



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Amos, Jonah, Hosea, Micah Sermon Series
Supports Session 6: No Compassion
Sermon Title: "Anger Danger" (James 1:19-20)

Connection to Jonah 4:1-11

Newly restored from being swallowed by the great fish, Jonah lost his way again in his anger and lack of compassion for a people he viewed as an enemy.

Introduction/Opening

Most of us have a story in our past when we lost our temper. We may not be proud of that moment and may have deep regrets about what it was that triggered our response. The more challenging part of that past temper moment may be what it revealed about our character. Jonah sat angrily wanting an explanation from God for His reasoning in showing compassion to an entire city. We learn more about Jonah's character through the source of his anger.

Outline

1. Mad at God

- a. It's laughable when we consider it. We accept our heavenly Father as Creator and Sustainer. He is righteously involved in every detail of our lives. He knows the number of hairs on our heads, and not a bird falls from the sky without His attention (Matt. 10:29ff.). He loves all the world and care for us like one of His children. And we get mad at Him for being so.
- b. Jonah was "furious" with God (Jonah 4:1) that grace would be offered to a people like those living in Nineveh. Jonah was so angry that he settled outside of Nineveh with a good view of the city (4:5) and waited for God to punish the residents with some catastrophe. Adding to Jonah's anger was the loss of his creature comforts. God provided a special plant that shaded Jonah. The plant died at God's hand by a worm (4:7). The Lord added a scorching wind (4:8). Jonah grew self-destructive as his anger grew and wanted to die (4:8).
- c. Amazingly, God was patient with Jonah. He questioned and reasoned with Jonah about Nineveh (4:10). We can conclude that God will be patient with us. We are boiling or simmering, the Lord is not. He is filled with compassion and love despite our foul state of mind.

2. Lost Perspective

- a. Jonah was ready for God to judge, not spare Nineveh (4:1-2,9). His feelings are based on the knowledge of their cruelty and idolatry (3:8,10). He had lost God's perspective.

- b. Angry with an inhospitable village of Samaritans, James and John were ready to call down fire from heaven on the hostile settlement (Luke 9:54). Jesus rebuked James and John and continued on His pilgrimage. Jesus kept God's perspective.
- c. We have anger, and our solution is simple. Rid the earth of them. Like Jonah and the sons of Zebedee we would be happy to have them scorched and removed.
- d. Thankfully God is still patiently bearing with us, just as He did with Jonah and sons of Zebedee. He rebukes us and patiently continues on His mission of love and redemption.

3. Gaining Perspective

- a. Some may try to excuse their anger by referring to Jesus's cleansing of the temple with a whip of ropes while turning over tables of merchandise (John 2:13-19; Matt. 21:12). They would like to justify their anger by comparing themselves with Jesus. We aren't Jesus, and expressing our unrighteous anger is damaging, not helpful.
- b. Rather than letting those thoughts simmer, we need to confess our sin. Anger is sin, and we cannot cure our anger on our own. When we turn to Jesus and admit our seething thoughts are wrong and ask to be cleansed, we will be.
- c. There is no purpose in allowing the simmering to continue. If we are boiling underneath a polite veneer of smiles and laughter, sooner or later we will "cash in."
- d. The mission of Jesus, the redemption of His creation, should give us a new perspective when we encounter situations that anger us.

Conclusion

Years ago, my wife gave me some good advice. I planned on venting my feelings and my wife urged me not to. I recall her advice, "Just come home." Instead of instigating a confrontation, I walked home and remember a sense of peace as I did so. I had refrained from anger and experienced a small victory. I have never regretted following her advice and since then several times, I have, "Just come home." Jesus is waiting to help us move beyond our anger, calling us to just come home so we can find His perspective and purposes.

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