



Talk summary:

Recognising God's voice and responding to his call [Jonah 4]

1. Jonah is angry with God because he forgives the people of Nineveh [Jonah 4: 1-4]
 - Jonah's seems to want God to punish the people of Nineveh rather than have mercy on them, even though he knows God's nature is to be gracious and compassionate. His response is not dissimilar to the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son. But the Lord replied "Have you have any right to be angry?"
2. Jonah builds shelter, sits and watches what will happen to the city. A vine appears but is eaten the next day by a worm [Jonah 4: 5-8]
 - Jonah is waiting to see what would happen to the city, he has even built a shelter for the show! He is very happy about the vine that gives shelter from the sun, but when it is destroyed by a worm he is so angry he wants to die. Jonah did not yet realise that God was for the whole world, not just for one group of people.
3. God teaches Jonah what the vine and the worm meant [Jonah 4: 9-11]
 - God speaks to Jonah through the vine and the worm. The vine was an unexpected gift from God. Jonah was enjoying the vine, but God sent the worm to destroy it, to highlight Jonah's selfish attitude. God used nature to get his message across to Jonah – first through a big fish, then a tiny worm.

Questions:

Conversation Starter

Have you ever heard or experienced God through nature? Is there someone or somewhere you would feel uncomfortable talking about God/faith? Can you relate in any way to Jonah's anger? Can you think of something that you relied on and that was taken away unexpectedly, but that made way for something else?

What might God be saying to me about this theme/situation?

What have I learnt that I want to hold on to?

How am I going to put it into practice?