

The 12 Minor Prophets

“Can you run away from God?” - Jonah
Sunday, December 2, 2012

INTRODUCTION

“The life of Jonah cannot be written without God; take God out of the prophet's history, and there is no history to write. This is equally true of each one of us. Apart from God, there is no life, nor thought, nor act, nor career of any man, however lowly or however high, Leave out God, and you cannot write the story of anyone's career.” - Charles Spurgeon

The Story of Jonah

A. Commission & Rebellion (Jonah 1-2)

1. God commissions Jonah to proclaim judgment to the Ninevites and call them to repentance
2. Jonah disobeys God's commission and tries to run
3. Jonah repents, gives praise, commits to fulfill commission

B. Commission 2.0 (Jonah 3)

1. God extends a second chance -- preach God's Word!
2. God changes Ninevah through His Word
3. God relents from judgment and receives their repentance
4. The aim of preaching and why it must be God's Word that is preserved in this pulpit!!!

C. Aftermath (Jonah 4)

1. Jonah's anger
2. God's compassion

The Doctrine of Jonah

A. God

1. Nature
 - a) Holiness
 - b) Sovereignty
2. Work
 - a) Justice
 - b) Mercy

B. Man

1. Nature
 - a) Fallen
 - b) Dependent
2. Work
 - a) In need of God's mercy
 - b) Instruments of God's mercy
 - (1) **Acts 10**
 - (2) **Romans 6:13**

C. Christ

1. Christ was a Galilean as was Jonah
2. Jonah disobeyed God's commission, but Christ perfectly fulfilled it
3. Sign of Jonah (this is where we should make the greatest tie-in)
 - a) **Matthew 12:38-41**
 - b) **Matthew 16:1-4**
4. Deliverer of Good News

The Application of Jonah...the answer to the question

A. You cannot run from God

1. You will either relent and repent or you will be found and judged
2. God used a storm to force Jonah's realization of the futility of his flight...Are there storms brewing around you? Is God getting your attention that you have fled satisfaction in Him? His commissioning of you to be on mission?
3. Whether as individuals like Jonah or nations like Nineveh, the examples are clear

B. You can run to God and find mercy

1. Jonah ran to God when God graciously captured him in the belly of the great fish
2. Jonah found God to be merciful and God's mercy persisted when Jonah did not
3. Nineveh, with all of their pagan practices, was able to find mercy from the only God who could give it
4. **Hebrews 4:14-16**
5. Though we see a sign in Jonah, Christ is the perfect prophet and deliverer. He conquered the grave and has given us this sign as the validation and perfection of His message of deliverance for mercy to those who believe.

C. You can run for God and be on mission

1. **Spurgeon**, "*Every Christian is either a missionary or an impostor.*"

2. While missionaries are to be honored, they are human...frail jars of clay. Jonah reminds us of this. Make no mistake, Jonah was a man of God.
3. We have no excuse.

D. You can run after God and be satisfied

1. Nineveh found that God was more satisfying than their other gods, and came to God on His terms -- if God is truly satisfying, then we will come to Him as He commands.
2. Nahum is a stark reminder that God is always satisfying and our hearts tend to drift
3. Jonah, himself, is a great reminder that our satisfaction in God is truly tested in our satisfaction that God receives all the glory in the way that God chooses, particularly through the extending of mercy and forgiveness.