

Sailors and Storms - Jonah 1:4-17 - Devotions

Monday, April 24

*Opening thought - what kinds of things cause you to "run" from God, avoid Him or ignore Him?
How would you describe yourself during these times?*

Read - Jonah 1:4-10

How does the author of Jonah 1:4-10 describe the following:

The storm...

The sailors...

Jonah...

Pastor Jerry said that "we never run from God and rebel in a vacuum." There is always a reason for our running and rebellion, just like there is a reason for the storm that Jonah and sailors are now experiencing. The "great wind" has come as an act of God's judgment which is impacting Jonah as well as others around him.

- Why do we tend to think that our sin only impacts ourselves? How could the "sins of God's people" be affecting their families, marriages, neighborhoods and places of work?

Pastor Jerry also mentioned that when "storms" hit our lives, it's easy to go into a coping strategy that fails to get at the root of the problem.

- How do you see that in the actions of the sailors?

- How do you act in similar ways?

Reflect - in times of suffering, distress and trials, it is crucial that we examine our hearts openly and honestly before God. Where we need to repent and turn from sin, we must do so. God is sovereignly at work to call us back to Himself and our avoidance hurts not only ourselves but those around us. Take time to pray about all you have read this morning.

Tuesday, April 25

Opening thought - recall the last time you recognized your own sin and disobedience. What did you do in response to that recognition? Describe it.

Read - Jonah 1:8-12 & 2 Samuel 6:5-11

- What do you notice about both Jonah and David in these passages as they are caught in their own sin?

- Can you identify with either of these men? How? (Be specific)

Pastor Jerry stated that "misery is the normal corollary for the doctrinally grounded but willfully disobedient child of God." Jonah's statement in verse 9 is doctrinally correct and well grounded. Yet Jonah remains in a place of willful disobedience.

- What do you think of this above statement?

- Dr. Paul Tripp is quoted as saying: "*The distance between our confessional and functional theology is what causes our problems.*" Do you agree? Why or why not?

Reflect - It would seem that although Jonah and David "know God" that their immediate choices do not reflect that knowledge. What they know is not directly influencing their actions and behavior in this particular moment. Instead of stewing in anger or running away the solution is simple yet costly to our pride - repent and believe. Take time to read 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 and use this as a place of prayer for today.

Wednesday, April 26

Opening thought - take a moment and describe your life before you knew Christ and were a believer. Then, describe what immediate changes you noticed after becoming a Christian.

Read - Jonah 1:4-17

- As you read through the text, where do you see "persistent rebellion" on Jonah's part?
- What is Jonah forgetting? (see Deuteronomy 7:6-10; Exodus 19:5)

Pastor Jerry asked us to consider the numerous things that Jonah could have done when he was confronted with his own sin by the sailors on the boat. He could have repented, or he could've asked the captain to turn the ship around. Instead Jonah chose suicide. This is how twisted and sad our life can become when we are wrapped up in sin and persistent rebellion against God.

- How would rehearsing the goodness of God or (for NT believers) the gospel of Christ help us in our times of rebellion and foolish decisions?

Reflect - Pastor Jerry ended his sermon by posing this thought: "God's love and grace towards the lost is so great that He can even use the rebellion of His people for their salvation." God can use any means he chooses to bring salvation. This is both challenging and comforting.

- Challenging: puts God on full display (sovereignty and power); gives us insight on how passionately God loves those he has marked out for salvation and what he will do to save them. Do we have God's heart for the lost in Palm Bay? Or are we excelling in love only for insiders?
- Comforting: says something about God's love for rebellious people (Ninevites as well as Jonah); even my own sin and rebellion cannot remove me from God's grace. God's commitment to those marked out is serious!

Take time to respond to the Lord this morning about these final comforting and challenging thoughts. Where and how do you need to act based on God's Word to you?

Sailors and Storms - Jonah 1:4-17 - sermon notes

Last message focused on just one word: "hurl"

- God hurled the wind on the sea (sovereign, loving discipline of the Lord)
- How now (in today's passage) the sailors hurl Jonah into the sea (v. 14)

Everyone focuses on the whale but miss the importance of vs. 4-14! This will be our focus today. Details we've heard before

1. We never run from God and rebel in a vacuum

Vs. 4-5

Wind has come as an act of God's judgment which is impacting Jonah as well as others around

him.

- Sailors impacted, cargo impacted
- Achan's sin impacted all of Israel (Joshua 7:18ff)

But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out. - Numbers 32:23 ESV

- Can manifest itself in irritability, deep-seated anger, stress, anxiety -- as we continue to run away and rebel against God.
- All our relationships are affected (family, church, neighbors, etc.); even affect our ministry to those around us

Root cause of this storm: Jonah

- How many problems we experience in our community or nation are caused by the sin of God's people?
- How much are we, the church, are turning from our wicked ways? How are we knowing disobeying and rebelling against God?

2. When a God-ordained storm hits, humanistic coping methods are completely ineffective

The sailors are freaking out and they turn to:

- *man made religion* (v. 5); they turn to the different gods for help and relief; praying and seeking help from any god who would help
- Throw cargo overboard (*practical wisdom of the day*)
- *Outside help/Consultant*: look to Jonah for help (and his god)
- *Blame Someone*: cast lots to figure out who is responsible for the storm (irony: God actually grants the sailors request for who is to blame)
 - Proverbs 16:33 🤔
 - Then once they know they pepper him with questions
 - Jonah confesses who he is!

3. Don't miss this -

Misery is the normal corollary for the doctrinally grounded but willfully disobedient child of God.

- Jonah's statement is doctrinally correct and well grounded. Yet Jonah remains in a place of willful disobedience
- ***The distance between our confessional and functional theology is what causes our problems. -Dr. Paul Tripp***
 - Gap between what I say and what I do
 - Most of us will never physically run from God, but this above quote can become a way of life for many of us as believers

4. Persistent rebellion makes the child of God more self-centered and hard-hearted

- Verse 12 is such a sad verse

So many things he could have said, but did not.

- Repented on the spot or asked for time to talk to God
- Asked the captain to turn the ship around to Joppa so he could obey God
- Yet he chooses suicide! This is how bad it can get for a child of God wrapped up in sin and disobedience! The ugliness of his spiritual walk is a warning to us as to what persistent disobedience can do to us.
 - How can this happen?
 - Pride! (He is proud of being an Israelite.)
 - Forgetfulness - And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?" Mark 8:17-21 ESV
 - They were forgetting Jesus and all He has done for us on the cross
 - Sometimes when it gets so bad, the unbelievers look more compassionate than the believers. (What a rebuke!)

5. God's love and grace towards the lost is so great that He can even use the rebellion of His people for their salvation.

God can use any means he chooses to bring salvation. This is both challenging and comforting.

- Challenging: puts God on full display (sovereignty and power); insight how passionately God loves those he has marked out for salvation and what he will do to save them. Do we have God's heart for the lost in Palm Bay? Or are we excelling in love only for insiders?
- Comforting: says something about God's love for rebellious people (Ninevites as well as Jonah); even my own sin and rebellion cannot remove me from God's grace. God's commitment to those marked out is serious!