



Good News B.C. Derrick Shields “Good News in the Storm” February 11, 2024

Key Verses: Jonah 1-4

Key Thought: Jonah, a well-respected prophet in his home country, chooses to disobey God's instruction, yet God doesn't give up on Him. He serves as an example to us that while there are consequences for our disobedience, there is also an invitation to repentance and redemption.

Points to Consider:

- The goal of this series is to discover God's redemptive plan as we search for the “good news” in the Old Testament, before the coming of the Christ.
- Jonah is a prophet (see also 2 Kings 14:25) whom the Lord instructs to go to Ninevah to warn them of coming judgment. Instead, Jonah flees in the opposite direction, for the Ninevites are the sworn enemy of the Israelites.
- Where can we see the “good news” before Christ in this passage?
 - i. 1:4-16: As Jonah's shipmates feared the raging storm, his acknowledgement of the sovereign LORD, followed by his being cast overboard, prompted God to show His mercy by calming the sea. Likewise, Jesus and his disciples found themselves in a similar storm while at sea. The disciples called on Jesus and He calmed the sea. (see Mark 4:35-41) In both cases, we see that God desires to extend mercy by equipping us to walk through and deliver us from whatever storms we may face as the consequence of disobedience.
 - ii. 1:17-2:10: Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and remained in its belly for three days and three nights. In his moment of distress, he called on the Lord, acknowledging that it is He alone from whom salvation comes. Similarly, Jesus' death on the cross ushered Him into the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. He was resurrected on the third day, offering salvation to all those who call on His name. (see Mark 12:39-41)
 - iii. 3:1-2, 4-5, 10: God offers Jonah a second chance to warn the Ninevites. This time he obeys, the people repented and were saved. Looking ahead to Mark 1:15 and Romans 5:8-9 we see that this is God's pattern – repent, believe, salvation through the death of Christ.
 - iv. 4:1-2, 5: God's kindness toward Ninevah angered Jonah, so much so that he asked to die. Romans 8:34 reminds us that Jesus does not condemn sinners, but rather intercedes for them/us. The enemy wants us to fixate on our faults and those of others, but the Spirit seeks to remind us that through Christ we are new creations.

Discussion Prompts:

- Is there a situation in which you, like Jonah, are walking in disobedience to the Lord's instruction?
- How long will you stay in distress before calling on the Lord? Are you willing to acknowledge Jesus, confess and repent of your disobedience, and receive His mercy?
- How might your life change if you were to reject the enemy's condemnation and believe that you are a new creation through Christ?