

- I) V1-3 INTRO: But it *displeased* Jonah exceedingly and he became angry
 - a) Jonah has preached to Nineveh: Yet 40 days and Nineveh shall be overthrown! (3:4)
 - 1) FIRST: Imagine for a moment what an incredible act of obedience and courage this was
- II) HE ENTERED IN: To an incredibly large city
 - a) Jonah 1:2 and 4:11 God had referred to Nineveh as *that great city*
 - 1) The true and accurate measure of anything is what God calls it
- III) NINEVEH: Was the capitol city of the Assyrian empire and was intimidating and large
 - a) It took three days to walk around the outskirts of the city
 - 1) Jonah walked for a day and did not even reach the center of the city (moving from place to place)
 - 2) Its population was no less than 120,000 inhabitants (not including children?)
- IV) IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE: As Jonah walked into this great city
 - a) How small he could feel: One man against such an ancient, populated, and sophisticated city
 - 1) ALSO: Nineveh was a city known for its evil and its violence
- V) AS HE APPROACHES ITS HEART: He is cring out judgment:
 - a) As Sodom was overthrown, so will Nineveh be: Rapid and complete destruction from God!
- VI) QUESTION: What will the reaction of the people be? Mocking, violence, rejection?
 - a) AMAZINGLY: They began to listen: They *heard* his message
 - 1) Upon hearing this message: The people of Nineveh *immediately* repented
- VII) CH 3:5 TELLS US: They believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth: *Genuine repentance*
 - a) They believed God: They understood the message was from God, not Jonah
 - 1) Heb 4:12 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
- VIII) RESPONSE: They proclaimed a fast, which demonstrates the humbling of the heart before God
 - a) Joel 2:12 `Even now,` declares the LORD, `return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.`
- IX) ALSO: They put on sackcloth, which is a visible sign of mourning
 - a) Jer 4:6-8 Raise the signal to go to Zion! Flee for safety without delay! For I am bringing disaster from the north, even terrible destruction." A lion has come out of his lair; a destroyer of nations has set out. He has left his place to lay waste your land. Your towns will lie in ruins without inhabitant. So put on sackcloth, lament and wail, for the fierce anger of the LORD has not turned away from us.
- X) THE RESULT: God *saw* their works that they turned from their evil ways and repented
 - a) He *spared* this great city
- XI) IN THIS: We see *four elements* to turning a city around to God
 - a) FIRST: We see *faithful preaching* of God's message
 - 1) Ro 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.
 - l) SECOND: There must be a *genuine trust* in God

- a) They must turn from sin, and turn to God
 - 1) 2 Co 6:16-17 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore *come out* from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, *and I will receive you*.
- II) THIRD: Upon hearing the message and believing God, *they took action*
 - a) They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth: Demonstrating genuine repentance
 - 1) Jas 2:15-17 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.
- III) FOURTH: They *turned away* from specific sins
 - a) They turned away from their evil and their violence
- IV) KEY: When you truly repent you are no longer characterized by sin
 - a) 1 Co 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- V) GOD SPARED THE CITY: You would think Jonah would be overjoyed
 - a) This truly would be the joy of the heart of any evangelist: To see an *entire city* turn to God
 - 1) YET: This was not his reaction
- VI) CH 4:1-3 BUT: It displeased Jonah exceedingly and he became angry
 - a) INCREDIBLE: God had shown such incredible mercy to Jonah, the sailors and to the city
 - 1) Yet he is displeased exceedingly and angry
- VII) NINEVEH WAS EVIL AND VIOLENT: In Jonah's mind it should have been destroyed
 - a) After all: God had destroyed Sodom, Gomorra and their surrounding cities for similar sins
 - 1) Ezek 16:49-50 Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were *arrogant, overfed and unconcerned*; they *did not help* the poor and needy. They were *haughty* and did *detestable things* before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.
- VIII) V2 HIS RESPONSE: He prayed to the LORD and said Ah, LORD, was not this what I said
 - a) He *actually complains* that the LORD is gracious, merciful, patient and of great kindness!
 - 1) *I suspect* he actually preferred his message of destruction and hoped they would die
 - 2) INTERESTING: In this complaint he is trying to prove God was wrong in showing mercy
- IX) EVEN TODAY: We can refuse to desire God to forgive a terrible sinner
 - a) Paul was by his own testimony a terrible sinner
 - 1) Ac 22:4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women
 - 2) Gal 1:13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and *tried to destroy it*.
 - l) HIS TESTIMONY: Was so widespread that people refused to believe he could be saved
 - a) Ananias could not believe it

1) Ac 9:13-14 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name

b) The church didn't believe it

1) Ac 9:26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.

