



God, Jonah & A Big Fish Too!

If you're at all like me, you have a hard time passing up the story that is the book of Jonah. I find myself identifying with Jonah in several ways! Not in the most obvious, of course; I'm not a prophet in the Jonah sense of the word! I've never received an oracle from the Lord! I've never been thrown into the sea by a bunch of sailors; or, swallowed by a big fish! But, I have tried to run from God! I have been reluctant to go to a new place of ministry! Sara & I were almost newlyweds when we moved across the country to do ministry in Denver, CO. We started our family there; and, for the next 20 years we did youth ministry, adult ministry; and, we owned 2 different businesses! But, the Spirit of God began to stir a desire in my heart to sell the business and become a lead Pastor at a local church somewhere. So, we began to pray about where IN DENVER the Lord would have me to pastor; because, I was very reluctant to leave Colorado! After all those years we'd developed some deep roots. I loved Colorado— I still do— but, God had a way of preparing us to go where He was leading! Once He depleted our savings, God broke my will; and, moved us here, to Sioux City, IA. So, in a small way, I get Jonah's response, in v.3, of the opening chapter: *"The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai:*

'Get up! Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because their wickedness has confronted Me.' However, Jonah got up to flee to Tarshish from the Lord's presence. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish, from the Lord's presence". In Jonah's mind, there was nothing great about the city of Ninevah for many reasons! He was comfortable where he was; and, clearly, he wasn't on the same page with God on this one! God would have some work to do in Jonah to change him. We need the message of Jonah; because, if we're all being honest, we all look a lot like Jonah! And, the same kind of "spiritual surgery" that Jonah needed, we need! Jonah's story reveals how God includes us in His disciple-making work; and, then prepares us for it! Until we submit to God's Sovereign directive, for our lives, we're going just keep getting swallowed up by one big fish after another, like Jonah. So, let's talk about God's Sovereign will & plans for you. The greatest fulfillment you will ever realize, in your life, comes only from obeying Him! We tend to operate life with this weird idea that God's plans for us just aren't going to be as satisfying as our plans are; like, obeying Jesus and sacrificing everything for Him will be a drag & a burden to us.

His Commands Are Not A Burden

The Apostle John addressed that sentiment: *"For this is what love for God is: to keep His commandments. Now His commands are not a burden"* 1 John 5:3. It's no burden to love God & obey His will for your life. God has created you! He has downloaded the best path for your life into your heart by His indwelling Holy Spirit; and, your plans will never offer you the meaning in life that you long for! The best path for Jonah was the road to Ninevah; NOT, the boat ride to Tarshish that he chose for himself! And, because he rebelled, God would need to apply some pressure to get him back to the best place possible for his life; which, was the center of God's will. Jesus has commissioned us to make disciples; and, we're living in disobedience if we're not doing it! And, the blessed life you're looking for is realized, in part, in the obedient investing of your life in God's work in other people! We'll talk more about Jonah next post!

"Greeting Team"

For Sunday, November 7

Remember: Meet in the coat room @ **10:30 am** for brief prayer & then go "welcome" people! NOTE: Keep an eye on the auditorium for those who slipped past!

Greeters this week:

Erickson Thursday Night;
Jen Hagler Thurs

- 1st— Erickson Thursday PM;
Jen Hagler Thursday PM
- 2nd— Terry Embke Monday Night;
- 3rd—Randy Ehlers Sunday Night;
Donna Ehlers Monday Morning
- 4th—Curt Mastbergen Sunday Noon;
Tackett Sunday Night

Small Groups @ MBC

*Are Committed To
Developing New Leaders
Through Apprenticeship—
Small Group Leaders Are
Intentional About
Reproducing Themselves*

-Guide To: Small Group Ministry @ MBC

Announcements

1. Looking For A New Podcast?
Try the
"Everyday Disciple Podcast"
by Caesar Kalinowski
2. Looking For A News Source?
Try The Christian Post at
www.christianpost.com
or on Twitter