

The Sermon

Welcome

Good morning!

My Name is Pastor Jonathan

And I am so grateful that each of you are here today.

Everyone is welcome at Harvey!

Opening Illustration

Now if you’ve ever been around a newborn child...you know how amazingly sweet they are...

- like they smile at you... and it just melts your heart...
- And then they get to where they begin to laugh...and there isn’t much sweeter in the world than a baby’s laugh...

But then they grow a little bit...

- and one day...you’ll ask them to go do something...
- And it’s almost like overnight they learned a ***new word...***
- ***And that little child...looks straight at you and says:***
 - ***NO!***
 - ***NO! I DON’T WANNA...***

I remember the first time one of my little precious children told me no...

- And I remember thinking...
- Well...that’s cute...
- I’m not sure you understand how this relationship works....

Like I keep you alive....

- I feed you...
- I clothe you...
- I take you places...
- I make sure you’re taken care of...in every way....

So when I ask to do something....

- I’m not looking for your permission....
- I’m looking for your obedience....
- I’m looking for your immediate **YES**

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

And if we're being honest...

That's exactly how we can often treat our Heavenly Father also...

- The One Who gives us life...
- The One Who gives us breath...
- The One Who sustains us...in every way

And we never really get away from saying NO....we just try to make it sound more sophisticated...

- Like God will put on our hearts to do something....
- And we say...somebody else would be better at that....
- Or we might say....“I'll have to pray about that”...

It's all “**NO**”...

We just try to make it sound more sophisticated....

Transition

And that's exactly where we find a man in The Bible named Jonah....

This morning we're beginning a ***new Sermon Series*** through ***the book of Jonah***.

And most of us are familiar with The Story of Jonah...at least on a surface level....

- We've read the children's stories...
- We've been taught about it at VBS...

But I want to tell you up front...

- This is ***MORE*** than a children's story about a big fish.....
- The fish only shows up in 3 verses...

But GOD shows up in every chapter....

This is a Story about God

And about a man who told God NO....

And the question that drives the sermon this morning is this:

HOW DOES SOMEONE SAY NO TO GOD?!

- How does someone who knows God...
- Who has heard God's voice...
- Look at the Creator of the universe and say, “**NO**”?

And maybe the more uncomfortable question is this:

How do WE SAY NO TO GOD!?

In fact our big idea for today is this:

Big Idea

Because God Rules and Reigns, The Only Right Answer To God Is YES!

God's not looking for your permission... He's looking for your YES.

I. Some Background

Now before we begin in the text...I want to give you ***some background to this book...***

A. What Kind Of Book Is This?

In the bible we have all kinds of literature...

We have books that are....

- Narrative...
- Law...
- Poetry....
- Gospels...
- Letters or Epistles....
- Wisdom Literature....
- And Prophecy...

So what kind of book is this?

Jonah is prophetic literature...

The prophets were God's spokesmen...men who stood between God and their generation and said, "Thus says the LORD."

And Jonah is one of the twelve we call the Minor Prophets.

Now "minor" does NOT mean "less important."

- It simply means "shorter."
- Minor is about size, not significance.

But Jonah is unusual among the Twelve Minor Prophets

- Most of the prophets give you their sermons.
- But the book of Jonah gives us his story.

In fact, Jonah’s whole recorded sermon to Nineveh is one sentence long.

- The rest of the book is about what God had to do IN the life of Jonah...

B. Who Is Jonah?

Now who is Jonah...what do we know about him?

We see Jonah one other time in the Bible apart from this story....

We see him back in **2 Kings 14:25**

And in this verse we find out some information about Jonah...

- Jonah is from the northern kingdom
- Jonah prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II...somewhere around 760 BC...
- And Jeroboam, “Did what was evil in the sight of the LORD”...
- But we see that God had mercy on Israel....
- And the man God used to announce that mercy...was **Jonah**...

Why does this matter?

