

Good News people

Study 5: The Gospel and Creation: "reconciling all things to God"



Aim: to encourage people to see creation care as an integral part of God's mission.

Opening discussion:

1. What can we remember, without opening our bibles, about the story of Jonah?
2. In what ways do we share a similar mission to Jonah's?
3. How many elements of the natural world feature in the story of Jonah?

Reading: Jonah chapter 3.

1. Jonah's message in v 4 refers to an imminent destruction which (according to v10) the citizens of Nineveh avoided by turning from "their evil ways". However, we're given no details about what form that destruction would take or what kind of evil ways the people turned away from.
If we were to fill in these details ourselves and relate them to our own society, how far would the form of destruction be ecological and how far would the evil ways be our greedy and thoughtless behaviour towards the natural world?
2. Notice how the call to fast and wear sackcloth in v7-8 included the animals.
What does this imply about our common predicament?
Should we feel convicted by the very last verse of Jonah (4v11) regarding our attitude to God's creatures?
3. What caused the king of Nineveh to take action? (v5-6).
What are the implications of this for how we campaign for creation care?
In Luke 10, Jesus encourages the people he sent out on mission to look for "people of peace" to stay and work with. Who are the "people of peace" when it comes to creation care? How might working alongside such people enhance our witness for Jesus – to them and to others?

Readings: Colossians 1vs 19-20; Romans 8 vs 19-21

Concluding thoughts:

Last week we looked at the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Has this story got anything to say about our care for creation?

Are there any practical ways we can include creation care within the mission God has given us, both as individuals and as a church?