

Introduction: Matthew 13:53-58

Review:

Jonah 1 – Prophet to Israel/ 760 B.C./ God said go...Jonah said no. Sailors have their life changed. Jonah...man overboard/ God Fish to the rescue (1:16).

Jonah 2 – Help: PRAY TO GOD; He recognized his current condition/ remembered what he believed/ repented/ God's response...Jonah on the beach.

Today: **Jonah Chapter 3 READ**

Let's look closer at the responses we find in our text.

Jonah:

- God said go (now over 900 miles away) ...Jonah said yes. Didn't waste time creating a plan or developing a strategy.
- Experienced the mercy of God/not only rescued his life but restored his position.
- Did spending 3 days in the whale change him? Absolutely! Life change...a work of God!

The Ninevites:

- Simple message: judgement (not love) brought repentance (which is a work of God).
- They (from the least to the greatest) believed the message (God) and the messenger (Jonah).
- Even the king believed...and issued, along with his leaders, a decree for everyone, including himself.
- Sackcloth, ashes, and fasting for everyone...including the livestock. Humility! **1 Peter 5:6** Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.
- The decree: call urgently (pray) on God; give up their evil ways and violence. Life change...a work of God!
- Why pray and change? Not for God to change their circumstances, BUT to agree with God about their sin and plead for mercy to change his mind. What faith (Jonah)?!
- Their response was commended by Jesus: **Matthew 12:39-41** He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except

the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here.

The response of God:

- He is the God of second/third/fourth chances.
- Nothing is too difficult...bringing pagan fisherman, a king, an entire city to repentance.
- His amazing love for the lost by sending Jonah and changing their hearts.
- Prayer makes a difference...three chapters in a row!

Your response: The Ninevites believed God! Do you believe?

Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”

Hebrews 9:27 “Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.”

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Romans 10:9-10 “If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.”

Ephesians 2:8-10 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Believing changes behavior (sanctification).

Is your response to Jesus bringing about the changes like we see in Jonah and the Ninevites?