- Because I don’t want us to read the story....thinking of Jonah as somebody, who this was his first time, being asked to speak on behalf of God...
- Jonah was not a rookie preacher....
- He was a seasoned prophet...
- He was a prophet mentored by Elisha...
- He was a prophet who had already preached God’s grace to a people who didn’t deserve God’s mercy....
- And he did so...**when they were his people.....**

C. What was Nineveh?

Finally...what was Nineveh?

Nineveh was a superpower city in the Assyrian Empire, in modern-day **Iraq**.

And in this day....Assyria could be described as a terrorist nation....

- The things they did to their own enemies... were dark and depraved...
- And they bragged about it...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

- And the Assyrian Empire was a great danger to where Jonah was from...in fact, in 722 BC...Assyria destroyed the Northern Kingdom where Jonah was from....

So what does ALL this mean?

Let me paint the picture of ***Nineveh in our day...***

- In **2014**, ISIS took over the city of Mosul, Iraq...really close to where Nineveh was...
- And they told those who were **Christians**: convert to Islam...leave... or you're gonna die.

And thousands of Christians fled with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

- A few months later, the world watched a video of twenty-one Christian men...who died with the name of Jesus on their lips....

Now imagine God waking you up in the middle of the night and saying...“Arise. Go to Mosul. Preach to ISIS.”

- THAT WAS Nineveh.

So when God says to Jonah... “go to Niveveh”...

- Jonah hears...go to “the enemy”...

So that's what kind of literature this is... prophecy

- That's who Jonah is...an experienced proclaimer of God's Word
- And that's who Nineveh was...an enemy of God's people...

Now let's open God's Word...

Transition

If you have your Bibles, take them out and turn to the book of **Jonah**, and we're going to be in **Jonah Chapter 1, vs. 1-6** today.

II. The King Speaks (Jonah 1:1-2)

Jonah Flees the Presence of the Lord

1 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,
2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.”

A. His Word comes with authority (vs. 1)

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

The WORD OF THE LORD came to Jonah....

- Notice this book begins with **The WORD OF THE LORD** establishing authority before anything else happens...

See, God is Holy, and He is the Creator of The Universe!

- **And** when God speaks...God is not making a suggestion...
- And God who spoke everything into existence...
- Spoke to Jonah....

Hey Christian....

That same God has spoken to you, and He still speaks to us today...

- Every time we open this Book...
- The word of the LORD comes to you.

B. His command comes without explanation (vs. 2a)

So what did The Word of The Lord say to Jonah?

“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.”

- **ARISE.**
- **GO.**
- **CALL OUT.**

And what's fascinating is...

Again and again in the Old Testament, when God says, "**Arise, go**"...

The expected next line is:

.... "**So the prophet arose and went.**"

That's how it's supposed to work.

- God says go
- And the prophet goes.

HEY CHURCH:

God doesn't owe us an explanation before we give Him our obedience.

- Like, we often want God to explain Himself first....
- Like...you tell me the big picture...the whole plan...and then I'll decide if I'm going to go or not....

The only problem is...that's not obedience.

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

Hey Christian:

If the only commands you obey are the ones that make sense to you...

- Then you may not be following God...
- Cause oftentimes following God makes no sense...until we get there and can see how He's been working everything out all along....

C. His concern reaches the enemy's city (vs. 2b)

Look at the second half of **vs. 2**

...for their evil has come up before me."

We see that God had noticed Nineveh...

- God noticed Nineveh didn't worship Him...
- Nineveh couldn't care less about the God of Israel...
- **BUT GOD CARED ABOUT NINEVEH!**

So God says... **"Their evil has come up before me"**...

We can notice something about God's Character here....

- God did not create The World and just walk away....
- But God is a God who sees, knows, and takes sin seriously!
- Even the sin of those who yet don't believe in Him!

Like if God had just wanted to destroy Nineveh...

- Why would He want to send a prophet?
- Why would He want to send a preacher?
- You don't send a warning to somebody you've already decided to destroy...

See, God Himself said in **Jeremiah 18:7-9**....

