

## Mission of Mercy

### I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. **Doug Wicks:** The Seed Company. Bible Translation.
- B. **Slide#2 Women's Retreat** - ladies get signed up & please pay balances. Also if anyone would like to sponsor a lady who wasn't able to pay.
- C. **Slide#3 Easter Service** - 7:30am the 20th. Lower campus. Outdoor stage.
- D. **Slide#4 Patrick & Shari Bailey:** Fri night an *uncontrolled house fire* burned 1000 homes 90% of the **Bajao Muslim Village of Isla Verde** where the **Baileys** have been ministering for 12yrs.
  - 1. In 3 hours the **houses** were gone, the Bajao **church** was gone, our **preschool** was gone and the **neighboring Muslim areas** were burned down as well.
  - 2. There **Computer Center** was spared and is where they are offering first aide. They are secretly feeding some people in the Computer Center so as not to cause a riot.
  - 3. **If you would like to help:** buying pots, pants, clothes, water. [put **Bajao Fire** on check/ envelope]
  - 4. We have a **school team** going in **10 days** with **Wayne & 5 Loaves**.
- E. **Prayer:** Jonah could say...**Ps.118:17-19a** (read)

### II. **INTRO:**

- A. **Slide#5** George H. Morrison said, *The Victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings*.
  - 1. When we **fall** we often feel our ministry is ended & there is no hope for recovery.
    - a) But our God is a God of a 2nd chance.
    - b) Micah 7:8 **Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; When I fall, I will arise.**
- B. **Slide#6** I wonder, **was the great fish more relieved to be rid of Jonah as Jonah was to get out of the fish? Maybe it was mutual?** [Title: *Mission of Mercy*]
- C. Jonah learned in the last chapter what Isaiah said, **When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.** Is.43:2
  - 1. We don't know **where** he was vomited up on shore, **but** we do know...*the Lord was there.*
  - 2. The **will** of God will never lead you, where the **grace** of God can't keep you, & the **power** of God can't use you.
- D. The Lord is as concerned with **His workers** then He is with **their work?**
  - 1. God wants to work **in us as well as work through us.**
- E. **Steps of Great Awakenings...** [whether individual **or** for a community]

### III. Slide#7 **[1] GOD NEEDS A SPOKESMAN (1)**

- A. How do you feel when the word of the Lord comes to you **the 2nd time**? [2nd chance]
1. [1] Readily accept it & are thankful? [2] Take it for granted? [3] Plan on it? [4] Can't really believe it, but want to? **Or**, don't ever **feel** worthy of a 2nd chance?
    - a) Which of us can claim to be qualified for participation in the divine work?
    - b) Are we ever worthy or qualified to work for Him?
      - (1) **None of us qualify for His service, but he asks us to be part of His work.**
      - (2) **God is for the defeated.** God uses the **defeated** to do **great things**.
- B. **Slide#8blank** Can you think of any biblical characters who were given a **2nd chance** & were **restored to ministry**?
1. **Abraham** (lied about his wife); **Jacob** (lied to his father Isaac); **Moses** (killed a man & fled from Egypt); **Peter** (denied the Lord 3 times).
- C. **But why? Why** is God so gracious to give us **another opportunity** after we have failed Him? See **Ps.103:8-14**. Note the Cross...
1. (11) is the **vertical** measure (not north to South). His **mercy** is as high as the heavens.
  2. (12) is the **horizontal** measure. His **forgiveness** is as wide as **infinity** both directions.
    - a) The intersection is of course Calvary. - We draw our lines from the cross.

#### IV. **Slide#9 [2] GODS SPOKESMAN MUST SPEAK ONLY WHAT HE TELLS HIM (2-4)**

- A. **Slide#10** His instructions were simply to travel those **787miles** [I punched in Tel Aviv to Mosul] to Nineveh and preach the message the Lord would provide at the appropriate time.
- B. **He must preach God's word** - What was Gods rebuke to Jobs friends in 42:7? **you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has**.
1. **A doctor must not only give medicine but he must give the right kind of medicine.**
  2. Deliver God's message w/o tampering w/it.
- C. **3 day journey** – Nineveh was a sprawling metropolis w/perhaps a million people in & around it.
1. **Slide#11 Archeological photos today** show parts of the once massive walls still standing (8 miles of wall around the main part of the city).
    - a) Walls were 100' high, 3 chariots could run abreast on top of the wall.
  2. The city was surrounded by an **inner wall** and an **outer wall**.
    - a) The huge **inner wall** (50' wide, 100' high) was about **8 miles in circumference** while the **outer wall** encompassed fields and smaller towns.
  3. It was a very sinful city. Read **Nahum 3:1-4** (ruthless, cruel, violent city)
- D. **Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown** – **Only a one line sermon...but it had a whale of an impact**.
1. Only 5 words in the Hebrew text. **Yet, 5 words stir an entire nation**.

