

Run From Bitterness!
Run With Purpose, Pt. 7
Jonah 4:5-11
May 19, 2024

Jonah 1:1, The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: **2** “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.” **3** But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.

Jonah 4:1, But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. **2** He prayed to the LORD, “Isn’t this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. **3** Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.” **4** But the LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

Jonah 4:5, Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. **6** Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. **7** But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. **8** When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, “It would be better for me to die than to live.” **9** But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the

plant?” “It is,” he said. “And I’m so angry I wish I were dead.” **10** But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. **11** And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?”

Proverbs 14:10, Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy.

To Run From Bitterness, We Must Remember That...

1. Bitterness Grows in ISOLATION

Hebrews 12:14, Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. **15** See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

2. Bitterness Grows When I Celebrate God’s Mercy on Me, But NOT OTHERS

Lamentations 3:19, I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. **20** I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. **21** Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: **22** Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. **23** They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

3. Bitterness Grows When I Don't Learn Valuable LESSONS

Romans 5:8, *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

4. Bitterness Grows When I Care About Things More Than PEOPLE

Matthew 5:44, *But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

5. Bitterness Leaves You Short of Your FINISH LINE

Romans 12:1, *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

1 Corinthians 9:20, *To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.*