

The Angry Christian

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 July 2024

Preacher: Sam Bunnell

- [0 : 0 0] All right, well, it's been a fun series in Jonah, and really it's been more than fun. I have thoroughly enjoyed diving into this book like never before. I used to work in children's ministry when I was younger and, you know, taught Jonah and the whale and that Bible story several times, but never preached on it as a sermon series in adult church until now.
- So I've really enjoyed diving into the scriptures and seeing what God has given us through the story of Jonah. So by way of recap, if you haven't been here for all of those Sundays, just to give you a little recap.
- In Jonah chapter one, we talked about the runaway prophets and we said, why do we run? Sometimes we run like Jonah did, and it's usually because our lack of faith in God, just like Jonah had.
- Then why does God pursue us? Why doesn't he just let us run? But he pursues us to draw him back to himself out of his great unfailing love for us.
- And then our takeaway was God's plan always wins. Man, Jonah had other plans, but God's plan won the day. And so we are grateful for that.
- [1 : 1 0] And we're grateful that even when our plans try to supersede what God has done or wants us to do, his plans somehow always still win. So we're grateful for that.
- Then in week two, we talked about two lies and a truth. And we all played a little game of two truths and a lie. But in Jonah chapter two, this prayer from the belly of the whale or great fish to God by Jonah, we see these two big lies and a truth.
- We see that Jonah blamed God for what had happened to him. And he never ultimately repented. He cried out to God for deliverance. But he never ultimately took ownership of what he had done, the consequences of his actions.
- And he never repented to God. And our takeaway from that week was that self-deception keeps us from real change. Self-deception keeps us from real change.
- And we see that play out through Jonah chapter three and chapter four. So two weeks ago, we covered Jonah three. And we learned that God is in the saving business. If you didn't know it, it's clear in Jonah chapter three, when Jonah went to the great city of Nineveh, perhaps the most evil city on the earth in that day, at least blatantly publicly evil, disregarding of any of God's commands.
- [2 : 3 2] And God, through this begrudging message from his still unrepentant prophet, God saved this entire city. What an incredible testimony to what God can do.
- And our takeaway from that day two weeks ago was nothing is too hard for God. Nothing is too hard for God. You might have a situation in your life that seems too hard for anyone, God included, but you can be encouraged by the fact that nothing is too hard for God.
- Now today, we're going to talk about angry Christians. Angry Christians. Anybody angry this morning? Nobody's raising their hand.
- Angry Christians. Y'all, this is going to be fun. All right. Jonah chapter four. This is one of the most colorful stories in the Bible. This fitting conclusion to the tale of Jonah.

Now, before we get into it, I'd like to talk about Mondays for a minute. Monday's coming tomorrow. Anybody look forward to Mondays?

[3 : 43] You just can't wait for Monday to get here. Those of you raising your hands are lying through your teeth. I'm kidding with you. Anybody ever heard somebody's got a case of the Mondays?

I think that's been in a couple movies or shows out there. You've got that annoying coworker when you go into the office on Monday morning and they're just all too excited and energized and you're just like, I'm not ready for you this morning.

Well, somebody's got a case of the Mondays. Yeah, it's me. All right. Monday letdown is real. Right. Anybody ever heard the phrase? I'm living for the weekend, working for the weekend.

Everybody loves the weekend. They love when Friday gets here because Saturday is right around the corner. You got your weekend. Some people, a lot of people are off on Saturdays and Sundays. So you've got this to look forward to.

But you know the dreaded Monday is coming. Well, that's the vibe I get from reading Jonah chapter four. Now, before we get into that part of it, I want to go back to the end of Jonah three and realize the last verse of Jonah three shows us that God converted this whole city.

[5 : 00] They chose to put their faith in this God of the Jewish people, repent of their sins against him. They were all living in fear of the judgment of God, his prophet, just as God knew what happened.

If Jonah had just listened from the beginning, we could have avoided all this mess. But just as God knew what happened, they just needed somebody to go and preach this message to Nineveh because they were ready to turn.

Had all these events happening and disasters happening, a big famine. There was a big eclipse that was happening. He had orchestrated all these things to prepare the hearts of these people.