- If a nation I've warned turns from its evil...I will relent....
- And Jonah **KNEW** this!
- That's the problem we're about to see...
- Jonah who exactly the kind of God he served...
- And he did not God showing that kind of mercy to **THOSE PARTICULAR PEOPLE!**

HEY FOR US TODAY:

The God who noticed Nineveh still is THE God who sees, knows, and takes sin seriously...

- God notices those around us who don't believe in Him

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

- AND GOD notices the NATIONS who do not know Him all around the world...

Their sin has come up before Him...and so has His concern for them

- AND WE'VE BEEN COMMANDED TO GO AND TELL....

THE QUESTION IS...

- **HAVE WE GROWN NUMB TO THE LOSTNESS THAT SURROUNDS US?**

So here's where we are...

- God has spoken...
- His command is clear... ARISE... GO... CALL OUT...
- Now there's only one question left...
- What will the prophet do?

Let's keep reading in vs. 3

III. The Prophet Runs (Jonah 1:3)

3 But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

A. But Jonah FLED

Verse 3, begins with the word....**BUT**...

- After everything we just saw....
- When God spoke to the prophet...

What we expect to read is...**SO JONAH AROSE AND WENT...**

But what we see is **BUT JONAH...ROSE TO FLEE**

And Jonah partially did obey....

- God said **ARISE**....and Jonah did **ARISE**....

But he just got up and went **THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION!**

Like literally!

- God said to the great city...and Jonah bought a one-way ticket the other direction to the edge of their known world...

Why Did Jonah Do This?

- Well, God's Word hasn't told us yet...
- We find out in Chapter 4...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

- And I'll give you a preview...because it's a key to the whole book... And Jonah finally says it out loud in **Jonah 4:2**...

That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.

You see that?

- Jonah didn't run because he thought **GOD WOULD FAIL...**
- Jonah ran because he **knew** God would **SUCCEED!**
- Jonah didn't want God's grace going where Jonah didn't think it belonged...

So how does someone say no to God?

I think Verse 3 shows us 3 ways:

B. He Said No With His Feet

First, we see that Jonah said no with his feet....

- He rose to flee from the presence of the Lord...
- And he was headed away from the presence of the Lord...

Now we know that God is everywhere at all times...

- Jonah knew this too...

So what did this mean that Jonah was going “away from the presence of The LORD”?...

- This literally means that Jonah was turning in his resignation...
- God told Him to Go...and He said nope...I'm quitting...

One theologian put it this way:

“All flee away from the presence of God, who do not willingly obey his commandments.”

C. He Said No With His Wallet

Second, we see that Jonah went down and found a ship going to Tarshish...

Like, Isn't that convenient!?

- He gets to the port... and here's a ship...Going right where he wants to go...leaving right when he wants to leave...

I can almost imagine Jonah...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

Telling his family...I gotta go...well where you going...well I just got to go...

Then he arrives at the port...wondering if there really will be a ship going that direction...

- and there was...

And then if you've ever bought a last-minute plane ticket...you know...it ain't cheap...

- So Jonah possibly paid a high price...and he may have even thought...will they really take my money...or will God stop this somehow....?

You know how it is when you're walking in disobedience and know what you're doing is wrong... your adrenaline is running high... And at every turn you may even be wondering...when will God step in and stop this...and make it impossible for me to disobey!?

So maybe he even thought....

- Well, since God didn't stop me...
- and he allowed me to find a ship headed to Tarshish...
- and God allowed them to take my money...
- Then.... ***“The Lord must be opening a door!...”***
- He must ***“not have wanted me to go anyhow....”***

Hey Christian...we've gotta be careful...

- ***Just because God allows the opportunity for us to walk in disobedience...doesn't excuse our disobedience.***

In other words,

- We don't figure out God's will by what's convenient...
- We figure out God's will by what God has SAID.
- And God had already told Jonah....***“Go to Nineveh.”***

And then... "Jonah paid the fare."

