

Connecting Church and Home

Quarter 2, Week 9 :: **God's Heart for All Peoples**

Treasure Story: Jonah

Despite the fact that we all think we are basically good people, deep down we know we are not. We all have some person or group that we dislike and wish we never had to be around. Even though we know that the Bible teaches that we are to show mercy and kindness to all people, we struggle to obey when it comes to certain individuals. We are certainly not alone in our sin. In our Treasure Story for today, Jonah wrestled with God over his own inability to show compassion. Through Jonah's struggle, we learn much about sin but also of God's plan to deal with sin through the death of His own Son.

Connect

"You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you."

– John Bunyan

Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh or to preach repentance to its inhabitants. Yet through his disobedience and then remorse-filled obedience, we see God patiently teaching him that compassion is the prerogative of the Almighty. God chose to show mercy on Nineveh because He wanted to. He also chose to show mercy to all nations when He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for wicked sinners. Because of God's compassion on sinners, we have opened to us the door of grace and mercy that leads to eternal life with Him. Because of His compassion on us, we should show compassion on others. Here are a few suggestions for how you and your family can show compassion to those around you:

- **Making an Enemy a Friend:** Talk with your children and find out if there is someone in their class whom they struggle to like or who is sort of an outsider. Plan a time with your family when you can invite that child and his family into your home for a meal or for dessert. Spend time showing them kindness and see how God changes your child's disposition toward that student.
- **Praying for the Wicked:** Pick someone that everyone in your family will recognize as a "wicked" person. It could be a local criminal, a dictator, or just a plain mean person. Spend time praying for that person as a family. Pray that God will soften this person's heart to the Gospel so that he or she will trust in Christ.

My Mission As Parent

- Is it hard for you to have compassion on certain people? Does your lack of compassion sometimes send the wrong signals to your children about how they should think and act?
- Are there people that the Lord has laid on your heart to show compassion to that you are avoiding?
- Think about how much grace and mercy has been shown to you so that you are energized to show compassion on your children and help them show compassion on others.

Prayer Points

- Ask the Lord to help you and your children admit that it's hard to show compassion on some people.
- Pray that the Lord will help you see the amount of compassion that He has shown you so that you will in turn show that compassion on others.
- Praise the Lord for giving us the story of Jonah to teach us about His mercy and to help us better understand the sacrifice that Jesus made on our behalf.