



WEEK FOUR

THE RESCUED RESCUER

FEBRUARY 14 2021

JONAH 3:1-5

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SERMON OUTLINE

NOTES

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Revivals in the 18th and 19th century
- B. Manipulating revival

II. JONAH, THE RECIPIENT OF MERCY, COMMISSIONED TO PROCLAIM MERCY

- A. God intended to show Jonah his own need for mercy by having him swallowed by the great fish
- B. This event was meant to help Jonah have compassion for his fellow rebels in Nineveh

III. JONAH'S LACKLUSTER MESSAGE

- A. Jonah offers no call for repentance or message of hope
- B. His message is one of condemnation

IV. REVIVAL IS A WORK OF GOD

- A. Despite Jonah's failure to offer any hope to the Ninevites, they respond with repentance
- B. This goes to show that God is the primary actor in salvation
- C. If God can use Jonah's insufficient message for his purposes, He can work through our insufficient messages
 - 1. We cannot manipulate people into responding to grace
 - 2. We must entrust our messages to God

JONAH 2:1-5

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

SERMON REFLECTIONS

1. What kind of disposition do you have towards unbelievers? Think through your own journey from unbelief to belief in the gospel. How should the mercy of God compel you to feel about those who do not yet believe the good news of the gospel?
2. Think about the way you communicate to others about the gospel. Is your message characterized by condemnation or hope? How does your gospel preaching compare to the preaching of Jonah?
3. What does the Ninevites’ response to Jonah’s message show us about God’s part in revival? Did Jonah’s failure to preach a hopeful message to the Ninevites prohibit them from being saved?
4. If God is the primary actor in salvation, does the quality of our message matter? Why or why not?
5. Does God only use exceptionally gifted preachers to save people? What kind of encouragement can we draw from the way God used a poor message like Jonah’s to save a large group of people?



Jonah

WEEK 4

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JONAH 3:1-5

READING THE STORY

Making observations is the first step in becoming familiar with a passage and to help understand what is being said. In a notebook (or separate piece of paper), make the following observations about this passage...

- List any **People/Places**—
- List any important **verbs** (actions), **repeated words/phrases**, or other **theological/special terms**—

OBSERVATIONS

- 1 List the commands God gives Jonah.

- 2 What similarities do you see? What are the differences?

- 3 Compare the call of Yahweh in verse 2 with verses 3-4. What repeated phrases do you see, how well did Jonah obey the second time?

SUMMARY SENTENCE

In your own words, summarize this passage in 1 sentence—

JONAH'S WORLD

Word of Yahweh [1:1, 3:1] A phrase often used in the Old Testament when Yahweh speaks His will to His prophets. The original audience would have heard this phrase and known it to mean just that: a divine order or proclamation.

The great city, exceedingly great city [3:2,3] Nineveh was a great city, great in size, population, and wonders. The author is not praising Nineveh by repeating this phrase but showing the reader the miraculous nature of Yahweh's message spreading quickly.

Forty days [3:4] The word of Yahweh came with a clearly defined timeframe for the Ninevites to respond to His warning. The number forty is repeated often in scripture as a time of warning or preparation, rain fell for forty days on the earth **[Gen. 7:4]**, the Israelites lived outside the land of Canaan for forty years **[Num. 32:13]**, Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights in the desert before His temptation **[Mark 1:13]**.

They called for a fast [3:5] Fasting is choosing to deny yourself food for spiritual reasons, as a way of expressing repentance, of humbling oneself, and focusing on God.

Sackcloth [3:5] An itchy garment of rough cloth containing goat or camel hair. A traditional symbol of heartfelt mourning or repentance.

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HEARING THE CALL

There is at least one moment in every Christian's life when we respond to the word of the Lord with rebellion—when we hear His call clearly, but choose to run the other way. We hear the call to forgive, and yet we continue to harbor resentment. We hear the call to give sacrificially, and yet we continue to spend selfishly. We hear the call to honor all people as the image-bearers of Yahweh, and yet we speak carelessly, gossip and slander.

Here, in the middle of the book of Jonah, we are met with one of the most hopeful and encouraging statements, *"Then the word of Yahweh came to Jonah a second time."* God did not need Jonah to proclaim His message. Still, through Jonah's rebellion, He not only prepared His servant Jonah to serve, but He also gave Jonah the opportunity to repent and see himself as he truly was, a rebellious sinner in need of a savior. Just like the Ninevites. Just like us.

Brothers and sisters, we are adopted by a Father that does not give up on His children or His designed plan. While God did not desire Jonah to rebel, Jonah's rebellion did not deter God from fulfilling His purposes. When we as God's children return to Him with repentance and humility, we can trust that we will not only be met with forgiveness but also with equipping grace to serve Yahweh. *"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose"* **(Romans 8:28)**. This is good news because all things do indeed mean all things. Nothing is beyond the redemptive hand of Yahweh, including our sin and the sin of others. We can not only trust His sovereignty in our present and future, but we can also trust His purposed plan to work all things together for our ultimate good and His glory.

GOING TO NINEVEH

Ask our Father in heaven today if there is rebellion in your heart or something that He has called you to do, and yet you have turned away. Seek to hear His call a second time.

RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 1 When have you heard the call of the Lord a second time?

RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 2 In what ways can you see God using the circumstances (sin, rebellion, discipline, suffering) of your past to prepare you to humbly serve Him?