

EIGHT: What does it mean to follow God?

The last section of Jonah exposes a heart problem both in the prophet and in us. We worship created things over the Creator, and, like young children, become angry when God graciously takes them from us. God patiently points out our sins, not to anger us, but because he is kind and full of grace. He puts us in difficult situations so that we might see and have his heart.

READ: Jonah 4:5-11

“God in patient love is still harnessing the forces of nature for the sole purpose of getting at the heart of one single man.”

1) God sent a fish for Jonah in Chapter One and now sends a worm. Do you believe God is in sovereign control of every living thing? What is your view of the cosmos?

2) God is in control and he is a God of grace. Even so, we frequently choose our own desires over his. Are you like Jonah? Are you more concerned with your own kingdom and comfort than God’s kingdom?

“Idolatry is not just the desire for evil things; idolatry is about being ruled by good things. A desire for even a good thing becomes a bad thing when it becomes a ruling thing.”

3) What is it that makes a good day so good for you? What is it that makes a bad day so bad? What does that tell you about your values and desires?

4) How are your values different than God's? Is there anything you worship before God? Be specific.

"As you recognize how screwed up your values are, you don't have to run from him; you can run to him."

5) Do you have the heart of God? Where do you need to grow? In what areas of your life are you still running from God?

STREET LEVEL TRUTH: God is patient, kind, and gentle with us. He shows grace to sinners by forgiving us and by pointing out the areas in our lives where we still run from him to worship idols.

PRAAYER: God, thank you for Jonah. Thank you for using him to expose my own sin and waywardness. I confess that I still run from you and become angry when you smash my idols. I pray that I may turn to your grace so that I might love what you love, value what you value, and forgive as you forgive. In Jesus' name, amen.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.