

Crazy Anger

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 1st, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.

~Jonah 4:2 (NASB)

1) Miraculous Responses To God's Grace

- A) Jonah's message from God to Nineveh of "destruction in forty days" produced a faithful response of belief in God and actions of repentance from the people (Jonah 3:4-9).
- B) Like the sailors earlier in the story (1:16), the people of Nineveh responded to God and received His grace (cf. Jeremiah 18:7-8). Jonah must have been bursting with joy at seeing God's message miraculously embraced!
- C) Of course, this was not Jonah's response to God's grace! Rather, Jonah is furious (Jonah 4:1). Jonah finds God's actions to be completely the opposite of what Jonah desired! Jonah despises God's grace to the Ninevites!

- D) Jonah wanted God to act in ways which were consistent with Jonah's theological and moral convictions! When God didn't act as Jonah expected, Jonah was consumed with feeling victimized and overwhelming anger at this "evil."
- E) Jonah's convictions drive him to a deeply frustrated prayer which reveals his true heart (4:2). Despite Jonah's experiences of God's grace, he fled from God because he felt the Ninevites were not deserving of God's grace. God's grace was good for Jonah, but not for Nineveh!
- F) Extraordinarily, Jonah is suicidal in the face of God's lavish grace for Nineveh (4:3), even pleading with God to take his life! God's response challenges Jonah to get a grip (4:4)!

2) The Dangerous Legacy Of Jonah

- A) God's grace is meant to be lavishly given away! When a follower of Jesus Christ won't live as a grace-giver, they always become dangerously possessive of God, trading authentic biblical living for lifeless traditions.
- B) When a person has received God's grace through Jesus Christ, but will not live as a grace-giver, they are living in a sinful lifestyle which should bring into question their salvation. If you've got grace, it was meant to be given!
- C) When a follower of Jesus Christ isn't living as a grace-giver, they won't evangelize. They will have a million excuses, but the bottom line is simple: When God's grace is not given away, it stagnates a person into paralyzation.
- D) When a follower of Jesus Christ isn't living as a grace-giver, they will fill their lives with spiritual activity while resisting those things which require dependence on God and others (e.g. prayer, evangelism, intimacy/relationships).