

# 06 AN ANGRY PROPHET

KEY TEXT: JONAH 4:1-11

## CENTRAL truth

It's okay to feel anger when someone hurts us, but it's not okay to let that anger control us. God commands us to forgive (see Eph. 4:32), not just for the sake of the person who hurt us, but also for our sake. **We should celebrate the fact that God shows grace to everyone** and extend that same forgiveness to others.

## key question

**What does the way we think about, talk about, and treat our enemies reveal about our understanding of God? What does it reveal about our hearts?**

When people know God for who He is, He can receive the praise and recognition He deserves (see Is. 43:7,21,25). When we put our faith in Jesus, we should live with gratitude and show the world who He is and what He has done. People who understand this put God's purposes before their own and show others the same grace, mercy, and forgiveness He has shown them. However, people who think God exists to serve them tend to put their own purposes before God's and withhold grace, mercy, and forgiveness from others.

## keep in mind

It's easy for us to judge Jonah because his life and situation are so removed from ours. However, Jonah had a good reason to be angry at and scared of the Ninevites. It's likely that some of your students are in a similar place. Regardless of what you may think about their situation, their pain is real and it's not your job to tell them how to feel. Focus instead on the fact that forgiveness is a unique opportunity to show the world who God is. Make sure your students know what forgiveness actually is.

Contrary to popular belief and teaching, forgiveness isn't feeling "okay" with someone. To forgive is to cancel a debt, and to decide that the person who wronged us doesn't owe us anything else. Students don't have to let things go back the way they were to forgive someone. They are allowed to let someone's past behavior inform their own future decisions, regardless of what the person who hurt them might have to say.

## application

**How can we make sure we don't miss out on the joy of serving God and the satisfaction of watching Him work in and through us?**

## the win

**FOR THE STUDENT:** Students should understand that they need God's grace and forgiveness as much as anyone else. Our Holding grudges hurts God's reputation, and He wants to help us forgive others.

**FOR THE LEADER:** Present forgiveness as a privilege that leads to personal freedom and joy. Avoid trivializing what students have experienced or shaming anyone who may be having a hard time forgiving someone.

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