And he just needed his man, his prophet to show up and preach his message. And they were ready to turn. So they did. They turned. I dare say that Jonah had never had such a sweeping, successful result to his preaching ever before.

Right? He was a prophet of God. But I dare say this was his greatest church meeting ever. He'd never converted a whole city before.

[6 : 09] So you would think that on the heels of going through what he went through, leading up to that, and then showing up and seeing God use and bless his preaching as he did, you would think that Jonah would be on a high.

You'd think he'd be on the mountaintop. You'd think he would be racing back to King Jeroboam to say, hey, by the way, the Assyrians aren't going to be a threat anymore to us because they all converted to Jehovah God.

They all now have faith in our God. Don't worry. We're okay now. You would think that he would at least feel some responsibility to get back to his own people and report what God had done.

But he doesn't do that, does he? The Monday letdown is real. I can tell you as a pastor, I think we have another pastor in the room.

I think you would agree that sometimes, even as a pastor, after a great day on Sunday when God blessed, God moved, we see people baptized.

[7 : 24] Sometimes we see decisions being made at the end of the service. Sometimes we see visible fruit of God moving in a church and changing lives. Sometimes, even after a day like that, Monday can make you want to quit.

Throw it in and say, you know what? I can't face another week of this. The Monday letdown is real. And Jonah had a case of the Mondays in a big way.

So what happens? Let's look at Jonah chapter one. Would you turn in your Bibles with me to Jonah chapter one? Did I say chapter one?

What chapter did I mean? Making sure y'all were with me, all right? I'd love to say that was an accident, but I think I just misspoke. Jonah chapter four.

If you're able to physically, would you mind join us in standing and let's read this short chapter together. Jonah chapter four and verse one. I'm reading out of the New Living Translation.

[8 : 34] You got to kind of read the last verse of chapter three before you get into chapter four and verse one. When God saw what they had done, speaking of the Ninevites and how they had put a stop to their evil ways, he changed his mind and did not carry out the destruction he had threatened.

This change of plans, chapter four, verse one, greatly upset Jonah and he became very angry. So he complained to the Lord about it. Didn't I say before I left home that you would do this, Lord?

That is why I ran away to Tarshish. I knew that you're a merciful and compassionate God, slow to angry and filled with unfailing love. Something to get mad at God about, right?

God, you're amazing and I'm so mad about it. You are eager to turn back from destroying people. Just kill me now, Lord.

And y'all, we're going to see this again in just a minute. But do you realize how messed up Jonah was in his head? You go back to his prayer to God in Jonah 2 and he, I'm sorry, his crying out to the men on the boat in Jonah 1, actually.

[9 : 51] You go back to that when he says, I've run away from God. And instead of just falling to his knees in repentance and crying out for God in godly sorrow, instead of just repenting for what he had done, he asked the guys to assist him in committing suicide.

He says, throw me over the boat into the water. He knew, according to this verse here in chapter four, he knew that God would forgive.

He knew that God was merciful and compassionate to those who had turned away from him. But instead of using that with his own heart of repentance, he refused to repent and said, forget this.

I'm just going to end my life. Guys, throw me in the water. Jonah has these suicidal tendencies that are coming from this deep place in his heart, in his mind, that is not okay.

And we see this pop up a couple of times here in chapter four. So he said, you're eager to turn back from destroying people. And in verse three, just kill me now, Lord.

[11 : 04] I'd rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen. It was all about him. Verse four, the Lord replied, Jonah, you're crazy.

What's wrong with you? That's what I would have said. Instead, God says, is it right for you to be angry about this? Don't worry, we're going to come back to that.

Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see what would happen to the city. And the Lord God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there. And soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah's head, shading him from the sun.

This eased his discomfort. And Jonah was very grateful for the plant. But God also arranged for a worm. The next morning at dawn, the worm ate through the stem of the plant so that it withered away.

And as the sun grew hot, God arranged for a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah. The sun beat down on his head until he grew faint and wished to die. Death is certainly better than living like this.

[12 : 06] Once again, Jonah turning immediately to the extreme of death. Then God said to Jonah, is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?

Yes, Jonah retorted, even angry enough to die. Then the Lord said, you feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there.

