

Small Group Leaders' Guide | Sermon Questions, Feb. 7th 2016

The Gospel in Relationships | Jonah and the Ninevites (Jonah)

Travis highlighted Jonah's three indicators of avoiding repentance:

- He Runs (1:1-3)
- He Pretends (3:3-4)
- He Complains (4:1-11)

1. Travis highlighted the difficulty of accepting other's advice or perspective on our own issues, whether they are hair loss or relational breakdown. How is it that our own perspective so often takes precedent over other people's or even God's?
2. What does God tell Jonah to do? How Does he respond? Have you ever run from something God placed before you? Have you ever run from forgiveness?
3. Travis pointed out that everyone repents in this story, even God! How might one interpret the contrast between repentance and Jonah - in other words - what seems to be vitally important to God's heart?
4. "You're only as healthy as the topics you can discuss" said Travis, of counseling situations. Are there relationships or situations that you just cannot discuss in your life right now? (This could be a good time to take down prayer requests on specific relationships)
5. What might Jonah have done differently had he truly embraced forgiveness at Nineveh? Travis said forgiveness should include a symbolic act or gesture in addition to the words. What symbolic acts are missing from your attempts at forgiveness?

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. 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?" - Jon 4:10-11

This is how the book ends, Jonah, upset and angry about the loss of a plant - God essentially saying "I have great compassion for the souls of men and women. Do you?"

6. The story of Jonah forces us to consider what we value in life; do you believe there is no greater loss than that of souls? Do your investments, in both time and money, reflect your core convictions? Or do they portray a different concern?
7. What actions can you take even this week to move closer to God's perspective on the world?