Alistair Begg said:

“When you're determined to run from God, there will always be a ride waiting...But YOU WILL PAY THE FARE”...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

Last week we saw in Galatians that following Jesus is costly...

But this week, we see in Jonah that ***disobedience is costly too!***

- It cost Jonah money from his wallet.
- It cost him time.
- It cost him his peace.
- It almost cost him his life...
- And it nearly cost a whole ship full of sailors their lives too.

Disobedience is costly!

D. He Says No By Going Down

Finally, Jonah said No by going down...

I want you to notice in **vs. 3** the repetition of the word **DOWN**....

- Jonah went **DOWN** to Joppa
- Jonah went **DOWN** into the ship

And then in **vs. 5**

- Jonah has gone **DOWN** into the inner part of the ship

And in **Chapter 2**

- Jonah will say, “I went **DOWN** to the land whose bars closed upon me forever....

DOWN...DOWN...DOWN...

But God had just told Jonah to...**ARISE**

And Jonah has been going down ever since...

Also notice the action words in vs. 3...

- Jonah went down to Joppah...
- Jonah found
- Jonah paid
- Jonah went down into the ship...

And none of these actions include...Jonah prayed...

- There was no pause in Jonah’s actions...
- No...should I do this?...
- No...Lord I’m struggling right now....
- ***Just a whole lot of running....***

How does somebody say NO TO GOD?

- It’s not usually one big dramatic moment...
 - It’s one step at a time...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

- It's one action after another....
- And never stopping long enough to pray to God to confess...**LORD I'M STRUGGLING....GIVE ME WISDOM....**
- Because deep down...you might just be afraid of what God would say if you did....

What about you?

- Do you just act....
- Or are you stopping to spend time with God in prayer...
- To make sure that you're following Him instead of just charging along?

How does somebody say No To God?

- With their feet...where they're busy going...and not praying
- With their wallet...not always financially...but there's a cost to disobedience
- And by charging ahead, one step DOWN at a time...away from the presence of The Lord...

My Prayer is always that we, as a church, would never get ahead of God, but would stay right behind Him...letting Him lead and direct us...

Let's keep reading in **vs. 4-6**

IV. The King Pursues (Jonah 1:4-6)

4 But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up.

5 Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried out to his god. And they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep.

6 So the captain came and said to him, “What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish.”

A. The LORD Hurls The Storm (vs. 4)

Notice, **vs. 3** begins with **BUT JONAH**

Now, **vs. 4** begins with **BUT THE LORD**

See, regardless of what humans may do...**God always gets the last word...**

Remember, Jonah was trying to turn in his resignation...

But like we're about to see...The LORD refused to accept his resignation!

Vs. 4 says....

4 But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea

AND The word “hurled” here...is the same word used in **1 Samuel 18:11** when King Saul hurled his spear at David....

- This was not some random weather event....
- This was God taking **AIM** at a runaway prophet!

And God sends A GREAT WIND...

- Earlier in **vs. 2**, we saw that God was sending Jonah to a **GREAT** city!
- But Jonah ran away from that **GREAT city...**
- So INSTEAD God sent him a **GREAT** storm!

Tim Keller said it like this:

"Every act of disobedience to God has a storm attached to it."

Now hear me when I say this...

That **does NOT mean** every storm in your life **is because of your sin...**

Just look at the book of Job....

- Sometimes the storm comes, and you did nothing to cause it.
- But it **DOES mean** every sin has a storm attached to it somewhere

Maybe not today...But someday...it's coming

But here's the good news about this storm...

- This storm was not God's hatred...
- This storm was God's LOVE.

Hebrews 12:6 says:

"For the Lord disciplines the one he loves..."

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

If God hadn't loved Jonah...

- God would have let him run off to Spain!
- The very fact that God sent a storm...is proof that God wasn't done with Jonah!

Hey Christian, for us today:

- If God is sending a storm in your life...to turn you around from your disobedience...
- That's not God giving up on you...
- That's God coming for you and loving you!