It came quickly and died quickly. But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals.

Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city? And this is how the story ends. It's crazy, right? It's not exactly a Disney movie where everything is okay at the end.

Where it all gets resolved and everybody lives happily ever after. He ends right here. Let's pray together. God, I ask that you would speak to us from your word today.

[13 : 09] That you would teach us something from this life and conclusion of this story about Jonah. Your prophet. About our anger. Your heart of compassion.

And how we can conquer by your power, your might, the sin within our own hearts and become more like you. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. You may be seated. Thank you for standing so long.

Monday letdown. Monday letdown. Man, this was a case of it. If we had ever seen a case of a letdown, it's what happened here with Jonah.

He begrudgingly went and preached his message. This entire city converted. And then as soon as it happened, Jonah was upset. Jonah was in deep despair, discouragement.

He was at the end of his rope. I can't believe that my preaching worked. And God is going to actually save this wicked people. You have to understand. The Israelites and the Assyrians were enemies.

[14 : 10] They had committed unspeakable atrocities against the people of Israel. There was a lot of understandable hatred of these people on Israel's part.

And I believe that's why God chose this people to redeem so he could communicate then that he is able to save to the uttermost the extreme far reaches of sin anyone who will turn to him in faith.

I believe this was a picture of when God would open up his salvation to you and me, to all the Gentiles who would turn to him. And the age of the church in which we live now, in which we have this command given to us in Matthew 28 and Mark 16 and all throughout the Gospels, we have received this command to carry the gospel out to the nations.

We get to see a little glimpse of that here in the book of Jonah. So, do God's changes upset you? Let's go back and look at verse 1.

This change of plans greatly upset Jonah. So let's stop there for a second. When God changes plans, does it throw us off?

[15 : 26] Oftentimes it does, doesn't it? Sometimes we have a plan. We have a vision in our mind of how this is going to go. And then when God throws us a curveball, which is not a curveball for him, he knew it all.

He knows the before, the during, and the after. But when God throws us a curveball, all of a sudden we get all bent out of shape, don't we? Well, God, you didn't prepare me for that.

God, I didn't know that was coming. And his whole point is to teach us to rely on him. To trust in him. To let him direct our steps.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge God. And he will what? Direct your path. Direct your steps.

God will order your steps if you walk closely with him and lean on his wisdom, not your own understanding.

[16 : 25] Then God's changes won't seem like big changes. Then all of a sudden it's, okay, God, what are we going to do today? I'm going to go to work, but what if you have my car breakdown on the way there?

I'm ready for whatever you bring me today. What if somebody gets mad at me? What if they fire me? What if all of a sudden I have a car wreck and I'm in the hospital?

What if a curveball comes out of nowhere? And that's where we landed last week. We talked about how God can do anything. Nothing is too hard for God.

Do you understand that anything that comes your way, whatever seeming curveball, whatever change of plans comes your way, that is not too hard for God.

It was all part of his master plan to bring good to you, Romans 8, 28, and bring glory to himself. That's why the entire Bible was written.

[17 : 27] That's why God deals with us. Because we are his creation. And he wants to use us to show his glory. So do God's changes upset us?

Or do we by faith say, God, I didn't plan for this. I don't understand this. I can't wrap my head around this. Jonah's thinking these people are too far gone.

They're too wicked. They don't deserve repentance. They don't deserve forgiveness. They don't deserve God's blessings. But he didn't understand that he could have looked in a mirror and said the same thing.

Sometimes God might be teaching us a valuable lesson when he throws us what seems like a sudden change. So this change of plans greatly upset Jonah.

And what was his response? He became very angry. Look back in Jonah chapter 2 and verse 9 real quick. Just turn a couple pages over if you've got it.

[18 : 30] Jonah chapter 2 and verse 9. I will offer sacrifices to you. With songs of praise I will fulfill all my vows. My salvation comes from the Lord alone.

What an attitude. What a wonderful thing to say about God. But now look at chapter 4 and verse 2. Salvation comes from the Lord alone.

I will praise God for this wonderful truth about him that God saves. And then in Jonah chapter 4 and verse 2. What does he say? He complained to the Lord about it.

