

“Just as They Are”
Series: “No Perfect People Allowed”
(Part 1 of 4)

Listening Guide Notes

Discussion Starter: What words describe you best: neat & tidy, sloppy & messy, or somewhere in between?

Explore: Read Jonah 3:1-10.

The Ninevites were one of the most violent people groups in the world. It was to these people that God called a man named Jonah.

1. What did God tell Jonah to do (vs. 1-2)? How many times did God give Jonah this assignment?
2. What did Jonah say to the people of Nineveh once he got there (vs. 3-4)?
3. How did the people and the king respond to Jonah (vs. 5-9)?
4. What does this story tell us about God's grace (vs. 10)?

Reflect: Review the LG and discuss the questions below.

1. The church is not about a building, rather it is about people. How would you describe the people in your church?
2. Why is it so important to accept others just the way they are? Who has done that in your life?
3. What does it look like to be gracious toward others? Is there someone you know that you could show more grace to today?
4. What has God's love and salvation meant to you?
5. Read Luke 18:11-14. Who do you identify with more in the story? How can we become more like the second man?

Live:

As a group: Discuss how your group can become more inclusive.

On your own: Thank God for His kindness toward your own imperfections. Next, ask God to help you become more loving toward those who are imperfect.

A church becoming like Christ must...

1. Get used to messy.

^[1] “Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ^[2] and he began to teach them saying...”
–**Matthew 5:1-2 (NIV)**

2. Get generous with grace.

^[1b] “His disciples came to him, ^[2] and he began to teach them saying...”
–**Matthew 5:1b-2 (NIV)**

3. Get humble about salvation.

^[1b] “His disciples came to him, ^[2] and he began to teach them saying: ^[3] ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’” –**Matthew 5:1b-3 (NIV)**

“God blesses those who realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is given to them.” –**Matthew 5:3 (NLT)**

“Our righteous acts are like filthy rags.” –**Isaiah 64:6 (NIV)**

^[11] “The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ^[12] I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ ^[13] But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ ^[14] I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God.” –**Luke 18:11-14 (NIV)**

“Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God – all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done in dying for our sins – making us friends of God.” –**Romans 5:11 (LB)**