2. It was a 3 day preaching journey [Revival hits day 1]...everyone *immediately* repents...  
So why does God give them **40 days** of warning? [to show *abundant* grace?]

#### V. Slide#12 [3] THEY BELIEVED GOD (5a)

- A. This so much proves that *Salvation is of the Lord* (i.e. not his prophet)...because of 4:1.  
1. Jonah's *heart* was not found anywhere in this. – Yet, God blessed His Word.
- B. How was this decree different from Constantine's or the mass conversions of the Middle Ages?  
[Why? here the people *believed* first - vs.5]
- C. I also like the fact that they didn't run around the city pointing fingers on *who to blame*. They all just owned it.  
1. I think if judgment was falling on our Tem/Murr Valley we'd be looking at...*It's probably because Pechanga. It's those wineries in Tem. It's them Marijuana Shops trying to come into town I bet.* - Greatest to least saw their part in it.

#### VI. Slide#13,14 [4] FAITH RESULTS IN REPENTANCE (5b)

- A. They *proved* their faith (believed God) by their works of contrition. [outward evidence]  
1. True repentance = a complete turn-about.  
2. Lk.24:47 and that **repentance and remission** of sins should be preached in His name to all nations.

#### VII. Slide#15 [5] REPENTANCE LEADS TO ACTION (6)

- A. Slide #16 [opps wrong guy] (6) Word of the religious humiliation of the people reached the king of Nineveh, probably Ashur-dan III.
- B. The spirit of a true awakening is **contagious**.  
1. It spreads rapidly & affects all classes of people.  
2. The king was willing to relinquish his seat of authority & submit to a greater authority.  
a) No **human** could have forced this powerful king to do this. It would have taken **armies** to dethrone him.
- C. Slide#17 When you come to *the King of the universe* you must set aside your \_\_\_\_\_???
1. *Whatever robe you don*. Maybe yours looks like a **suit**. Maybe its your **position** you're so proud of. Your **title** on your door. Your **degreed initials** after your name. Your **badge**. Your **smock**. Your **education**. Your **success** in business. Your **income** amount. Your **level, rank, prestige, influence**. *Lay it aside & humble yourself before your Creator*.  
a) Oh, don't forget Jesus did it first...when He *laid aside* His **heavenly garments of glory** & came to earth. And when He *laid aside his garments* to wash feet.

## VIII. Slide#18,19 [6] THE CALL FOR AN ALL OUT PRAYER MEETING (7-9)

- A. Every awakening large or small had/has its roots in a prayer mtg.
1. And prayer is given its rightful place in Nineveh.
  2. Food & drink, the necessities of everyday living were now to be ignored.
  3. **Note:** the king doesn't tell them **what** to pray for...it's actual **praying** that matters.
    - a) It's a full blown prayer service in Nineveh.
    - b) Did you know, a **drowning man never needs to be schooled on how to cry for help!**
      - (1) **Slide#20** You just need to cry out **mightily!** (8)
      - (2) **People who say they cannot pray are deceiving themselves.** Some of the greatest prayers of the bible come from **ordinary people w/a great need.**
        - (a) From a **leper**, *make me clean*. From a **blind man**, *open my eyes*.  
From a **poor re-publican/publican**, *God be merciful to me a sinner*.
  4. Prayer changed Nineveh. **What might you & I crying mightily to God do today?**
- B. **Slide#21** (8) **Sackcloth** [קֶשֶׁת] - cloth made of black goats' hair, coarse, rough, and thick, used for sacks, and also worn by mourners. [think burlap against your naked body]
1. **Slide#22,23** Not sure what **animals clothed with sackcloth** looks like but...
  2. Even the animals were kept from eating & were donning sackcloth.
    - a) Thus again showing the peoples sincere remorse.
      - (1) **Maybe its time we wrap our little hiney's in itchy burlap for awhile?**
      - (2) **Maybe its time we learn how to cry mightily?**
- C. (9) This gentile city turns from its ways **w/o any guarantee of grace**...only **hope** God might turn aside His wrath & spare the city
- D. This fear of judgment from God is startling because the Assyrians were a cruel, violent nation fearing no one.
1. **Slide#24** Their chief sin? **Violence**(8) [reliefs show: empaling enemies. flaying enemies]
- E. **Slide#25** This was truly **the greatest revival** this world has ever seen.
1. **What view of God did the Ninevites express in vs.9?** (mercy)
  2. **Doesn't our view of God affect our willingness to turn away from our sins & turn toward God?** [Yes, that's what ultimately does it – Our need to get **re-focused** on **HIM**]