Didn't I say you would do this? You're a merciful and compassionate God. You're slow to angry. Filled with unfailing love. You're eager to turn back from destroying people. He was celebrating the fact that God saves back in Jonah chapter 2.

When he was begging God to save him. But when God chose to save this huge city. According to his miraculous power. Jonah couldn't handle it.

[19 : 33] He said no God. That's too far. I want you to save me. But not them. Y'all are we ever in that boat? So to speak.

In that boat. Do we ever. Sorry little dad joke there. Do we ever find ourselves in Jonah's shoes. Of wanting God to work on our behalf.

But not somebody else's. Wanting God to bring people into our church. To experience the love of God. The compassion. The community with the believers. The teaching of the word of God.

The corporate worship of God together. How we sharpen each other. Iron sharpens iron. We want people in our body of believers. But not those people. Right? Not those people.

I've had conflict with them. Those people are a mess. I want them to go to the Methodist church. Just bless Aaron. And all those folks over there. No man.

- [20 : 30] We don't want to think about that. Well it's not that I want them to go to hell. I just think. They. No. No. We don't want them around here. What if God wants to do something. And exercise complete transformation. And life change. In somebody else. You know what's interesting? Those people.
- In that city. And those sailors. In that boat. When Jonah tried to run away from God. All. Those. Both those people groups. Had a better.
- Response. To God. Than Jonah ever did. Jonah knew the most about God. He was a prophet of God. He had worked on God's behalf. He was a professional.
- God worker. But he had. So much more of a man centered. Self centered response to God. Than these.
- [21 : 29] What he would call heathen. And truly were heathen. Ever did. Let that not be said of our church. Let it not be said.
- That as people. That as people. Start to. Get drawn by the scripture. Get drawn by the. Hearing of the gospel. Get drawn by the Holy Spirit of God. And God takes them.
- From zero to hero. So to speak. God takes them. From nothing. Living in sin. Lost. So obviously. Openly.
- Without God. And then God. Does a work. Of saving. Transformation. In their life. And then we see them come. And get saved. And get baptized. And give their lives to God.
- And start serving. And start. Letting the Holy Spirit of God. Work through them. To touch others. I'm afraid. That some of us. Long time Christians. Long time church people.
- [22 : 23] Get left behind. Because we've lost. That initial. Love. We've lost. That initial. Zeal.
- We've lost. That initial. Excitement. We've lost. That appreciation. We've lost. That gratitude. Somewhere along the way. Life got in the way.
- And it became more about us. Than even. About God. And certainly. About others. So. We see this. Drastic. Attitude difference.
- In Jonah 2. And in Jonah 4. When it came to him. God save me. When it came to them. No God. Don't save them. So.
- Verse 3. Jonah. Was a classic. Narcissist. Jonah was a classic. Narcissist. Back in Jonah chapter 1. And verse 12. We see it here too. We talked about it.
- [23 : 19] Just a moment ago. He said. Throw me into the sea. It will become calm again. I know that this terrible storm. Is all my fault. Yeah. He was right. The storm was his fault. But the answer. Was not ending his life.
- The answer was. Calling out to God. For repentance. Calling out to God. And say. God. This was on me. I will now. Obey you. I will now. You got my attention. I will do. What you told me to do.
- But instead. He was looping. Other people. Those sailors in the boat. Into his own sin. And saying. Now I want you guys. To be guilty. Of throwing me. Into the water. It was all about him.
- And then you see it. Back in Jonah 4. Look back in Jonah 4. And verse 3. Just kill me now Lord. I'd rather be dead than alive. If I predict.
- If what I predicted. Will not happen. It was all about. Jonah's reputation. All about Jonah's desired outcome. He just couldn't handle it. Because he.
- [24 : 13] Wasn't happy. With what God. Decided to do. It was all about him. He was a classic. Narcissist. So. Jonah 4. And verse 4. Here's the question.
- That is kind of the theme. Of today. All right. Is it right. To be angry. About this. So Jonah cries out to God. God. I hate what you're doing here.

This is the wrong move. And God. Instead of coming back. And explaining. All of his reasons. Which were right. Which were righteous.

