



What In The World

What in the world will it take to make me change?

Jonah 4:1-11 – The story of racism, a cold heart, and the relentless love of God.

Jonah's story is all about the relentless love of God in spite of the cold heart of his rebellious prophet. We hope Jonah's story has a happy ending. But honestly, we don't know. Just like the parable of the Prodigal Son, we are left wondering. Evidently, God intended it that way. Our text today is the climax of the entire narrative. The racism that prompted Jonah to head to Tarshish wasn't cured by his time in the fish! Sadly, some of the heart condition that plagued Jonah continues to linger in God's people.

Read Jonah 4:1-11

- 1) Why was Jonah filled with such hatred for the Ninevites?
- 2) How is that contrasted with God's graciousness and mercy?
- 3) How is God's sovereignty portrayed throughout the Jonah narrative?
- 4) Compare Jonah's reaction of God's mercy towards the Ninevites with the reaction of the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:25-32). How are their reactions similar?

Application

- 1) Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:18-20). How does racism and hatred prevent the church from fulfilling the great commission?
- 2) Are there particular kinds of people that we have trouble loving? Why?
- 3) How might we cultivate hearts of compassion like God's, rather than the cold-heartedness of Jonah?
- 4) God appointed a plant to be a blessing to Jonah. Are there blessings in our lives that if they were taken away would make us "angry enough to die?"
- 5) What keeps you from being obedient to "making disciples of all nations" today?

Spend some time in prayer asking God to uncover any hidden sins that cause us to have cold-hearts or racism towards any people.