

May 28, 2017



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

**Lesson Leaders:**

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**Class Leaders:**

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

It's never too soon to be kind

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**

Lord, what do You want me to do for another today? Lead me. And may that person see a glimmer of You.

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?"*  
(Ruth 2:10 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 10, 2017)*

**Series: God's Urgent Call**

**UNIT: Called to be Strong**

**NEXT WEEK**

**Deborah and Barak**

**(Judges 4:1-10)**

## God's All Embracing Love Jonah 4:1-11

### Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson explains why we should have a greater perception of the wide extent of **God's All Embracing Love**. The study's aim is to feel how unworthy we are of God's love to us. The study's application is to thank God daily for His unfailing love for us.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### Lesson Introduction and Background

I grew up singing in Sunday school. I learned about Jesus best when I sang about Him. Music has always spoken deeply to me, and I still recall so many of the songs we sang when I was a child. One of my favorites has always been C. Herbert Woolston's "Jesus Loves the Little Children." As a girl I liked hearing that Jesus, this wonderful Saviour I heard about, loves every child. It does not matter who you are, where you come from, or what you look like. He still loves you. In this week's passage, we find Jonah under a gourd. He had turned from his earlier disobedience and journeyed to Nineveh, where he preached as commanded. His message to the Ninevites had been successful, and they were now a changed people. You would think that he would be jubilant. But what was Jonah doing? Jonah was not sitting under that gourd just to rest. He was actually sulking. Jonah was complaining to God because his mission was too successful! You are probably questioning his actions. Jonah was furious because the Ninevites had repented and God had chosen to spare them from disaster (Jonah 3:10—4:1). He was basically throwing himself a pity party because God had mercy on people who Jonah really did not think were worth it. Now a lot of you are probably thinking, well, that is downright childish of him! Stop and think a minute, though. How often do things like this happen? It likely happens more often than you think. We see someone who does not fit in with the crowd walk into the church. Perhaps that person's hair is different, or maybe he is wearing clothing that is just on the other side of appropriate. How do you react? Do you go up and greet him, or do you just pretend the person is not there? Some of God's chosen servants were considered ruffians or unusual. Among them were a tax collector (Matt. 9:9), a prostitute (Josh. 2:1-21; 6:17-25), and an Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39). God even chose to use Saul, who had been one of His most vehement enemies (chap. 9). He welcomed people such as this as His own. In John 1:12, we read that anyone who receives Christ is given the blessing of becoming God's own child. We learn from Galatians that God does not base His favor on gender, race, or ethnicity (3:26-29). Romans 8 tells us that anyone who is led by His Spirit is His child (vs. 14). Many people, though, take on an attitude much like Jonah's. This is not the sort of attitude God wants from His children. God expects His people to receive any and all of His true children. When we reject others simply because we do not feel they are worthy of God's love, we reject our Lord's explicit teaching. Is there someone in your congregation who is not being received as he should? Do you know someone who needs to be accepted into the love of Christ? It may not be easy, but it is up to us to take that person into the fold. Race, income level, occupation, or former lifestyle does not matter. If that person is sincere, we need to extend a welcome. If God says a person should be accepted, then who are we to deem otherwise?

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### God's Loving Mercy is Sometimes Confusing to Man (Jonah 4:1-4)

*God's mercy is confusing because man doesn't understand God's plans (1)*

Man doesn't understand because man thinks in terms of "fairness" (Matt 20:1-15)

Man doesn't understand because God choices are based on His own criteria (Deut 7:5-7)

Man doesn't understand because God does things as it pleases Him (Jer 27:5)

Man doesn't understand because God hides certain things from man (Matt 11:25-26)

Man doesn't understand because mercy does not depend on man's desire (Rom 9:15-16)

Man doesn't understand because grace is grace only when it is not of man choice or knowledge (Rom 11:5-6)

*Knowledge of God's mercy doesn't always mean understanding God's ways (2-3)*

Man can't understand God's ways because God's thoughts are not man's (Isa 55:7-9)

Man can't understand God's ways because God's ways are higher than man (Job 11:7-9)

Man can't understand God's ways because no man can know the things of God (Job 42:1-6)

Man can't understand God's ways because the plans of God thwarts the purposes of man (Ps 33:10-11)

Man can't understand God's ways because God's thoughts are too profound for man (Ps 92:5-6)

*Man does not have the right to question God's mercy (4)*

Don't question God because He is the creator (Isa 45:11-12)

Don't question God because that is testing God (Mark 8:11-13)

Don't question God because one who is in sin has no right to question a Holy God (John 8:5-7)

Don't question God because it is useless and unprofitable (Titus 3:9)

Don't question God because it sometimes is the influence of Satan (Matthew 16:21-23)

### Object Lesson on God's Loving Mercy (Jonah 4:5-11)

*God's Mercy is always initiated by God Himself (5-8)*

God initiates mercy because He loves us (Rom 5:8)

God initiates mercy because Jesus took the initiative and bore all of our transgressions (Isa 53:5-6)

God initiates mercy because God is faithful and righteous (Rom 3:3-5)

God initiates mercy because of grace (Eph 2:8-9)

God initiates mercy because it is mercy that prompted God's salvation (Rom 9:16)

God initiates mercy because God started it before the beginning of time (2 Tim 1:9)

*God's Mercy is all about helping people (9-11)*

God's mercy to people should prompt us to be merciful to others (Matt 18:28-33)

God's mercy to other people doesn't mean that He doesn't love us (Luke 15:28-31)

God's mercy to people teaches us how to be merciful (Luke 6:35-36)

God's mercy to people teaches us about forgiveness (Eph 4:32)

God is merciful to us so that we can be merciful to others (2 Cor 1:3-4)