

NS LIFE GROUPS

NorthStar Church

Nothing Just Happens! (week 3)— Jonah

Jonah 1-4

May 5, 2019

Main Idea: God abounds in mercy and grace to sinners!

Icebreaker: Can you tell of a time when you wanted someone to receive the just punishment that their sins deserved rather than be shown mercy and grace?

Study:

God sovereignly worked in the details of Jonah's life to teach him and the Ninevites that God abounds in mercy and grace to sinners.

The Fingerprints of God in Jonah's Story:

1. God called Jonah to go to Nineveh. (Jonah 1:1-3)

- Why is it so significant that Nineveh was the specific city that God called Jonah to go and preach against? *(They were rivals of Israel and were very wicked people that tortured their prisoners, etc.)*
- If God had called you to go and preach a message of repentance against Hitler and the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s, what would your reaction have been to God's call? What would you have done, and why?

2. God sends a storm. (Jonah 1:4, 15-16)

- What do you think when you hear the truth that sometimes God sends storms?
- How can storms from God actually be tools of his grace and rescue in our lives?
- How did God use this storm for good in the story of Jonah?

3. God sends a fish. (Jonah 1:17 and 2:1, 10)

- How is God's grace seen in this part of Jonah's story? *(Jonah deserved death for his sin and disobedience against God, but God rescued him and gave him a second chance.)*

4. The Ninevites repent. (Jonah 3:1-2, 5-10)

- How would you have expected the Ninevites to react to Jonah's preaching? Why?
- What was their reaction to his preaching?
- What, then, is God's response to their repentance, and how does his response to that mirror his response to us when we repent and put our faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior?

5. God uses a plant to teach Jonah a lesson about grace. (Jonah 4:1-2, 5-11)

- What is Jonah's response to Nineveh's repentance? Why? *(He is angry because he wanted God to destroy them for their sins, not forgive them.)*
- What was going on in Jonah's heart and mind that caused him to react the way he did throughout these verses in chapter 4? *(Jonah cared more about his personal comfort than he did about the lives of people. He didn't have compassion on lost people like God did. Jonah thought he was more deserving of God's mercy and grace than the Ninevites were.)*

Application:

1. What is the result in our lives when we forget how undeserving we each are of God's mercy and grace?

(Possible answers: We become self-righteous, aren't as urgent to share the gospel with others, don't worship as passionately, lack passion to grow in our relationship with God, etc.)

2. Why and how does a proper understanding and awe of God's mercy and grace toward us affect the whole of our Christian lives?

(Possible answers: when we are completely in awe of what God has done for us and how little we deserve it, it motivates us to want to get this good news to others, to want to worship the Lord in thankfulness and give generously, to want to grow deep in our walk with God, to want to defeat the sins we struggle with, to want to study his Word, to want to linger long in prayer with him, etc.)

Pray: Pray for the various requests that your group members share. Pray that God would give each of us a deep, constant appreciation for the mercy and grace he has shown us through Jesus.