

## The Reluctant Preacher

Jonah

PROPOSITION: The book of Jonah is more than a story about a great fish, a great storm, gourds, or worms. It is a story about man's relationship with God.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The book of Jonah is more than "a fish story." It really did happen.
2. Jonah was a historical character who prophesied in the northern kingdom following Elijah and Elisha.
3. Jesus said the Old Testament account is true (Matt. 12:38-41).
4. The Bible says that God prepared a great fish that swallowed Jonah. Why is that hard to believe?

### **DISCUSSION: The book of Jonah is a story about...**

#### **I. The consequences of disobedience (chp. 1).**

- A. Jonah received a "great commission" (vv. 1, 2).
- B. God is interested in the lost everywhere (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9).
- C. But Jonah did not want the people of Nineveh to repent and be spared (cf. Jonah 4:2).
- D. A person cannot get away from God.
- E. Because he disobeyed, Jonah failed to help others, endangered the lives of many, and ended up in a fish (v. 17).
- F. Applications:
  1. God gives us orders, and we may go in two directions.
  2. God has told us to go to the lost with the truth (2 Cor. 4:7; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15).
- G. The consequences of disobedience can be disastrous – to those we should be reaching and to ourselves.

#### **II. Prayer and restoration (chp. 2).**

- A. Most of Jonah 2 is a prayer from the belly of a fish. Trouble has a way of sharpening prayer skills.
- B. In a terrible situation, Jonah remembered God (v. 7).
- C. It is amazing that Jonah pleaded for the one thing he was not willing to extend to the Ninevites, i.e., mercy from God (v. 9).
- D. When Jonah repented, God forgave and delivered.
- E. God will give a second chance (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9; James 5:16).

#### **III. The power of God's word and the graciousness of God (chp. 3).**

- A. The greatest revival in history took place in a pagan city 150 miles northwest of Baghdad.
- B. Jonah was one man preaching God's message in a large city, the "Sodom" of his day.
- C. The recorded message is only eight words (v. 4).
- D. When the message is God's message, God's power is behind it (vv. 5-9).
- E. Lesson for us: Never give up proclaiming the truth of God's word.
- F. God's mercy is great to those who turn to Him (v. 10).

#### **IV. Misplaced values and God's broken heart (chp. 4).**

- A. Not often do you hear of a preacher who was upset because people responded (v. 1).
- B. Jonah was watching to see what would happen (v. 5).
- C. God prepared a shade for him, but it quickly faded. Jonah became very angry.
- D. Then God said, "You don't care!" (vv. 9-11).
- E. What the book is really about: Priorities.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. This is a book without an ending.
2. Will the story have a happy ending or a sad one as far as your response is concerned?

From "The Book of Jonah More than a Fish Story" by David Roper  
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Sunday, August 24, 2008