

Series: Mission Unsinkable

Scripture and Background Information for November 07-13.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we continue our series, “*Unsinkable*.” With the series, we’ve looked at how God’s mission is unsinkable despite how His messengers may mess up, their disobedience cannot sink God’s mercy. Today we will focus on **Jonah 4** and talk about “*The Message*.”

Background for Jonah 4:

God called Jonah to preach to the Ninevites, but Jonah flew in the opposite direction. He went into a ship, was caught up in a massive storm, and realized he could not flee from God. He was thrown into the sea, was swallowed by a fish, and was at the bottom of his life. Although the situation seemed doomed, Jonah recognized the fish as his salvation. After three days, the fish spit Jonah on dry land, and Jonah followed God’s calling. He went into Nineveh and preached the message of God’s judgment to the people. The people realized their doom and repented, and God forgave them.

Our text deals with Jonah’s conversation with God after God forgave the Ninevites. Here, Jonah finally tells us why he never wanted to go to Nineveh in the first place. God is merciful, and Jonah did not want God to be merciful to the enemies of Israel.

Jonah has his argument with God and leaves the city to see if it might be destroyed. God starts pursuing Jonah again. He shows him His heart, His mission, and His mercy.

Questions to engage with the text:

1. As said earlier, the book of Jonah is built on contrasts. The prophet turns from God, while the pagan sailors turn to Him. Consider chapter 3 & 4, how does the writer contrast Jonah’s experience to the Ninevites’ experience?
2. How does chapter 4 use contrast to show God’s heart vs. Jonah’s heart? Consider the term “mercy.”
3. Rather than focusing on the prophet’s message, the book of Jonah focuses on the relationship between God and the prophet. When looking at Jonah’s anger at the rotten plant, why do you think God sent the worm and the hot wind to destroy the plant? What does Jonah’s anger reveal about him? What is Jonah’s problem? Whom does he care most about?
4. One of the barriers in Jonah’s life to participating in God’s mission is his own personal comfort. When you think about those barriers in your life, what immediately comes to mind? In what ways could you seek to overcome comfort and participate in God’s mission around you this week?

***Note:** Although Jonah experienced God’s mercy, he did not want the Ninevite’s to experience His mercy as well. Jonah saw the Ninevite’s sin as greater than his own. He compared himself to others, which made him blind to his failure. The blindness of our sin will always make us ruthless toward others.*