## IX. Slide#26 [7] GOD'S MISSION OF MERCY (10)

- A. Most important step, as the others are the **human** side, now the **divine** side.

1. Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his **mercy**. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.
- B. **God relented?** – From the **human** stand point it “looked” like God repented, **but** from the **divine** perspective, it was simply God’s response to mans change of heart.
1. God is utterly consistent w/himself – It only appears like He is *changing his mind*.
  2. **Slide#27 Jer.18:7-10** explains the heart of God concerning nations turning from their sin...
    - a) **7** The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to **pull down**, and to **destroy** it, **8** if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will **relent** of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. **9** And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to **build** and to **plant** it, **10** if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will **relent** concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.
    - b) The goal of Gods judgment is **correction** not **revenge**.
      - (1) Of course, until He is **completely** through w/them (like Amalakites).
- C. **So, was Nineveh’s repentance real?** - See what Jesus says in **Mt.12:41**
1. **Slide#28** The people of **Nineveh** will stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for they **repented** of their sins at the preaching of Jonah. Now someone greater than Jonah is here - **but you** (Scribes/Pharisees) **refuse** to repent.
  2. **Compare:** Jesus had preached to his generation for **3 years** and had reinforced His message with His **miracles**, **yet** they would not repent and believe. Now Nineveh heard from a heartless prophet... *1 message, in 1 sentence, by 1 preacher, which emphasized **wrath** & not love, yet they repented & were forgiven.*
- D. **Slide#29** He had spared **Jonah** in chap.2, now He spared **Nineveh**.
1. God’s mercies are always **unmerited**; His grace is never earned.
  2. **Repentance** is never a work to be rewarded. But this is not to say that God does not act in response to such repentance.
  3. **Nineveh’s repentance *delayed*** God’s destruction of the city for about 100 years. The people evidently fell into sin again, so that later the city was destroyed, in 612 b.c. (see the Book of Nahum - for their utter destruction by Babylon).
- E. When God threatened punishment He provided a **dark backdrop** on which to etch most vividly *His forgiving mercies*.
1. This emphasized His **grace** most brightly to the sinners’ hearts.
    - a) God is finished with **this city**...**but not** with **this prophet**.
- F. **My Jonah Poem for chapter 3:**

1. Ejected to Land, Face in the Sand. 2nd Chance, No “if, but, or can’t(s)”.  
2nd Time, On the Dime. 3 Days, Voice Raised.  
40 Days, And wrath Pays. 1st Day, They Obey.  
King Dashes, Sits in Ashes. Maybe God will relent? If we repent.  
All the Kings Horses & all the Kings Men... Covered in Sackcloth & Repented of Sin.  
God wills “*None to Perish*”. True Repentance He does Cherish.  
Nineveh, you may Go. Jonah, your Heart I will now Show.

G. 2 Pet.3:9 The Lord isn’t really being **slow** about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being **patient** for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to **repent**.

1. **Shalom** = universal flourishing. [not just **peace** but wholeness, completeness, being settled]
  - a) Cornelius Plantinga said, “Sin is the vandalism of shalom.”
  - b) **Shalom** only comes through repentance.
  - c) **Repentance** is the **hose** that **shalom** flows through. *Sin kinks the hose.*
    - (1) **Thus**, **repentance** must be done daily.
    - (2) And remember, there is **1 human heart cry** that **never fails** to reach the ears of God. It is the voice of **genuine repentance & confession of sin**.

H. **Communion**: A time to fast & a time to feast.

1. **Bread**:
2. **Cup**: