

Begin with prayer:

To begin with, pray. Ask God to teach you about Himself from his word.

Picking up from where we left off:

Once more, God has commanded Jonah to go to the people of Nineveh and proclaim His message to them. Jonah obeys and the people turn to God in repentance and faith. God has mercy and relents from sending judgement upon them. In our second reading, the younger son has returned to his father in repentance and faith. The father welcomes his son with open arms and invites all to celebrate, for this son of his “was lost but now is found”. Both readings end with us contemplating on the reaction of Jonah and the older son to the mercy and compassion of God to others as well as to ourselves.

Read Jonah 4:1-11:**Questions:**

1. How did Jonah initially respond to the repentance of the Ninevites and to God’s mercy and compassion? (See verse 1)
2. What reason and response did Jonah give? (See verses 2 and 3) What does this tell you about Jonah?
3. What was God’s reply to Jonah? (See verse 4) Does Jonah have a right to be angry?
4. What does Jonah go and do and what does God do to remind Jonah of God’s mercy and compassion not only for him, but for all God’s people including the Ninevites? (See verses 5 to 11)

Note: The “vine” is used a number of times in the Bible as a description of the people of God in relationship with Him living under and in the covenant blessing of God. In the Old Testament e.g Ps 80 and Hosea 10:1 and in the New Testament e.g. John 15:1-17 & Matthew 20:1-16.

Read Luke 15:25-31:**Questions:**

5. Compare the response of the older son to his brother’s return to that of Jonah’s to the Ninevites. How are they alike?
6. What reasons did the older son give for his reaction?
7. Do you think the older son had a right to be angry with his father? Why?
8. What does the father remind the older son? (See verse 31) What does the father expect of the older son? (See verse 32) What else does the father remind the older son about the younger son? (See verse 32)
9. What do we learn about the father in the parable? I take it Jesus is referring to himself and to God the Father. What does this teach us about Him?

Contemplate:

I can’t think of anyone I would be angry with God about, if they became a Christian. But you might know of someone who has been. Why would they do that? Do you think they have a right to be angry? Why?

What does God expect of us to do when someone becomes a Christian?

Are there any other insights from these two passages that you’d like to share with your group?

Finish with prayer:

Think on what you have learnt about God and thank him in a prayer.

This Bible Study is such that it can be done on one’s own or with others in a Bible Study Group - even around the table at home. It’s designed to help you to remember the sermon, grow in your knowledge and love of God, appreciate your fellowship with other believers and to take your part in the life of the Church as followers of Jesus Christ.

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