

### Taking it Home:

- READ and interpret Psalm 103:8-13; Psalm 145:8-9; Micah 7:18-19.
- Do you have prejudices, bias' or anger against a person nation or people group whom you believe does NOT deserve salvation? Understanding God's forgiveness of you and all your sin (Eph. 4:32), and understanding His Scriptures clearly about forgiving others (Matt. 6:14-15), what should you do with this information?
- Do you care more about God's created world, plants and animals, than you do about people? How does that compare with what Scripture says? How can you begin to move towards making an impact for the Kingdom of God in your realm of influence, and the world beyond? What steps must you take to shift your thinking to align with God's Word?

### Related Reading Resources:

- David Platt, *"Radical,"* 2010, *Multnomah Publishers*

### Growth Group Service Opportunity:

*Delivering Thanksgiving food boxes to needy people in our region...* We are partnering with the Salvation Army on Monday, November 21st to deliver 500 Food Boxes. We need around 100 people to volunteer to deliver 4 to 5 Boxes each. What a marvelous opportunity for our Growth Groups to be the hands and feet of Christ to those who are in need of grace, compassion and the love of Christ. Call Pastor Paul to sign up. Thank you!

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit [pastormatthew.net](http://pastormatthew.net) and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Jonah and the World Beyond  
"Should I Not Pity?"  
Jonah 4

Dr. Matthew R. St. John  
Bethel Church  
October 23, 2011

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## "Should I Not Pity?"

Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit [www.bethelfc.com](http://www.bethelfc.com).

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 23, 2011

Jonah 4

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**Quick Review:** Jonah, because of his rejection of the unbelieving Ninevites and distaste for their participation in salvation, was displeased with God's demonstration of mercy towards the Ninevites, thereby displaying the real reason for his original flight to Tarshish. From the very beginning, Jonah had clearly understood the gracious character of God. He had received mercy, but didn't want Nineveh to know God's mercy.

## My Story:

- Have you ever been at a place in your life when you were a little angry to see certain person get help who, in your opinion, shouldn't have been helped? Explain the circumstances. How did you feel about it?
- Look back at a time in your life when you were the recipient of grace and assistance, when in reality you know deep down in your heart you didn't deserve the grace or assistance, yet you were blessed by it. Has that experience changed your view about helping others that may not deserve assistance? In what way?
- This past Sunday we took a look at the final chapter of this fascinating book and character of Jonah. Was there a particular point, comment, or verse that caught your attention? Was there a particular theme in the book that challenged you? Discuss.

## Growing Deeper:

- READ Jonah 3:10 through 4:1. The Ninevite King repented of his sin, along with his countrymen and God relented on His severe judgment of them. Why do you suppose Jonah was angry that this unlikeable people group was NOT judged harshly by God, rather God showed compassion and grace toward them? Did Jonah have good reasons for being angry at God? Explain.
- Have you ever been the recipient of God's amazing grace, forgiveness, compassion and mercy? Why is it difficult for some people who've been the recipient of God's amazing grace to be angry when someone else whom they despise receives God's amazing grace? Is that fair? **READ and Interpret Matthew 6:14-15; Ephesians 4:32.**
- Pastor Matthew mentioned that Jonah would have known through other prophets of Israel that God was going to use the nation of Assyria to eventually punish the Northern Kingdom of Israel due to their unrepentant sin and abandonment of worshipping Yahweh. Thirty years after Jonah preached to Nineveh the Assyrians destroyed the nation of Israel. Place yourself in Jonah's shoes for a moment; would you want to preach to the enemies of America and watch God bless them even though you knew that one day those enemies would conquer America? Wrestle with this probing question and discuss your thoughts.
- Is there a person, or group of people that you believe do NOT deserve God's grace, compassion and mercy? Why? Explain your opinion.
- Pastor Matthew stated that "Jonah hated the Assyrians and he felt betrayed by God because God showed salvation to the enemies of Israel. This was calamity to Jonah that God would offer mercy and salvation to these evil people." READ the fascinating dialogue from God to Jonah about the plant in Jonah 4:5-11 and interpret. Discuss your interpretation.
- Why would Jonah care more for the life of a plant than that of a repentant people (Vv. 9-11)? Do you or someone you know have similar anger at God, like Jonah, for offering mercy, grace and salvation to people whom you dislike? Discuss. READ Matthew 6:25-30. From Jesus' own words, what does He say about who He cares more for, plant and animal life or people? Look up and interpret Gen. 1:26-27. Why did God make man His representative ruler over all creation (plant and animal life)? In your interpretation of these Scriptures, why does God care more about people than plants and animals?