



WEDNESDAY EVENING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: Jonah and the Whale

Passage: Jonah 1-4

Speaker: Bro. Mark Holland

Introduction: When most people think about the book of Jonah, what's the first thing that comes to mind? The big fish that swallowed Jonah, of course! But guess what — it's not about the fish! Even though Jonah is listed among the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament, there's actually no real prophecy in the book. Instead, it's all about Jonah and his relationship with God. We see a prophet reluctant to carry out the mission God gave him, and then one who complained when that mission actually worked! What kind of prophet is that? Maybe the kind that reveals something true about us. Let's take a closer look and see.

"The men of Nineveh shall rise in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." (Matthew 12:41)

I. Running Away From God (1:1-17)

God concerns Himself with the wickedness of heathen nations.

No one can run away from God!

God is able to use incidents in the lives of His servants for His glory.



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II. Running to God (2:1-10)

Jonah's prayer is written like a psalm; his prayer is composed of bits and pieces of Psalms 30, 42, 5, 103, 18, and 107.

Someone has observed that there are times when we have to hit rock bottom so that there is no way to turn but up - towards God.

Prayers in time of need, like Jonah's, should be made with an attitude of thanksgiving as well as petition.

III. Running with God (3:1-10)

The least likely prospects might be the ones who will convert.

The people are in a place of fasting and prayer, as one seeks to petition God.

Jonah's mission was a success! Souls headed for destruction were saved!

IV. Running Ahead of God (4:1-11)

Jonah manifested a wrong spirit. He possessed the same spirit as the elder brother of the prodigal son and the Pharisees who criticized Jesus for eating with sinners.

We learn the danger of a selfish spirit: it makes us seem petty and excludes people God wants us to witness to.

We see God's nature: He is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, willing to relent when there is repentance.

Conclusion: The book of Jonah is a powerful reminder to both Christians and the unsaved. To the Christian, it challenges us to faithfully carry out God's calling with



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compassion, humility, and a heart for all people. To the unsaved, it reveals a God who loves deeply, warns faithfully, and offers salvation to all who will repent and obey. May we all take to heart the example of Nineveh's repentance—and even more so, respond to the message of Jesus Christ, who is far greater than Jonah.



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