



**Sermon Title:** Pastoral Passages week 2

**Sermon Title:** Jonah

**Date:** 7/17/2022

Jonah was a man who received clear instructions regarding what God wanted him to do. Unfortunately, instead of obeying what he heard from God, he ran away.

**Big Idea:** Obey God with both your actions and your attitude

The book of Jonah is divided into two settings

**Act 1 – On The Sea**

Jonah received a message from God. **Jonah 1:1-2**. Nineveh was the capital of the mighty Assyrian empire. The Assyrians that lived there were very wicked people. When Jonah got this message from God to go to Nineveh, he ran away **Jonah 1:3**. Jonah knew God's plan, yet he ran away to Tarshish, which was about 2500 miles to the west - what we know as Spain. **Jonah 1:4-5**

While onboard the ship, God sent a terrible storm. The sailors decided to cast lots to determine whose fault this storm was. The lot fell to Jonah. **Jonah 1:8 -10**. When the sailors found out Jonah was a Hebrew, they were frightened because they knew how powerful the Hebrew God was.

They asked Jonah how to make the storm stop. He told them to pick him up and throw him into the sea **Jonah 1:11-12**. That was Jonah basically saying he would rather die than go witness to these people in Nineveh. The sailors reluctantly threw Jonah overboard. And as soon as they did that, the storm stopped- immediately. Jonah was swallowed by a giant fish. **Jonah 1:16 -17**

Just look at how God was in control of this situation from way before Jonah ever even set out on his journey. God had created this specific fish to swallow Jonah and had it waiting in the area where the boat was. **Jonah couldn't even die without God's permission.**

It's easy to view the fish as a punishment for Jonah; however, in reading Jonah's prayer to God when he was in the fish belly- we come to

understand that God sent the fish to save Jonah. The prayer reveals that Jonah was **drowning** and **sinking** to the bottom of the sea when God sent the fish to swallow him and save him. Jonah prayed this from inside the fish. **Jonah 2:1-9**. After three days, God caused the fish to vomit Jonah up onto the dry land.

## Act 2 – On Dry Ground

God reminded Jonah of his mission, and this time Jonah obeyed **Jonah 3:1-3**. Getting swallowed by a fish and then vomited out of that fish will change your perspective. Jonah was still God's man for the job - walking deep into the city and yelling, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

Those in Nineveh responded to this in a radical way **Jonah 3:4-9**. When God saw the way that the evil people of Nineveh turned from their wicked ways and repented, He had compassion for them and withdrew the destruction that he had planned for them. Jonah witnesses the whole city repent, and Jonah gets very angry with God. **Jonah 4:1-4**

Now we see God go to work on Jonah's issue. God arranged for a situation to help get Jonah over his selfishness. He used a plant, a worm, and a wind. **Jonah 4:5-8**. The first time Jonah was happy in this entire book was over this leafy plant. Then the plant died, and God sent a scorching hot wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head, and this is the third time he said he wanted to die.

God was controlling this entire situation – We read that God provided a great fish, provided a plant, provided a worm, and provided a scorching wind to help Jonah get over his attitude problem. God asked Jonah if he had a right to be angry about the plant, and Jonah said he was so angry he could die **Jonah 4:9**

God told Jonah that he cared more about a plant than the souls of those people – including the 120,000 children. **Jonah 4:10-11**. God ends this lesson with a question to Jonah. Should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh?

We don't know how Jonah answered. It would be nice to think Jonah

Four lessons that we can take away from this story

1) When God commands you to do something, He doesn't withdraw His command just because we choose to ignore it.

**2) When you disobey God, you invite storms into your life and others around you.**

Jonah could have avoided all this if he had obeyed God in the first place.

**3) God cares about our attitude as much as our actions**

Jonah did what God asked, but he did it, gritting his teeth the whole time.

**4) God is a God of 2<sup>nd</sup> chances**

God gave Nineveh a second chance. One of the most evil societies ever, and He forgave them when they asked for it. God gave Jonah a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance, and he certainly didn't deserve it.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **God gave grace and mercy to Nineveh. What does this show us about God's character?**
- **Have you ever found yourself in a storm because you were disobeying God? Explain**
- **Describe a time when you were impacted because of another person's disobedience to God**
- **Have you ever obeyed God with your actions and not your attitude? Explain**
- **Jonah was upset that the Ninevites repented. Have you ever been upset that someone became a follower of Jesus?**