



# Shepherd's Path

## A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

### Discovery Digs Series, Lesson 12

**Lesson Title:** Jonah Preaches in Nineveh

**Take Home Point:** Share God's love with your enemies.

#### **Warm-Up:**

Do you know the origin of the word "represent"? It means, "to present again." In the event I am unable to present my information directly, I present it to someone else, and they "re-present" me to whomever I send them. I don't hold my representative responsible for the reaction of the recipient, although I want to be represented well and do not want to be misrepresented. If you think about it, we represent others and others represent us all the time in life. We have a representative form of government; we represent our employer or client; a lawyer may be our representative to the court. Most of all, as followers of Christ we represent him to the world. God chooses us to share his love with the world around him. He wants us to represent his character well by what we say and do. If we act like the rest of the world toward our enemies, how does that represent the one who said, "love your enemies"?

**Read:** Jonah 3 & 4; Matthew 5:44

#### **Observation (What happened?):**

How did the Ninevites respond to Jonah's preaching of God's coming judgment?

How did God respond to the Ninevites repentance? How did Jonah respond?

#### **Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

Why do you think the Ninevites believed God as Jonah preached?

What attitude did Jonah display even as he told the people of Nineveh about God?

#### **Insight:**

During his ministry, Jesus was asked, "*Who is my neighbor?*" (See Luke 10:25-37.) In response, he provided God's way of seeing who is a neighbor and how one is to be treated. But no one ever asked him, "*Who is my enemy?*" It probably seemed the answer was so obvious – an enemy is someone who hurts you in some way, or who wishes you ill, or who delights in damaging or destroying things you care about. But even without being asked, Jesus addressed how God wants enemies to be treated, as well. No doubt because he knew this was a problem for all humanity. As his representatives on earth, God does not want us to distinguish between our friends and enemies in sharing his love and grace. Jesus didn't limit those he came to save. In fact, while on the cross he asked his Father to forgive those who condemned him to such a horrible death. When we consider that, how can we think of doing less than sharing God's love with everyone around us, no matter how we feel about them or what they have done to us?

#### **Application (What does it mean to me?):**

Who would you consider to be your enemy? How would you share God's love with that person?

Pray for the children in your small group to choose God's way of love and forgiveness toward enemies instead of the world's way of hate and revenge.

## Lesson 12