Which were just. And it didn't really matter. What Jonah thought. God is in charge. This is his world. He can do whatever he wants. But instead of flexing. On Jonah.

Which God could have done. Right there in that moment. He comes back. And just asks a question. Jonah. Is it right. For you to be angry about this?

[25 : 09] A convicting question. Which should have pierced. Jonah to the heart. Is it right. For you. To be angry about this? Y'all.

I think that's a question. We can ask ourselves. Probably 90% of the time. When we find ourselves angry. Is it right. For us to be angry.

About this? Usually. The vast majority of the time. The answer is going to be no. It isn't.

It isn't right. For us to be angry. About this. Charles Spurgeon. Perhaps the most famous. And. Well loved.

And read. And quoted. Pastor. That we've got. In church history. Perhaps. Definitely one of. Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Metropolitan Tabernacle.

[26 : 05] Over in London, England. Definitely in the Baptist tradition. He's kind of one of our heroes. And he said. We think that we do well. To be angry. With the rebellious.

And so we prove ourselves. To be more like Jonah. Than Jesus. Don't read that with me. One more time. Would you? Let's read it together. Huh? We think.

That we do well. To be angry. With the rebellious. And so. We prove ourselves. To be more like. Jonah. Than Jesus.

Remember back. When we talked about. The sign of Jonah. That was back in. I believe. The first Sunday. We talked about. The sign of Jonah. Jesus actually.

Referenced Jonah. The difference. We believe that Jonah. Was a forerunner of Jesus. But it was kind of. A contrast. Jesus spent. Three days.

[26 : 57] After his. Crucifixion. In the belly of the earth. Jonah spent. Three days. In the belly of the whale. We see this. Referenced in Matthew. Jesus himself. References. As Jonah. But you see.

A stark contrast. There. That even though. There were similarities. In the story. Jesus was completely. Different. In his responses. In his heart. In his goals.

Than Jonah. So we. Our goal. Is more. To be like Jesus. Than to do anything. That Jonah did. But we understand. That when we show.

The kind of anger. That Jonah showed. Who was he angry at? Was he angry. At the people of God? Was he angry. At the lost? He was angry.

At the rebellious. Y'all. If we ever. Find ourselves. In a place. Where we are angry. With lost people. We can be assured. That we are behaving.

[27 : 50] More like Jonah. Than we are. Like Jesus. When was the time. That we see Jesus. Showing. Exhibiting. His anger.

In the New Testament. Anybody know? What's that? In the temple. Right? When the religious people. Were cheating people.

In the temple. When they had turned it. Into this market. So to speak. And they were. Selling things. Dishonestly. And charging people. Exorbitant prices. To gain money.

For themselves. And go ahead. Get ahead. That's what Jesus. Was angry at. It was religious people. Capitalizing on. Faith in God.

To use it. For their own. Devices. To hurt. And harm. Other people. In the name. Of God. That's what got him angry. It wasn't.

[28 : 45] The horrible. Wicked. Pagan. Heathen. Culture. Surrounding them. What did that do. To Jesus. When he looked. At the wickedness.

Of the world. Around him. Anybody know? What did Jesus. What was his response? Gave his life. It was sacrifice. Right? If you read.

Throughout the New Testament. There's a. There's a common theme there. His response. Was sorrow. It was compassion. It hurt him. The very people.

That put him on the cross. That drove in the spear. That drove in the nails. That drove in the crown of thorns. He loved them. He never.

Responded. In anger. When we respond. To the lost world. Around us. In anger. Especially when we do it publicly. We are changing.

[29 : 38] The message. Of Jesus. To those people. And y'all. We don't get that many chances. To communicate. Who Jesus is. To the lost world. Around us. Let it not be said.

Of the church. In Henrietta. Texas. That we are. Exhibiting. To the lost world. That we're showing them. That Jesus. Is angry. With them. Because he's not. Jesus.

Loves them. Jesus. Hates the sin. He hates the devil. He hates Lucifer. But when. We get to the point.

Of transferring. That hatred. Onto. People. That Jesus. Gave his life for. Boy. We're behaving. Like somebody else. We're not behaving. Like Jesus.

