



Sunday, August 9, 2020
Pastor Don Denyes

Intro to Jonah 4:1-11

A recent survey conducted by the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University concluded that a substantial minority of Americans who describe themselves as evangelical Christians (41%) also accepted a “works-oriented” means to God’s acceptance. That means that people who attend (or are even members) of churches that affirm salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ alone still believe in a false gospel. Just to be clear: there is *nothing* that we can do to merit God’s favor or the *gift* of salvation.

Ultimately, it would seem, the issue comes down to glory. If we say that salvation is entirely a gift from God, from first to last, then He alone receives glory for our salvation. If, however, we think that we played some sort of role—either through abstaining from the “major sins” or by doing some other slate of good works—then we ought to receive some of the credit, or glory, for our salvation. So, while it is still true that we all have an inner-legalist that refuses to die, still wanting to earn God’s favor (and wanting others to earn it as well), even more profoundly, we have an inner-glory-seeker, that longs to be credited with some measure of righteousness of our own (Rom. 10:3)

Context

We have now reached the climactic moment of the Book of Jonah. This is the chapter that makes sense of the rest of the book. We were left wondering in chapter 1, why did Jonah run away when God told him to go to Nineveh? The answer is not that he was afraid of them or anything like that. The answer is that Jonah knew that by God sending him to Nineveh, He planned to show mercy to them. Jonah did not like that. Jonah, then, proves to be about God’s pursuing kindness, not only to the people of Nineveh, but to His own prophets who stray from the gospel as well.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Jonah 4:1-11

“The Kindness of God”

Jonah Complains in Anger

- Anger based on:
 - Hatred
 - Pride
 - Fear

- Results of his anger:
 - Rebellion (1-2)
 - Depression (3)
 - Isolation (5)

God Corrects in Love

- With two searching questions:
 - Should you be angry? (4, 9)
 - Should I not be compassionate? (11)

The book ends with a question.

We must write the last paragraph with our own lives.

Discuss

- 1) When was a time that you were angry about something you knew you shouldn't be angry about? How did you deal with that?

- 2) Has there ever been a time when you were happy about something happening to someone else that God would not be happy about? What was that like?

- 3) Pastor Don pointed out that the God who appointed the plant to shade Jonah from the sun is the same God who appointed the worm to eat the plant and caused Jonah to suffer so that he might learn more about God's character. When you think about the mercy of God, which image comes more readily to mind: the plant or the worm?

- 4) If you are honest, are there people in your life that you think are unworthy of the grace of the gospel? Why might we be tempted to think that of someone?

- 5) Pastor Don also noted that Jesus set aside His own reputation when He died like a criminal so that we might be saved. How can we encourage one another to lay aside our own reputations for the sake of Christ and the mission He has called us to?