

Series: Objection Over-Ruled

DOEST THOU WELL TO BE ANGRY

JONAH 4:1-5

Text: Jonah 4:4

Jonah 4:4

⁴ *Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?*

Introduction:

God had just turned away His anger from a city of more than 60,000 people, because His prophet, who had ran from God's call the first time, had repented and went the second time. But was Jonah happy that the city had repented and turned to God?

No!

Jonah 4:1

¹ *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and **he was very angry**.*

This chapter then is filled with unhappiness. Jonah is unhappy with God.

Jonah here is cold, very cold spiritually. His reaction then shows the condition of his heart at the time.

The Scripture speaks much of anger. There is a healthy anger and unhealthy anger. A healthy anger is one that is angered over the prevalence of sin and wickedness in our world today.

But there is also an unhealthy anger. This is anger without cause. This is what we see in Jonah.

Note what God asks Jonah:

Jonah 4:4

⁴ *Then said the LORD, **Doest thou well to be angry?***

Let's answer this question by considering four facets of Jonah's displeasure.

1. THE SURPRISE AT JONAH'S DISPLEASURE

Jonah 4:1

¹ *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.*

A. The Amazement

We can't help but be surprised that Jonah would become angry at the repentance of Nineveh.

We take it for granted that the world and the devil will be unhappy and displeased over revival. But for God-fearing, Bible-believing, Church-going people to be

upset over revival that would be a puzzle! But what is more surprising for us to realize is that this attitude is not as uncommon as we might think.

Quote:

G. Campbell Morgan said, "O brethren, how much of the attitude of Jonah is among us."

B. The Attitude

We may think and say we want revival and spiritual growth and blessing; but all it takes for displeasure to rear its ugly head is for the preacher to go an extra few minutes on his sermon or for an invitation to last a few more verses than usual or for someone to ask us to give more money for the bus or building program or some other church ministry.

Illustration:

A lady once wrote to a denominational magazine of a fundamental Baptist Church group and complained to the editor that their Church had revival meetings scheduled during the time of a basketball tournament. She was displeased just like Jonah. The editor of the magazine invited the readers to write their response to the complaint of the lady.

The magazine then published a dozen letters. Of those twelve only one plainly opposed the complaint.

We simply do not expect this sort of attitude from God's people, but it is there and much more than we realize.

Note not only the “Surprise” but also:

2. THE SELFISHNESS IN JONAH’S DISPLEASURE

Jonah 4:2-3

² And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.

Note:

A. The Pettiness

The root cause of Jonah's displeasure is selfishness. Selfishness is sin!

Many Church members don't speak the words, but show forth the attitude. If they don't get their way they become puffed up, begin to be slack in their attendance, or else give up positions they hold in the Church! This pettiness is a sure sign of spiritual immaturity. Self is on the throne of the heart!

Note what the Lord said in Matthew:

Matthew 16:24

²⁴ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

If we are going to follow Christ, self must be put to death. We can either deny self or deny the Savior. The choice is ours!

Note not only the “Pettiness” but also:

B. The Prayer

This prayer of complaint by Jonah after God giving grace to Nineveh shows his displeasure with God in three ways:

Note his words of selfishness:

Jonah 4:2-3

² And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, **I** pray thee, O LORD, was not this **my** saying, when **I** was yet in **my** country? Therefore **I** fled before unto Tarshish: for **I** knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, take, **I** beseech thee, **my** life from **me**; for it is better for **me** to die than to live.

Ten times he references himself.

Selfish people are self-centered. When they open their mouth to speak or pray it is mostly about me, myself I, and mine. They seem to think that the world revolves around them!

If God does something that is not according to their plans then they are displeased with God. And if you find a person displeased with God, then you have found a selfish person!

Note not only his “Surprise” and “Selfishness” but also:

3. THE SLANDER RESULTING FROM JONAH’S DISPLEASURE

Jonah's anger over the repentance of Nineveh showed forth his sin of selfishness and it also slandered God. He slandered God in two ways:

A. He Blamed God

Jonah 4:2

² And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

To Jonah it was God's fault that he ran from God's face to Tarshish. God's grace caused Him to disobey! He knew God was gracious and forgiving and knew that his preaching would probably bring repentance on the Ninevites part, and this was displeasing to Jonah so he fled.

B. He Belittled God

When we blame God we also belittle God! In slandering God Jonah belittled a good point of God's character to make it seem a fault instead of a good point.

Close:

This spirit that we see on display in Jonah has not place in the heart or life in a true Christian.

May we never allow bitterness and anger cause us to blame and belittle God.