

The Smallness of Selfishness

Jonah 4



Big Idea: Selfishness makes life very small and unsatisfying.

Seven Symptoms of Selfishness:

1.) Judging **GOD** (v. 1-2)

- According to Jonah, His view was right and God's was wrong.
- He tries to judge God for being exactly who He said He is.
- *Do we trust God with outcomes we don't understand?*

2.) Despising **CHANGE** (v. 3-4)

- Jonah was quite willing to serve God as long as he was able to serve on his own terms.
- This same symptom of selfishness still plagues many churches today.
- *Are we all in for Christ, or are we only in so far as circumstances go our way?*

3.) **STUBBORN** Disobedience (v. 4)

- When we are miserable it is because we choose to be miserable.
- We will never get out of life's pits until we realize that we are there because we choose to be.

4.) **SPECTATOR** Faith (v. 5)

- Jonah sits back and waits to see what will happen to the city.
- There is an inherent selfishness in sitting back and watching church rather than getting involved and being the church.

5.) Cherishing **COMFORT** (v. 6)

- "...*exceedingly glad...*" – Literally, "rejoiced with great joy."

- In the midst of a magnificent and miraculous display of God's mercy, all Jonah could think about was shade for his head.
- Jonah loved personal comfort more than God's glory (Luke 9:57-58).
- If comfort is what we demand, Christ cannot be whom we serve.

6.) Obsessive **DRAMA** (v. 7-8)

- Jonah throws a big fit over a small thing.
 - Jonah is at the same moment completely unconcerned about perishing people, but furious about a perishing plant.
 - Selfish drama often forsakes opportunities of great joy.
- v. 8 – *"It is better for me to die than to live."*
 - Jonah's selfishness is so extreme that he would rather die than not get his way.
 - Every day, people all around us prove that they would rather die apart from God than give up their rebellion against Him.
- To the degree that we make a big fuss over minor inconveniences, we can find selfishness at work in us.

7.) Self **JUSTIFICATION** (v. 9)

- Not only was Jonah in opposition to God, but now he is defending his rebellion.
- Self-justification is the sign of a conscience seared by selfishness.
- What obvious sins do we find ourselves trying to defend?

The Outcome of Selfishness: A Small, Unsatisfying Life (v. 10-11)

- God is showing Jonah how **SMALL** his selfishness had made his life.
 - Whereas Jonah could have been rejoicing in God's eternal glories, his time was spent whining about trivial things.
 - By God's grace, Jonah is right in the middle of one of the most glorious and joyful scenes in all of Scripture.
 - Yet Jonah's selfishness made him utterly miserable.
- Selfishness makes life very small and unsatisfying.