Jesus. Sacrificed it all. Jesus. Gave it all. For them. He communicated. His love. In. The most powerful. Way. He ever could.

[30 : 34] To those. Wicked. People. Let's personalize that. To. Us. Wicked. People. He died. For us. Too.

And just. Because. You. Are not out there. Committing. The same. Sins. That gets you. So angry. In others. Doesn't mean. That your sins.

That you've committed. And my sins. That I've committed. Don't condemn us. To the same hell. Didn't also. Put Jesus. On the cross. Ourselves.

There is no room. For us. To point the finger. At somebody else. That is without Christ. And say. Those people. Those people. Are too far gone.

Nothing. Is too hard. For God. There was a whole city. Of people. That were too far gone. There's a whole city. Of people. That were committing. Things.

[31 : 30] That nobody. In the United States. Of America. Is committing. On the same scale. You can look at. How lost we are. As a country. And we don't come close.

To what Nineveh was. And God. Saved them all. He used his prophet. To go and preach. The reality. That their sin.

Was destroying them. That their sin. Would bring God's destruction. Upon them. But he wanted them. To repent. He wanted them to turn. And they did. And he saved them.

Would you be okay. If God saved. The politicians. That you can't stand. So much. Would you be okay. If God saved.

The abortion doctors. That are killing babies. Would you be okay. If God saved. The people. That you. Absolutely.

[32 : 25] Hate. And are so angry at. Because God loves. Those people too. And he wants to save them. And we are supposed to pray. For their salvation.

We're supposed to pray. For them to turn. And then we are supposed. To conduct ourselves. In a way. That communicates. The gospel. And not anger. God will judge.

This world. The end. Of this world. Will come. You can read about it. In Revelation. But during the time. That we have. God has us.

On this earth. To show. That he. Wants to save. It's not all about. Destruction. With God. It's about salvation. Of those.

Who will turn. So. Do God's changes. Upset you. And is it right. To be angry. About what God. Wants to do.

[33 : 23] Now. Let's don't just take. Charles Spurgeon's word for it. Let's look at the scriptures. Ephesians chapter 4. We'll be done in just a moment. Ephesians chapter 4. In verse 26. Don't sin. By letting anger.

Control you. Y'all. You want to see people sinning. By letting anger. Control them. Log on to Twitter. Or X. Whatever it's called now. Log on. To Facebook. Jump on the internet.

In. Social media platforms. And chat rooms. And. Look up. A political discussion. And you'll see people sinning. By letting anger. Control them. Right. Sometimes.

We can personalize that. And say. We've. We've done things like that. Now. If that's not enough for you. Log on to a group of pastors. Arguing about theological. Perspectives on things. It's crazy.

Okay. Verse 27. Anger gives a foothold. To the devil. You want to keep the devil. Out of your life. And stop his influence. Over you.

[34 : 17] Abhor. Anger. Shun. Anger. Resist. By the power of God. Anger. From controlling you. And then you won't give. That foothold. To the devil. In your life. Verse 30.

Verse 31. Get rid of all bitterness. Rage. Anger. And harsh words. That should never be. How we conduct ourselves.

With other people. Especially those. Who are without Christ. It should be the exact. Opposite of that. Well what if they mock us? What if they make fun of us?

What if they speak against us? What if they try to harm us? I swear. Christians are the only oppressed people group in the world. Where it's okay to oppress them. And you're surprised by that? Jesus told us that was going to happen.

He told us that's how it was. That's how it would be. You name the name of Christ. The world is coming against you. But you're never going to win them.

[35 : 17] By responding in kind. You're never going to win them. By denouncing them. You're going to win them. By speaking the truth.

In love. You don't speak lies. You don't tell them that what they're doing is okay. But you speak the truth. In love. As Jesus did. So you get rid of that bitterness.

That rage. That anger. Those harsh words. And you never let anger. Control you. Verse 5. Back in Jonah 4. Verse 5.

Back in Jonah 4. Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city. Made a shelter to sit under. As he waited to see. What would happen to the city. And just a little brief note I had on this. That we mentioned before. It's crazy that still.

