

December 18th – Running from God

“Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.’ But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.” (Jonah 1:1-3)

I admire runners. I know some people who run in all sorts of weather – hot/cold, dry/rain, calm/windy, etc. Some of my friends run many miles almost every day. Sometimes on TV I catch the coverage of a marathon. It blows my mind that someone could run 26 miles without stopping! Running is a wonderful thing because it comes with many great health benefits. Most runners are able to maintain their weight while experiencing a boost of energy and metabolism.

Yet, there are times when running is the worst thing we can do, especially when we’re running from God. That’s exactly what the prophet Jonah did about 3,000 years ago. I’m sure you remember the story from Sunday School. We tend to emphasize the fact that he was swallowed by a whale, but probably don’t take enough time to consider his initial mistake. When God commanded Jonah to go east to Nineveh, Jonah went as far west as he could go – to Joppa (modern-day Spain).

Jonah was a man of God. Why would he run from a preaching assignment in Nineveh? Because his people, the Jews, had been severely harassed by the Ninevites and he wanted them to die. He didn’t want the Ninevites to repent because he wanted them to die and go to hell. That’s a horrible attitude for a man of God, but even God’s men can get in the flesh. Jonah didn’t have a good reason to run from God and neither do you! What has He called you to do? Don’t run away – do it today!