

Riding the Roller Coaster

Describe a good roller coaster experience you've had. How about a bad one?

Read Jonah 1:1-4:11.

1. When have you run from God?
 - A. When I was afraid I wouldn't be able to do what I wanted to do.
 - B. When God wanted me to go someplace I didn't want to go.
 - C. When God convicted me to do something I didn't want to do.
 - D. During an altar call.
 - E. When I was around a bunch of "heathens."
 - F. When I was with a bunch of church members.
 - G. When I tried to find myself, not what others wanted me to be.
 - H. I've never run from God.
 - I. Other.

2. What would you include in your prayer if you were in the fish's belly?
 - A. Help! Get me out of here!
 - B. You did this to me, God.
 - C. I did this to myself, and I admit it.
 - D. I really wish that I could be in church right now.
 - E. I'm never going to obey You again.
 - F. I'll always obey you from now on.
 - G. Let's sing some praise songs.
 - H. Dear Jesus, thank You for this food.
 - I. Other.

3. Which of the following is most like Jonah's message to the people of Nineveh?
 - A. Turn or burn.
 - B. God hates you the way you are.
 - C. I want to be seeker-sensitive as I share a little about Yahweh.
 - D. You need to be like me to be accepted by God.
 - E. Please come to our church social activity.
 - F. Come with me on a retreat.
 - G. There's no hope for you.
 - H. I don't like you, and neither does my God.
 - I. Other.

4. When have you prayed a prayer of desperation to God?
 - A. After I had done something really stupid.
 - B. When I got into a jam.
 - C. I can't think of a time when I've done that.
 - D. When someone close to me was facing death.
 - E. When I had a big exam.
 - F. During a personal crisis.
 - G. In a time of pandemic.
 - H. At a time I wondered if life was worth living—like Jonah did.
 - I. Other.

5. Why does God change His mind?
 - A. He doesn't.
 - B. Sometimes He gets sentimental.
 - C. Because people change.
 - D. It's just a human way to describe God's omniscience (knowing everything).
 - E. God likes to give second chances.
 - F. When the proper conditions are met, God is willing to change.
 - G. He gets a new idea that's better than the previous one.
 - H. God is flexible until a person's probation closes.
 - I. Other.

6. What was the message of the plant in this story?
 - A. God provided an unexpected gift for Jonah.
 - B. God removed something Jonah expected to keep.
 - C. That's just the way life is.
 - D. I have no idea.
 - E. Good and bad things happen no matter what we do.
 - F. We're not aware of a lot of stuff that's happening.
 - G. Be merciful, the way God is merciful.
 - H. We can't control our circumstances, but we can control our response.
 - I. Other.

7. What does God want you to do that you might not want to do?

8. For whom in your world today do you feel sorry? For whom in your world today do you not feel sorry?