To this moment. Jonah has still not gone back. And reported to his nation. This life-changing news. Of what had happened. With their most feared enemy. Nineveh.

[36 : 17] Nineveh. The capital of Assyria. So he's still. It's all about him. He's waiting to hope. Just hoping against hope. That maybe God will change his mind. And choose to destroy.

Now verse 6. Here we go. The Lord planted the leafy plant. And it spread its leaves. It gave Jonah shade from the hot sun. God provided for Jonah. Even though Jonah had this negative.

Wrong spirit. You ever been in that boat? I have. Where God provided for me. Even though I wasn't all the way right with him. There were some things I was holding on to in my life. But God still provided for me.

That's how faithful God is to us. That's how loving and compassionate and tender he is. Toward us. That even when we are resisting him. In certain areas of our life. He still goes ahead and blesses us.

Now are we ever going to experience his full blessings? Are we going to somehow miss out on the consequences of our sin? No. No. Not until we open up our heart to God and say you got it.

[37 : 17] Whatever you want. Convict me. Change me. Transform me. We never see Jonah do that. But God provided this shade for him anyway. But the lesson is coming isn't it?

The lesson is coming. In verse 7 through verse 8. We see this contrast. Between Jonah experiencing this slight discomfort. And then if you're reminded of the prophet Job.

Did Job lose a little bit or a lot? More of y'all know the answer to that question than answer me. Okay. There you go. A little bit or a lot? Job lost a lot y'all.

He lost everything. He lost his family. His wife. His kids. He lost his possessions. He was a wealthy man. God had given him much. And then God took it away. What was Job's response to Jehovah God after he had lost all of this?

What did he say? Anybody remember? Still I will trust in God. The Lord gives. The Lord takes away.

[38 : 22] Blessed be the name of the Lord. What a difference in the response of Job losing much and Jonah losing a little.

Jonah said I can't handle it. I can't take it. God just kill me now. If you're not going to give me shade. Just kill me. I mean how dramatic is this guy right?

But we're never like that are we? You and I. We never overreact a little bit to something wrong that happens in our life. And this is just the worst. Why does this always happen to me? Of course this is what's happening.

Right? Of course it's me. Of course it has to happen to me. Yeah you're the only one with bad things happening to you. But what a contrast in Job's response to Jehovah pulling back everything that he had given to him.

And of course then God restored to him abundantly more than he had ever had before. But the difference was. He said God you give me things.

[39 : 26] You take things away. I will still bless your name. Jonah completely different. So now verses 9.

Down through the end of the chapter. Teach us this question. What matters to us more than the salvation of those who are without Christ?

God says to Jonah again. Is it right for you to be angry about this? The plant dying? You're angry that I saved the people and didn't destroy them. Now you're angry that the plant died.

You didn't do anything to get it there. This wasn't the work of your hands. This was me. I can give and take away whenever I want. But you're more angry about the plant than you are about the death and destruction of 120,000 people in this city.

So what matters more to us than the salvation of those who are without Christ? How do we know the answer to that question? Here's how we know the answer to that question.

[40 : 31] We get more worked up about blank than we do about the fact that people are lost and dying and going to hell without God around us.

On our street, in our neighborhood, within a very small diameter of this church, people are lost without God and dying and going straight to hell to pay the eternal punishment for their sins.

And we get more worked up about whatever this is than we ever do about people dying without Christ. That's how we know that we've got it backwards.

We get more passionate about this over here. We feel this uncontrollable urge to go online and vent than we ever do about this over here. I'm under conviction about this.

I pray that some of you are as well. And I pray that God changes how we think. Romans chapter 12. God needs to change how we think about him and about the lost around us.

[41 : 41] In conclusion, I thank God that he's patient with us. 2 Peter chapter 3 and verse 9. The Lord is patient with you.

Not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. Those bad people, those people on the other side of the tracks, those people that seem to be completely opposed to everything we stand for, God wants them to come to repentance.

But you know what the interesting thing is? Us hard-hearted Christians, he wants us to come to repentance too. He wants us to repent of our hard hearts, repent of our misplaced priorities, repent of our misplaced anger, and turn back to his will, turn back to his way.

