

9-29-24 Jonah

Week 3

Text: Jonah 3:1-10

Topic: Calling, Mission, Repentance

Big Idea of the Message: God uses the few simple words that Jonah speaks to bring about great repentance and salvation to an entire city.

Application Point: God doesn't need your eloquence to accomplish his desires. Rather, he lovingly invites you to lend your voice to his simple message and to join him in his work.

Review last weeks message (slide)

Too often I find myself lacking the words to say or feeling I must say the right words.

When I am confronted with tragedy, or a hot topic question I catch myself thinking prayerfully, God give me the right words. And where that isn't wrong, God is in charge, and He can use anything to grab someone's attention. Don't get me wrong, I am not implying that we shouldn't know how to defend our faith. But often we need to be reminded that God can do much more than we think He can.

Remember in week one I said the book of Jonah is more about God dealing with Jonah, His prophet/preacher as much as the city of Ninevah. We will continue to see that as we continue.

Read Jonah 3:1-4.

1. **God's ways are not our ways.**

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:8-9

- Anyone ever have a situation where they would have handled it differently than God did or would?
- Let's see how honest we all are today. Anyone think they would have handled it better?
- God spoke to Jonah a second time. Praise God that He gives second chances.
- Did Jonah deserve any more grace or favor than the Assyrians did?
- That is the real issue in Jonah's (our) hearts. God's grace and mercy is not fair in our eyes.
- Jonah could probably build a good case of why the city of Ninevah shouldn't be spared, why the Assyrian people should be wiped out. And in time they would be wiped out, but for the generation that Jonah spoke to they wouldn't be.
- Jonah spent three days sharing God's message. He spent three days and nights in the belly of the fish. (Jesus referenced to this when He said He would spend three days and three nights in the grave **Matthew 12:38-41**).
- The city was so big it took Jonah three days to get God's message out. Can you imagine the things he saw?

- What was God's message? **"Yet forty days, and Ninevah shall be overthrown!"** Ninevah would be destroyed in 40 days.
- God's way of doing things is not the way that we would do it.

2. How one responds to God's message determines everything.

- **Read verses 5-9.**
- How did the people of Ninevah respond to God's message? (**verse 5**)
- When God reveals His message to us, we only have two responses, **confess or cover**.

He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy. Proverbs 28:13

- How much of the 40 days did they need to make their decision?
- **Promptness** is the only way to react to God's message. Delay is disastrous and invites doom. We never know how much time we have left.

For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2 Corinthians 6:2 ESV

He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Proverbs 29:1

- The people of Ninevah repented which was preceded by faith.
- Faith is the foundation of repentance. **Conviction led to conversion**.
- This is clearly more than a casual acceptance of Jonah's message and his God. This reply impacts every person in the city in life-altering ways, including fasting, mourning, and behavioral change (**vv. 7-9**). This is an example of biblical repentance, which eclipses remorse or regret and leads to life change.
- From fasting, to changing wardrobes, to the king changing thrones and putting out a decree. Wow!

For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death. 2 Corinthians 7:10 NLT

- Surprisingly this response is the result of Jonah's reluctant and short message. His sermon is comprised of a grand total of five words in the original Hebrew language. It isn't the eloquence of the length of the message that convinces the people of Nineveh, but rather the content that Jonah delivers in obedience to God.
- Never in history has so many decisions taken place, in such a short time, from one man preaching, in one place. (120,000 turning to God!)
- The messenger was tainted, Jonah's heart wasn't in it. He preferred to go anywhere else besides the belly of the fish. Jonah didn't even want to be there or see these people saved, But God....
- If God could use a bitter/halfhearted, fish vomit smelling, enemy of the people of Ninevah to get them a message; what could He do with a sold-out follower full of passion?

3. Responding to God correctly will change your life!

- **Read verse 10.**
- **“God saw their works...”**
- They turned; God turned.
- They repented; God repented.
- They changed; God changed.
- God planned judgment, Nineveh repented, God withheld judgment.

If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, 8 and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it. 9 And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, 10 and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will relent of the good that I had intended to do to it. Jeremiah 18:7-10 ESV

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 ESV

- Sometimes the most simple and unassuming words can be the most profound. God doesn't need your eloquence to accomplish his desires. Rather, He lovingly invites you to lend your voice to His message and to join Him in His work.
- Like a child going to work with his dad, we are invited to watch God the Father, learn how He speaks, and say and do what He does. Jonah's simple obedience brought about salvation for an entire city (v. 10).

Conclusion

1. God's ways are not our ways.
2. How one responds to God's message determines everything.
3. Responding to God correctly will change your life!

Sought after (Isa. 62:12) Precious in his sight (Isa. 43:4) A new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) Not condemned (Rom. 8:1) Forgiven (Col. 1:14) Loved (1 John 3:1) Accepted (Rom. 15:7) A child of God (John 1:12) Jesus' friend (John 15:14) Free (John 8:36) The temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19) God's treasured possession (Deut. 7:6) Complete in Christ (Col. 2:10 NLT) Chosen (Col. 3:12) Called (2 Tim. 1:9) An ambassador of the Most High God (2 Cor. 5:20) God's masterpiece (Eph. 2:10 NLT) **Able to do all things through Christ, who gives you strength (Phil. 4:13) More than a conqueror through Jesus, who loves you (Rom. 8:37)**