Sin: Self-Righteousness

Key Scriptures:
Jonah 2:7-4:11

Jonah 2:8 Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Luke 11:30, 32-33 [30] "For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. . . .[32] "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. [33] "No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light.

Key Point:
Self-righteousness is wanting God to treat me according to His grace while treating everyone else according to their sin.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What's something you used to be very opinionated about but have changed your mind on over time?

Reflect, Think, & Share: Read through the key scriptures and share any observations or questions with the group.

- Why do you think it is often easier to see other people's faults than our own?
- What stands out to you about Jonah's prayer from the belly of the fish?
- Why do you think Jonah wanted God's mercy for himself and his own people, but not for the Ninevites? Have you ever found yourself struggling to be happy when someone you didn't like received something good?
- What kinds of people or groups might Christians be tempted to look down on or distance themselves from today? What makes it difficult to show compassion to them?
- Loving our country, families, church or heritage can be good things. But when might those things become more important to us than God? How can we recognize when that happens?
- Evidently the forty days had already passed (3:10). Why then do you think Jonah still waited to see what would happen to the city (v. 5)?
- George Whitfield said: "There are two things you need to do to be a Christian: 1. You must repent of your sin. 2. You must repent of your righteousness." What do you think it means to repent of our righteousness?
- How does the Lord use the vine as an object lesson for Jonah (vv. 6–11)?
- Why do you think God ends the story of Jonah with a question rather than an answer? What does His question reveal about God's heart for people who are far from Him? How should that impact us?
- How does Jesus demonstrate the grace that Jonah struggled to show?
- What do you think about the following statement? "Anything that you add to Jesus Christ as a requirement for being happy will strangle you."

Start doing: Is there anyone from whom you are withholding God's message of grace because you think that person doesn't deserve it?

Prayer: Do you have any specific decisions or areas of life where you could use prayer from others? If you feel comfortable, share these issues with your study group so that they can pray with you and for you.

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