Tim Keller said it this way. A pastor who just died a year or so ago up in New York City said, as long as serving God fit into Jonah's goals for Israel, he was fine with God.

As soon as he had to choose between the true God and the God he actually worshiped, he turned on the true God in anger. You ever been there?

[43 : 02] As long as God's plans line up with my plans, everything's okay. But the minute that I have to choose between what I want and what God wants, I turn on God in anger.

As long as what's happening at the church lines up with how I think it ought to be, everything's alright. But the minute God wants to do something outside my comfort zone, oh boy, I don't like that.

The minute that God wants to do something in my family that I'm not prepared for, I'm going to resist. I'm going to get mad. I'm going to get angry. And then everyone around me is going to feel the effects of that.

Y'all, I pray that God would convict us, that he would change us from the inside out to not be angry at those without Christ, but to give everything we have to give, to show them the truth in love.

So the takeaway this morning is choose God's priorities over mine. And that's the question, are your priorities lined up with God's priorities?

[44 : 20] Are my priorities lined up with God's priorities? Would you bow with me now? God, you've taught us much in this study of Jonah. And I think this last sermon in this series, this last opportunity to teach and this last lesson that we take away from Jonah 4.

We don't know what happened ultimately. We don't know exactly if Jonah ever finally repented and gave his heart to you. There's some people, historians and theologians, who believe at some point he did turn back and get his heart in line with yours.

But God, regardless of that, allow this lesson to penetrate us deeply, to pierce our hearts and show us where we have been wrong. We get so mad so quickly, and that's in us.

That anger is there. We're never going to totally conquer that anger. It's always going to be a struggle while we're wrapped in this sinful flesh. But God, your spirit is stronger. We can win those battles.

By your victory, by your spirit, claiming the victory that you've already won for us. We sang it this morning. We're fighting a battle that you've already won. We can overcome.

[45 : 39] I pray that you would start to create a real change in how we think and how we see the world. It's not all about political victories.

It's not all about who's president or what Hollywood's doing or what they're saying on the media. God, this lost world is always going to be taking the wrong path.

They're always going to be going down the wrong way. But God, instead of fighting back against that and spending our energies trying to conquer sin through human efforts, I pray that we would conquer sin through the victory that your death and your resurrection and the gospel message has already won, that that would be our message to the world.

This lost world can be changed, can be forgiven by the power of the gospel. Let that be the first thing off our lips.

The first thing from our fingers as we type on a keyboard. Lord, let it be prayer. Let it be the power of the life-changing message of Jesus.

[46 : 54] God, if there's somebody here this morning who doesn't know you, I pray that they would be convicted to turn from their sin just like all those people in Nineveh did. Just like so many in this room have done.

Turn to Jesus. Say, I know I've done wrong. I know I'm a sinner. I know Jesus died for my sin. I know he rose from the dead. And I know that he wants to forgive me. And I'm deciding to give my life to Jesus today.

We ask all this in Jesus' name. Church, if that's you, that last thing I prayed there, if that's you and you say, I'd like to give my life to Jesus today before I leave this place, would you slip your hand up right now and I'll pray for you?

Anybody? Thank you. Let me ask the rest of you this question. Is God working with you on something right now? Is he convicting you of maybe an area in your life that you've given place to anger?

Maybe the devil's gotten a foothold in your life in this way. And through the story of Jonah and God's word, you've seen that anger is often, usually, the wrong reaction.

[47 : 59] Say, I'm not able to say I've conquered it all at this moment, but I'm going to ask for God's help in changing my heart on anger. Would you slip your hand up and I'll pray for you? Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. God, please work on their behalf. There's so many rooms, hands raised around this room, and God, you know exactly what's been getting under their skin. You know what triggers them.

You know what pushes them too far. God, your spirit is stronger than our flesh. your spirit lives inside us and it can change us.

God, let the school, let the neighborhoods, let the workplaces, let the families, the relationships reflect the change that you can work in our lives.

Let us not be angry and sin. let us err on the side of showing your nature, your love, your compassion, your forgiveness, and speak the truth to a lost world that needs to hear it in the loving way that you did.

[49 : 10] It's in Jesus' name we ask these things. Amen. Amen. Amen.