

Camarillo Community Church

“Chicken In The Sea” Ralph Rittenhouse 6/07/2009

LESSON #1 WE ARE ALL CALLED TO BE HIS MESSENGERS

Jonah 1:1-2 "The Lord gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai: ² “Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh! Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are.”

Who was Jonah?

What was his assignment?

Who were the Ninevites?

Nahum 3:1 (NIV) "Woe to Nineveh, woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims."

Nahum 3:3(NIV) "...piles of dead, bodies without number, people stumbling over corpses."

Nahum 3:19(NIV) "...your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you claps their hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty?"

Jonah's response:

Jonah 3:3 "But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the Lord. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. He bought a ticket and went on board, hoping to escape from the Lord."

Jonah 4:2 “I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. I knew how easily you could cancel your plans for destroying these people.”

What was Tarshish?

What’s your Nineveh?

Psalm 72:10 “The western kings of Tarshish and other distant lands will bring him tribute.”

Ezekiel 27:24-25 "They brought choice fabrics to trade—blue cloth, embroidery, and multicolored carpets rolled up and bound with cords. ²⁵ The ships of Tarshish were your ocean caravans. Your island warehouse was filled to the brim!"

LESSON #2 THE DANGER OF RUNNING IS ALWAYS GREATER THAN THE DANGER OF OBEDIENCE.

LESSON #3 YOUR SIN WILL OFTEN PUT OTHERS IN DANGER

Jonah 1:4-5 "But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart. ⁵ Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship."

Jonah 1:6 "How can you sleep at a time like this? Get up and call on your god. Maybe He will pay attention to us and spare our lives."

Proverbs 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD."

Jonah 1:9 "I am a Hebrew, and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land."

Jonah 1:11-12 "'What should we do to stop this storm?' Jonah said, 'Throw me into the sea and it will become calm again.'"

Jonah 1:14 "Then they cried out to the Lord, Jonah's God. 'O Lord,' they pleaded, 'don't make us die for this man's sin. And don't hold us responsible for his death. O Lord, you have sent this storm upon him for your own good reasons.'"

LESSON #4 GOD OFTEN USES OUR GREATEST WEAKNESSES AND FAILURES

Jonah 1:16 "The sailors were awestruck by the LORD's great power, and they offered him a sacrifice and vowed to serve him."

LESSON #5 IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO STOP RUNNING FROM GOD

Psalms 139:7-9 "I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. ⁹ If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans."

Life Group Homework

Getting Started

1. What do you think of when you think of the story of Jonah? 1) A big fish; 2) A disobedient prophet named Jonah; or 3) A repentant city named Nineveh; 4) None of the above. Why?

2. What insight, principle or observation from this week's message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.

Digging Deeper

The first verse of this book states that Jonah was the son of Amittai, who are mentioned in 2 Kings. Jonah lived before and in the early days of king Jeroboam II of the northern kingdom of Israel. Though not stated in the text, this book was probably written by Jonah or, perhaps, narrated to a scribe and is set sometime about 760 B.C.

This book is interesting and profitable to us to study today because it tells the story of a prophet's struggle with God and resisting God's call for him to go to Nineveh. Jonah's own prejudice keeps him from going to his assigned "mission field". In the end, Jonah is convinced to fulfill his mission, Nineveh repents, and another lesson can be learned about grace. God gave Jonah and Nineveh a second chance.

Read Jonah 1:1-3. See also 2 Kings 14:25.

3. Who was Jonah? What was he asked to do? What was his response? What character qualities was Jonah exhibiting in this passage?

Read Jonah 1:4-10. See also Psalm 139:7-12 and Psalm 89:5-9

4. What were the consequences of Jonah's decision to run away from God? What could he control and what was out of his control? Who was impacted by his decision?

5. What does Jonah's response tell us about his relationship with God? What does the sailor's response tell us about their understanding of the true God? Note: The sailors understood Jonah's description of God as being characteristic of the highest deity, for in the ancient Near East the supreme God was usually the master of the seas.

Read Jonah 1:11-17.

6. What choices did Jonah make in this passage? Describe his attitude about the situation he was in? What other choices could he have made?

7. What prophesy of Jonah's came true? What was the response? How did God provide for Jonah? What other option did God chose not to do to Jonah?

Read Luke 9:51-56

8. Jonah disobeyed because he had a wrong attitude toward God's will. What do these passages say about God's will toward sinners? What attitudes, exhibited by Jonah and the disciples, become barriers to our obedience and our Christian witness today? What is God's response to our prejudice and lack of love for others?

Application

Why is obedience important to us? Is there some attitude or action in which I am "fleeing to Tarshish" today?

In what ways has God called us to be like Jonah? Who in our lives do we need to exhibit God's compassion toward?

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