose heart never wavered.

We praise you, Holy Spirit, for working faith in us and enabling us to embrace Jesus as our Savior. Amen.

- based in part on Jonah 4:2, and "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" by Henry F. Lyte, 1834

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

East Lake Expression Engine

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

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