Maybe you've got a storm brewing in your life today...

- And maybe it's God using it to turn you back to Him!

B. The Pagans Are Prayin' While The Prophet Is Sleepin' (vs. 5)

Then look at **vs. 5...**

The Sailors were afraid!

- Now these were professional sailors....
- They had seen some bad storms before...

But this storm was **so great** that the sailors were afraid!

So they “each cried out their own gods”...

I want you to notice... everybody on the boat is praying...except for Jonah!

- They start calling out to every god they could remember...
- And then they start hurling their cargo overboard...
- God was hurling a storm!
 - And they were hurling their cargo!

And remember...these sailors were getting paid to haul this cargo...

- So imagine how bad this storm must have been for them to begin to throw overboard their paycheck...just to survive the storm...

The thing was...God didn't want their cargo...

God wants His prophet!

But ALSO notice who was missing from this picture....

Jonah!...

Jonah had gone DOWN into the inner part of the ship and was fast asleep...

Just notice the irony in this scene for a moment:

- The Pagans are praying and screaming....
- And The Prophet is sleeping....
- The ones who **DON'T KNOW GOD** are crying out to God...
- And the one man on board who **DOES KNOW GOD**...is fast asleep...

And that phrase **“fast asleep”**

- Is almost like a “trance-like” sleep...
- It's the kind of sleep of a person who thinks they're safe when they're in great danger...

See, in this moment, when God was hurling wind and waves at the boat....Jonah had a great peace while he was running from God....

Hey Christian, Today FOR US:

The absence of conviction...is not the presence of God's approval.

In other words...

- We can feel perfectly calm....
- But we can be headed in the completely wrong direction.

C. The Captains Similar Call (vs. 6)

Finally, look at **vs. 6**

6 So the captain came and said to him, “What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god!...”

I don't want you to miss this...

Look at what the Captain says to Jonah...

“Arise...Call Out”...

These are almost exactly the same words that God said to Jonah in vs. 2...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

And I like to imagine how the scenes played out when I read God’s Word...

SO I imagine Jonah being fast asleep...

- Chaos is going on upstairs...
- And down in the ship...The Captain comes down and finds Jonah ***fast asleep...***
- Maybe Jonah is dreaming...
- And then...in his dream...he hears some familiar words...
- “Arise...Call Out”...
- “Arise...and CALL OUT!”
- But he wakes up...to familiar words...
- But instead of God...it’s the ship’s captain...because of what God is hurling at the ship!

God asked Jonah to call out on His behalf to a sinful people so they would not perish....

AND NOW Jonah finds himself on a boat with people who did not know the Lord, and they are asking him to Call Out on their behalf of them...so they will not perish...

Jonah had run from God’s command...

But God had chased him down....

And this time...God’s Words...came out of the mouth of a pagan sea captain!?

Like, how wild is that!?

Jonah wouldn’t hear it from God...

So God let him hear it from a pagan ship captain...

And listen to what the captain says next:

Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish.”

In other words... ***“Maybe God will notice us...”***

- God had noticed Nineveh...
- And Jonah didn’t care....
- Now...this captain...who is staring death square in the eyes...
- Looks at Jonah...and says call out to your God...
- Maybe He will notice us....

***Jonah didn't care that Nineveh was drowning in their sin....
But now He's on a boat with men who are literally facing drowning
in the sea...***

And this is just wild...

- The only man on that ship who knew how to call out to The One True God...was running from God and fast asleep....
- And the man who **HAD** the answer...didn't care enough to wake up.

And when I read this...

I can't help but wonder...could this be us?!

- The world around us is drowning in their sin...
- And they're crying out to every god they've ever heard of...

***Could we be the ones....who HAVE THE ANSWER...but we just
don't care enough to WAKE UP!?***

Transition

So how does someone say no to God?

We've seen this through Jonah...

- One step down at a time....
- One step away from the presence of God at a time...

