

We Have a Problem (Jonah 4; p 775)

I. God's Problem (v2; Exod 34:6-7)

- **He is gracious:** grace is getting what we don't deserve
- **He is merciful:** mercy is not getting what we do deserve
- **He is slow to anger**
- **He abounds in steadfast love [hesed]**
- **He relents from disaster**

II. "Their" Problem

- **Is not God** (He is mercifully gracious & has made a way to relent from His fierce anger at sin)
- **Is their spiritual blindness** (they don't "know their right hand from their left" (11) and so are "evil" (1:2; 3:8) and "violent" (3:10))
- **Is our spiritual blinders—which make us part of the problem not solution**

III. Our Problem

- **We assume previous growth, or knowledge, equals current spiritual maturity (2:8-9)**
- **We confuse external obedience for heart-change (3:3; 4:1)**
- **We deceive ourselves that we are deserving of grace, but some aren't (1-2, 5)**
- **We want God to use cotton wool with us but lightning bolts on others (5)**
- **We treat outsiders as the enemy (2, 5)**
- **We easily make church all about us rather than about God and others (1-3, 6)**

*God extends undeserved grace to sinners
and calls us to share that good news lovingly*

What does that mean for you personally? For us as a church?

Hearing & Doing Questions

1. What reason does Jonah give for his anger with God? What do you think is the real reason?

2. Read Jonah 4:2 and Ex 34:6. How do you reconcile God's characteristics expressed there with His command to "preach against" the city of Nineveh (1:2) and His "fierce anger" towards the city (3:9) which was going to be "overthrown" (3:4) in forty days?

3. What do you think is going on with Jonah when 3x he expresses he wishes he were dead (4:3,8,9)?

4. Is there any significance that the only mention of happiness in the book is about Jonah's emotions toward a vine which lives only a day? How do we respond similarly?

5. Ever been angry at God? Why? How did you resolve/deal with your anger?

6. Like Jonah, do people today (including us) ever have a sense of entitlement when it comes to our relationship with God? What does that look like and what is the cure?

7. God confronts Jonah with the stark reality that he is more concerned about a day-old piece of vegetable matter than human beings created in the image of God whose eternal destiny hangs in the balance. As you take stock of your preoccupations, attitudes, relationships and use of time and money, what is God calling you to repent of and do?