

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, April 28, 2015

Jonah and the Fish

Jonah 1:1 – 2:10 (*selected verses*)

Major Segments:

- God commands Jonah to go to Nineveh
- Jonah disobeys and flees to Tarshish
- Storm at sea and lots cast
- Jonah confesses to the sailors he is running from God
- Overboard and big fish provided by God

Segment Questions:

- Ever wonder why God didn't stop Jonah before he left for Joppa? How did he get the money for the ship journey to Tarshish?
- Have you ever felt like Jonah of a person(s) (Nineveh) and leave it up to God and why? Have you ever made a "Joppa trip" away from God?
- Why do you think Jonah confessed to the sailors that he was the problem because of running from God? If your sin is in your face do you hide and run or confront with confession?
- Why do you think the sailors were inclined to feel regret of throwing Jonah overboard? Do you think God was using this circumstance for Jonah or the unbelieving sailors?

Action Questions:

- Share a story in your life where you felt that the problem is for God to solve directly without you. Have you found yourself at times not willing to pray for someone(s)?
- How do you feel looking back that you avoided what God wanted you to do? Any specific Jonah story of your past?
- Tell us how you found God's mercy in a time where you ran from Him and knew He was calling you to a command.

Jonah 1:1 – 2:10

From: www.btstories.com

The Lord said to Jonah the prophet, “Leave right now and go to Nineveh. You’re to tell them I’m going to judge them because of their wickedness.”

Jonah knew that God was merciful and would forgive Nineveh if they repented. He didn’t want that, so he ran away from God’s will and went to the seaport town called Joppa. He bought a ticket and got on a ship going to Tarshish. He wanted to get far away from God’s will so there would be no possibility of Nineveh’s repenting.

Once the ship was out to sea, God sent a violent storm to hit it. The sailors were terrified because the storm was about to destroy their boat and drown them. They threw their cargo overboard to lighten the load. When that didn’t help, they prayed to their various gods. While all of this was going on, Jonah was fast asleep down in the hold of the boat.

The captain woke him up and said, “How can you sleep? We’re about to die. Get up and pray to your god.”

Eventually the sailors figured out that this storm was directed at only one person on the ship. They cast lots to see who it was. The results showed that Jonah was the reason for their troubles. They said, “Who are you, and what have you done?”

He said, “I serve the Lord God, who made the sea and the dry ground. But I’m running away from him.”

Suddenly the storm got worse! The men screamed at Jonah, “What should we do to you to calm the storm?”

Jonah yelled back, “God only wants one thing, and the storm won’t stop until He gets it. You’re to grab me and throw me overboard.”

The men didn’t want to kill an innocent man, so they worked even harder to fight against the storm and get to land. Finally they realized they couldn’t fight God. They cried out to the Lord and asked him for mercy for what they were about to do. They then grabbed Jonah and threw him overboard.

Immediately, the storm stopped! The men were shocked at the power of God. They fell to the deck and worshiped the Lord and vowed to serve only him.

God had a large fish waiting for Jonah as he went into the water. The fish immediately swallowed him, and he stayed in the fish’s stomach for three days.

Jonah prayed and acknowledged that it was God who put him in the fish. He finally said, “I’ll give you what you want. I’ll thank you for your will, and do what you want me to do.”

With that, the Lord spoke to the fish. It went to land and vomited Jonah onto the shore.