II) BUT IT WAS TRUE: And his salvation had a purpose

a) 1 Ti 1:12-16 How thankful I am to Christ Jesus our Lord for considering me trustworthy and appointing me to serve him, even though I used to scoff at the name of Christ. I hunted down his people, harming them in every way I could. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. Oh, how kind and gracious the Lord was! He filled me completely with faith and the love of Christ Jesus. This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--and I was the worst of them all. But that is why God had mercy on me, so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life.

III) V2 WAS NOT: This what I said when I was still in my country

a) This is what he had feared and had said to himself: I knew you wouldn't destroy them!

1) This is what motivated him to run away

IV) V2 QUESTION: What was his reason for running away

a) He knew that God was gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness

1) He knew that God relents from doing harm

2) Ex 34:6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness

3) He was angry because God was not going to destroy these evil people

V) V3 THEREFORE NOW: O LORD, *please take my life* from me for it is better for me to die

a) INTERESTING: He is still a man of prayer but not one praying in a way pleasing to God!

1) It is a good thing God doesn't answer every prayer with a yes

VI) V4 THEN THE LORD SAID: *Is it right* for you to be angry

a) Many lessons actually begin with a question and Jesus is a great example of this way of teaching

1) Why do you worry about your clothing? Who do people say the Son of Man is? Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Who is it you are looking for? What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? Why do you call Me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?

2) KEY: The answer to the question has a way of revealing the heart

VII) POINT OF THE QUESTION: Which of us is right, Jonah? Who has the proper perspective here?

a) Am I right, in showing mercy, or are you right, in desiring judgment?

VIII) V5 SO: Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city There he made himself a shelter

a) This is how he answered the question: by avoiding it

1) Maybe he thought they wouldn't change in 40 days and the judgment would simply be postponed

I) FIRST: He quits his mission by leaving the city

a) God did not tell him to leave, he just decided to on his own

1) He should have remained, and taught them the way of God!

- II) SECOND: He built himself a shelter, isolating himself from the people who had responded
 - a) He desired no fellowship with people different from him: I have nothing in common with them
- III) THIRD: He waited to see if God would destroy the city and became a *spectator*
 - a) He openly hoped God would change his mind: Perhaps they really weren't saved at all
 - 1) JESUS MOVEMENT: The American Church stood back, waiting for us to fall
- IV) V6-8 AND: The LORD God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah that it might be shade
 - a) PLANT: A shrub having broad leaves like vine leaves and casting a very dense shadow, and sustaining itself by its trunk that grows very rapidly and in a few days can look like a tree
- V) GOD BEGINS A WORK OF PREPARATION: Like He had prepared the great fish
 - a) FIRST: He prepared a *plant* to provide shade for Jonah to deliver him from his misery
 - 1) This could provide him enough comfort to consider *his own heart*
- VI) SECOND: He prepared a *worm* to destroy the plant
 - a) This removed the comfort of the shade and caused him to experience the full sun
- VII) THIRD: He prepared a *strong wind* to combine with the heat of the sun
 - a) In doing all of this: He prepared *Jonah* to be taught
- VIII) RESPONSE: JONAH SAYS IT IS BETTER FOR ME TO DIE THAN TO LIVE
 - a) V9 God pushed Jonah to his limit
 - 1) He is breaking him: Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?
- IX) V9-11 THEN: God said to Jonah Is it right for you to be angry about the plant
 - a) JONAH: You care for yourself, you care for even something like a plant
- X) FACT: You did not tend this plant, water this plant, cause this plant to grow:
 - a) You simply took pleasure in it because it provided for you:
 - 1) It grew and it perished and you felt pity for it
- XI) YOU FELT PITY: Because it was pleasing *to you* and you were comforted by it
 - a) I feel pity for Nineveh: It is filled with people who do not know better (children?)
 - 1) Do you not believe I should spare a city: Do you not believe I should show Mercy?
- XII) NOTICE: The book actually ends with a question, one that continues to ring in our day