

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE / OCTOBER 29

TO APPLY—NOT REHASH—THE SERMON

Read

Read Jonah 4 and make some observations about the passage.

Sermon Recap

Review the sermon with your group, highlighting the following:

- God’s message of mercy, as presented in Jonah, is to turn enemies into family.
- When we define our lives by religion and performance, we detest failure—and therefore, we have no margin for mercy.
- There is a deep irony in an “unmerciful Christian,” because to be a Christian means we have received mercy. And those who have received mercy become merciful.
- Often we interact with God as if we are “the only child,” but the reality is, God so loved *the world*. His mercy is for all.

Group Discussion

1. This week’s message majored on the themes of mercy and forgiveness. How have you seen forgiveness done poorly?
How have you seen it done well?
2. Who do you know who truly exemplifies mercy? How can you follow their example?
3. The book of Jonah ends with a question toward Jonah—and, ultimately, toward all of us: “Will you be upset at God’s mercy toward ‘bad people?’” What is your answer?
4. Now that we’re through the book of Jonah, how would you summarize the message of the book? How does this differ from your thoughts about the story beforehand?

WEEKLY RESPONSE QUESTIONS

- Reflect:** What are the biggest barriers in your life to being a person of mercy? How might you overcome them?
- Respond:** What is God’s Spirit prompting you to do in light of this week’s discussion? Be specific—even if it’s a small thing!
- Reach:** Is there someone in your life you need to show mercy to this week? Consider reaching out to them to start the conversation.

PRAYER

- Pray for God to transform your heart, so that his spirit of mercy would be true in your spirit as well.
- Pray for discernment and courage—**discernment** to know in which relationships you should pursue reconciliation (and which you need to let go), as well as **courage** to take steps of reconciliation, if God leads you to it.