And we've seen something even bigger:

- God rules...He speaks...and His call is clear
- God reigns...even when we say NO!
- ***And because God rules and reigns...The Only Right Answer To God is YES!***

***God's not looking for your permission...God's looking for your YES
and your obedience!***

So what does OUR YES look like for us this morning!?

- I think this Passage calls us to say **YES in THREE WAYS.**

Applications

1. Say YES To The Word God's Already Spoken

Maybe you're in this room today...and you're waiting for God to speak...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us:

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...

John 1:14 tells us

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

God now speaks to us from His Word...

- So while we may be waiting on God to speak....
- He already has...
- We hold His Word in our hands...

Remember...God noticed Nineveh...

- And God still notices the lost all around us today...
- And God's Word has not left us wondering what to do about it...

Jesus Himself commissioned us in Matthew 28:19-20 saying:

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you....

And Jesus didn't just give the Great Commission to preachers...

- This is a commission that has been given to **ALL OF US!**

So when I read this story....

- about drowning men...begging The ONE WHO KNEW GOD...to wake up and cry out to God for them....
- About a man who was called to go to a people who were drowning in their sin...and to tell them to repent...

I can't help but wonder...could we be the ones who are fast asleep...while people all around us...are drowning...and looking for someone who KNOWS THE ONE THEY CAN CALL OUT TO FOR SALVATION!?

Everybody in this room has a Nineveh....

- It may not be a city in Iraq...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

- It might just be the house across the road from you..
- It might be the guy you see at the coffee shop or the restaurant every week...
- It may be the coworker you'd honestly rather be judged than see them saved...
- Or a family member who you quit praying about a long time ago....

And some of you know who I'm talking about...

- right now their face has already popped up in your head....

And we know from God's Word...that we are to share God's Truth with them....

So WHO are you running from today?

- Who are you running...from telling them about Jesus?
- It wasn't just Jonah...
- I think all of us...in some way or another...can find ourselves running from being obedient to the Lord in telling people about Jesus....

So for many of us today...

- It's time to stop saying NO to God and what He's asked us to do...
- And it's time to put our YES on the table and get behind The Lord and follow Him!

Say YES To The Word God's Already Spoken!

2. Say YES To The Call God's Placing On You

For some specific people in this room...

God may be calling you to say **YES** to Him in a very particular way....

When I was a junior in High School...

- God began to call me to ministry...
- And I said **NO!**
- I had seen the ungodly business meetings in churches...I had seen my Father treated unkindly and unfairly in ministry...and I didn't want anything to do with that...
- So I came up with a plan...I wanted to be a **Lawyer**...
- So when I pre-registered for college...I put down Pre-Law studies...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

But the summer of my senior year...

- God's Holy Spirit weighed so heavily on me...that I couldn't say **NO!**
- And by the time I was a Senior in College...I prayed the prayer from **Isaiah 6:8**... “Here I am. Send me”...and I told the Lord... wherever you lead...I'm gonna you faithfully...

So in 2017...

- When The Lord called me out of music ministry and into preaching...
- My **YES** was already on the table...
- I was gonna follow Him wherever He led.

Some of you sitting in this room right now....

- You know exactly what I'm talking about...
- God's Holy Spirit has gotten ahold of you in a particular way...and may be calling you to ministry...whether that be on the Mission Field...serving a church as a minister or as a Pastor...or to plant a church....

And maybe God has been tapping you on the shoulder for years...

- Others have seen it in you and confirmed that calling...
- And maybe you don't know what to do with that calling...

Well the first thing is...YOU'VE GOTTA PUT YOUR YES ON THE TABLE...

- Here I Am...Send ME!

Second...you need to be mentored....

- Paul needed a Barnabas....
- Timothy needed a Paul....
- I've got a Del in my life...who has mentored me for 20 years now...
- So would you come and visit with me, Kendall, or Grant...and we would love to help walk with you through this calling....

I want to give you some real facts:

An average of 1000 churches A YEAR...close their doors....

