



Sunday, July 5, 2020

Pastor Don Denyes

## **Intro to Jonah 1:1-3**

There are times when we are all tempted to run from God. This is a trait we have inherited from our father, Adam. After he sinned, when God called out to him, he “hid...from the presence of the LORD.” It is part of our nature as sinners that we do not want to be exposed. We know that if the evil in our hearts is exposed before the presence of the LORD, that we will be crushed. Therefore John says in his Gospel that “people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.” (John 3:19). This is the very same dynamic at work in the prophet Jonah in these early verses.

Thankfully, the LORD does not abandon us in our foolish ways. He pursues us. Sometimes, His pursuit is not pleasant for us in the moment, but He always pursues His children in love and for their good. Thankfully, Jesus came not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him (John 3:17). This is the very same reason that Jonah ran and hid from the presence of the LORD in his day. He knew that God is merciful and that His plan was to save (Jonah 4:2). Far be it from us to run for the same reason! May we be a people who love the gospel such that we are always eager to see even the vilest people we know come to saving faith in Jesus!

## **Context**

Jonah is essentially made up of three narratives (chapters 1, 3, 4) and a poem (chapter 2). Each narrative highlights the mercy of God in different ways. In chapter 1, the LORD calls Jonah to go and preach to the Ninevites so that He might show them mercy (though that’s not obvious at first). He continues to pursue Jonah in mercy, even though he deserved to be punished because of his disobedience. In chapter 3, the LORD shows His mercy to the Ninevites. The focus returns to Jonah in chapter 4 as God continues to show him mercy—undeserved kindness.

**Read and Reflect** *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Jonah 1:1-3; 2 Kings 14:23-25

“You’ve Changed!”

Jonah 1

Pictures of His Past

- 2 Kings 14:23
- Servant of God
- Prophet of God
- He was a Hero!

Pictures of His Present

- Jonah 1:1-3
- God Speaks
- Jonah Runs

“The Bible never flatters its heroes. It tells us the truth about each one of them in order that against the background of human breakdown and failure we may magnify the grace of God and recognize that it is the delight of the Spirit of God to work upon the platform of human impossibilities.” – Alan Redpath

## Discuss

- 1) Pastor Don quoted G. Campbell Morgan as saying when we read Jonah, “people look too much at the fish and not enough at God.” What are some other ways we can get distracted in our Bible reading and miss the main point?
  
- 2) Pastor Don also said that sometimes we can succeed in what we’re trying to do (like Jonah getting on the boat like he wanted), but still be far from God. Have you ever had a season in life where that was true? What was that like?
  
- 3) Read Psalm 139:7-10. We often hear words of comfort in these verses. In what circumstances might we hear them as more of a warning?
  
- 4) Why do people try to run from God? (Obviously because of sin, but think more specifically, what about sin causes us to run from God?)
  
- 5) How does God show mercy to Jonah?