

The Pursuit of the Prophet – Jonah 1:4-16

Have you ever had time in your life when you have questioned the character of God? When you seemed to put God on trial because of the circumstances of life or a crisis of belief based on something God has asked of you? In actuality, what are we really questioning and putting on trial is our trust and faith in our relationship with God. This is where we find Jonah.

Last week, you looked at three verses in which you saw...

1. The Command of Jonah
2. The Clarity of God's message
3. The Choice of Jonah

Today we will see through the life of Jonah, that even when we are unfaithful, He is faithful. Even when we are disobedient, He is sovereign and full of grace.

A.) God's Pursuit (vs. 4-5) – God pursues His disobedient servant

- a. The Consequences – the Lord sent out a great wind (v.4)

***Disobedience will always result in consequences**

- i. The Lord sent – The Lord was the source of storm The word "sent" means to hurl or throw
- ii. The ship – The storms of life will remind us that we are not in control, the ship was the mercy of the waves of the sea

- b. The Crew – The experienced crew was afraid for their lives (v.5)

***Disobedience will always put others in danger**

Notice how the crew responds:

- i. No peace – They were afraid
- ii. No power – They cried out to their God
- iii. No purpose – They were throwing cargo off the ship

All of these characteristics are evident in a person who does not have Christ. Can you imagine living a life with no peace, no power, and no purpose? Each and every day we come across people who live this way.

- c. The Callousness – Jonah was asleep (v.5)

***Disobedience will always cloud our vision of the things of God**

- i. Jonah sleeps – Jonah is secure in his sin. This is a dangerous place to be.
 1. The safest place to be is always in the center of God's will

Certain death was all around, but yet Jonah was asleep. Can same be said about us corporately or individually?

B.) God's Instruments (vs.6-11) – God uses others to bring us back to Him

- a. The words of the captain –
What do you mean sleeper? How can you sleep at a time like this?

Ironic, the same words that God asked of Jonah in verse 2 (v. 6)

Again, Jonah ignores the question and does not call of His God, why?

- b. The casting of lots (v.7) –Proverbs 16:33 –³³ The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

Sin will always find you out... You can only avoid your sin for so long...eventually it will be revealed

- c. The words of the crew – Who do you represent? What is your purpose? (v.8)
- d. Jonah's confession – (v.9) Does our heart match what we say?

Does our life resemble a life that fears God? What does it mean to fear God?

For an unbeliever it is to fear the judgment and wrath of God. For the believer it means to have an awe and reverence for God. This is the motivating factor for us to surrender to the Creator of the Universe.

Proverbs 1:7 declares, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." Until we understand who God is and develop a reverential fear of Him, we cannot have true wisdom. True wisdom comes only from understanding who God is and that He is holy, just, and righteous.

Continual and habitual sin does not constitute a healthy fear of God.

- e. The crew's concern – (vs. 10-11) Are you crazy?! **What do others who see us say?**

C.) God's Sovereignty (vs. 12-16) - God will work in spite of us to accomplish His will

- a. Jonah's Advice – (v.12) He would rather die, than go to Nineveh
- b. The Crew's Attempt (v.13) There was nothing they could do fix the situation, the pagan crew cared more for Jonah's well being than Jonah did for the crew
- c. The Crew's Acknowledgement (vs. 14-16) – Notice the difference from verse (5) to verse (16). From fear and faithless, to trust and faith. All because God is faithful.