- Many because they can't find a Pastor....

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

Right now...there are somewhere around 10% of Southern Baptist Churches who cannot find a Pastor...

Seminaries are reporting...that there are not enough Pastors to even replace the Pastors who are retiring...

- And I don't know if you've noticed...Our Nation is growing... especially in Texas...
- AND we need more churches...not less...

SO maybe God is calling you to be a Pastor...

You may not can help every church...

But God could use you to help shepherd ONE CHURCH!

Lostness is also growing in The World...

- The International Mission Board presently has 3600 missionaries all around the world...
- But they literally have dots all over the world...of unreached people groups that they have discovered...WHO have **NEVER HEARD the Gospel...and have NO ACCESS TO THE GOSPEL...**

The problem is...the harvest is plentiful...but the workers are few....

Southern Baptists...have the resources....

They have the locations mapped out....

But they don't have the people who have said YES....

Maybe God is calling you to go to the Nations and the unreached people groups...

AND maybe you don't even know what that looks like....

- **But maybe today you need to put your YES on the Table and let The Lord work out the details....**

He did it in my life...

- 9 years ago I didn't even know how to organize or plan out a sermon...
- I couldn't imagine...having to stand up and preach for 20 minutes... like that's a long time...
- And now I can't figure out how to preach under 40 minutes...

What about you?

- **Is God saying to you...I could use you?**

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

- *If so...won't you put your YES on the table!?*

Because if God is calling You...EVERY OTHER answer is simply A NO TO GOD!

Alistair Begg said it about as simply as it can be said:

"If God says go, we dare not say no."

Today....

If God has been stirring something inside of you...

- Don't harden your heart...
- Don't walk out of here and head back down below deck and go to sleep...

But would you come talk to me, Kendall, or Grant....

Say YES To The Call God's Placing On Your LIFE...

And let Him work out the details....

3. Say YES To The Savior Who Never Said No

The truth is this:

- Every single one of us has played Jonah.
- Every single one of us has told God NO at one point or another...
- And what we need is a Savior who has never said **NO**

The Truth from The Entirety of God's Word is this:

God is Holy.

He created all things and He alone is perfect.

He can do nothing wrong, and He is the definition of Holiness.

He is set apart from everything that is ordinary and not good.

Humans are Sinful.

And The same God Who said Nineveh's evil had come up before

Our sin has come upon Him too...

We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, we've all done something wrong, against God's law, we've all sinned.

This creates a problem, because our sin separates us from God in this life and the next.

And the storm we deserve...is the storm of God's righteous wrath against our sin...

And no amount of trying harder...can calm that storm...

Jonah 1.1-6 | Running From “Yes”

Jesus is the answer, BUT GOD loved us so much... that God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, who came to Earth as a baby, fully God and fully man. And Jesus lived a fully perfect, sinless life here on Earth, but yet went **DOWN** to the cross and died for your sins and my sins.

And Jesus went **DOWN** into the grave..

But three days later, Jesus **AROSE** out of that grave and defeated sin and death.

So today, you don't have to remain hopeless, but you can have a rescuer named Jesus Christ!

If you turn from your sins, believe and have faith in Jesus Christ, and follow Him, then you will be rescued from your sin that separates you from God.

Because Jesus never said **NO**, He got what He did not deserve, death on a cruel cross

AND You and I, can get what it is that we do not deserve, forgiveness and eternal life.

Today, if you've never cried out in belief and faith...

God desires that His Word would cause you to say **YES** to Him who never said **NO** to us and our sin!

Today, if God's Word has spoken to you, would you cry out to Him to save you?

Don't say NO to the one who died in your place!

Today:

If God **HAS** rescued you, would you rejoice in Your Redeemer?

- And then would you not hold that The Good News for yourself...
- But you would **SAY YES to sharing it...and would some of you say YES to serving Him in ministry!**

Big Idea

Because God Rules and Reigns, The Only Right Answer To God Is YES!

Church, I love you!

Let's Pray!