

# Heroes of Scripture and Screen:

## Jonah and How the Grinch Stole Christmas

After watching the movie, read these **questions** and the Bible passage and talk about them as a family. It's best to do this right after watching the movie but you can also do it in the next day or so. The conversation could take anywhere from 10-20 minutes but we hope that it sparks an interest in noticing and sharing God throughout your daily life.

**A Moment to Remember:** **Which moment in the movie did you like the most? Why?**

*Read this passage from the Bible (Jonah 3:1-4:3 NRSV):*

The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish." When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

*If you have the time, take a look at this Venn Diagram and talk about whether it lines up with how you interpret the scripture and the movie (or just skip to the rest of the **questions**):*

## Grinch

The Grinch's neighbors in Whoville live lives full of love and kindness.

The people of Whoville forgive the Grinch.

The Grinch's heart grows several sizes.

Both Jonah and the Grinch are extreme grumps.

Both witness an extreme act of the heart with the people of Whoville joining hands around the tree to sing and the people of Nineveh repenting before God.

## Jonah

The people of Nineveh who Jonah is sent to talk to live lives of greed and malice.

God forgives the people of Nineveh.

Jonah fails to have his heart grow at all.

### Theme in Scripture – Transformative Love:

The people of Nineveh have been hurting each other in many ways so God asks Jonah to go to Nineveh and tell them to transform their lives from lives of hurt to lives of kindness. Jonah does not want to go. Jonah thinks that all of the people of Nineveh deserve to be punished and destroyed by God and he knows that if he goes to tell them God's request, they might transform their lives and God will be loving and merciful. The people of Nineveh hear what God says and they choose to transform their lives. Jonah does not. Even after seeing God's love and mercy for the people of Nineveh Jonah still thinks they should be punished and he is so upset by God's love that he says he wants to die! The theme of this passage is how love can transform our lives for the better. **How can love change someone's life for the better?**

### Theme on the Screen – Transformative Love:

The Grinch starts off a lot like Jonah. He doesn't think that the people of Whoville deserve the happiness and love of Christmas, so he tries to take it away. By the end of the movie the Grinch is a lot more like the people of Nineveh than Jonah. **What does the Grinch witness in Whoville that transforms his life? That helps his heart grow?**

**The Scene that Says it All: Which scene in the movie best represents this theme of family love. Why?** *(Is it when the people of Whoville sing, or when the Grinch's heart grows, or another scene?)*

**Bonus question: What's your favorite version of the Grinch? The book, the original cartoon movie, the Jim Carrey movie, the new cartoon movie?**