

November 1st, 2009
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: - Serving the Master of the Mission
Sermon #4 Title: The Mercy God Commissions
Sermon #4 Text: (Jonah)

Regardless of the specifics of any mission effort, every mission effort is a mercy effort. If you're not into missions, then you're not into mercy, because every mission is a mission of mercy!

I'll put it to you like this. If you're going to be in the Master's Business, then you're going to be in the Mission Business, and if you're going to be in the Mission Business, then you're going to be in the Mercy Business, and this event in the life of Jonah is chock full of mercy, and you need not miss it.

Sir. Thomas Fuller of the 17th century said, "God gives judgment in exact doses, but He gives mercy without measure."

- the Bible says that his Mercy is new every morning.

In the book of Jonah, and God's mission project in Nineveh, there are three primary places that we can see large doses of God's Mercy.

I. On the Wayward Messenger

*Note – In order to see God's Mercy on Jonah, we really need to see Jonah's real problem.

- Without reproaching, all that we've already preached about the man Jonah, I need to remind you of just a few things. I need to remind you of:

- Jonah's refusal to go to Nineveh in the first place.

- Jonah's attempted resignation as a prophet.

*Note – Now all of that being said, you need to realize one simple thing. – Jonah's problem was not with Nineveh, Jonah's problem was with God!

*Note – What did he do?

- Twice it is mentioned that he attempted to "flee the presence of the Lord."

*Note – Jonah hated Nineveh, and he was angry that God didn't agree with him. – Jonah saw them as men see them, he didn't see them as God sees them.

*Note – To have a problem with Master's Mission is to have a problem with the Master.

*Note – The Master's Mission is the Master's Decision, and to Disregard His Decision, is to Disregard Him.

- Any man that has a problem with any man, doesn't have a problem with any man, he has a problem with God.

- He doesn't love what God loves

- He doesn't see what God sees

- He doesn't agree with what God says.

Now that being said about Jonah, I want you to see God's Mercy on him throughout this event.

A. In his Physical Protection

1.) God protected Jonah in two places:

a.) Out of the water

b.) In the water

*Note – I've already told you that God sent the storm to spare the mariners God sent the fish to spare the missionary.

*Note – Do you know why God sent the fish? To keep Jonah from drowning!

2.) Remember –

a.) God didn't have to "catch" Jonah, Jonah was already caught.

b.) God didn't want just want Jonah in the water He could have merely sunk the boat.

- c.) He sent the storm to keep the mariners *out* of the water.
- d.) He sent the fish to keep Jonah *from* the water.

*Note – The fish was not a picture of judgment, the water was.

*Note – How many times in the Bible is water used in direct reference to judgment, or the term “flood” in similar matter?

- 3.) Noah and the ark – the water judged the world.
- 4.) The Red Sea crashing down on the Egyptians – the water judged the Egyptians.
- 5.) Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos, all spoke of a judgment of God “coming in like a flood.”

*Note – Don’t Miss This – When Jonah fled the Lord, he headed straight for the waters of judgment, yet what did God do? – God protected him from the judgment he so richly deserved!

(Now I’ll say this and move on. – Do you know what the fish does picture? – It is a perfect type of the Lord Jesus, keeping God’s man safe while in the waters of condemnation.)

- Mercy, is when God sees to it, that you and I do not get what we do deserve!

B. In His Spiritual Attention

*Note – When Jonah went to the bottom of the ocean, God was taking him to the bottom of his heart, and by His mercy He gave Jonah his undivided attention.

- 1.) 2:2 – “I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me.”
- 2.) 2:7 – “when my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord.”

*Note – When you read all of chapter 2 which is Jonah’s prayer to God, there are some things you’re going to find out.

#1 – Jonah didn’t change his mind about Nineveh, Jonah changed his mind about God!

- That was Jonah’s problem in the first place. – He didn’t flee from Nineveh, he fled from God. You can’t flee from your mission, or ministry, you can only flee from God.

- Jonah could have changed his mind about Nineveh, and it wouldn’t have changed a thing.

- he never said, “Okay Lord I’ll go”
- he never said, “Fine, whatever you say.”

- What he did say

- verse 5 - “I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.”
- verse 6 – “yet has thou brought up my life from corruption.”

*Note – Jonah’s (life from spared from corruption) is not that he was going to get to live, he didn’t know that when he was praying. His life spared from corruption was that God had allowed him to change his mind, and heart about God.

- verse 9 – “I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving, I will pay that I’ve vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.”

*Note – Jonah’s problem was with God so Jonah’s repentance had to be toward God!

#2 – Jonah didn’t ask for deliverance, he offered up praise!

#3 – Jonah didn’t miss the lesson

- verse 8 – “They that trust in lying vanities forsake their own mercy.”

*Note – Those who trust the Lord fortify the mercy given to them. Those who trust anything else forsake the mercy given to them.

(In short, to resign from God is to refuse your mercy, and I want all that I can get!)

C. In his Personal Restoration

- 1.) “And the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time.”

- 2.) God is the God of multiplied chances.
 - a.) Cain was given a second chance at his offering.
 - b.) Pharaoh was given multiple chances to repent.
 - c.) David was given a second chance
 - d.) Peter was given a second chance

*Note – It is the Mercy of God that holds back the Judgment of God, so the Grace of God can do the work of God.

*Note – God’s mercy is showered down onto his wayward messenger.

II. In the Warning Message

*Note – Now someone may say, “All Jonah preached was judgment, judgment, judgment, judgment.”

*Note – Where is Mercy in the message Jonah preached?

A. It is in the Condemnation of Sin –

- 1.) 1:2 Jonah is told to “cry against the wickedness of the city”
- 2.) Condemnation is to sin what an x-ray is to broken bone.

a.) It is the telling of the truth as it is!

*Note – 22 times in the Bible, Mercy and truth are married to each other in context.

- b.) Psalm 85:11 – “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.”
- c.) Psalm 25:10 – “All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.”
- d.) Paul said in Romans 7:7 – “I had not known sin, but by the law:”

*Note – Telling us of the dangers that we do not know is not mean, and belittling, but merciful and loving.

B. It is in the Notification of Judgment – “yet forty days”

*note – Don’t ever get the idea that Mercy is the Elimination of Judgment, but rather it is the Notification of Judgment.

- 1.) Paul said, “Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.”
- 2.) Mercy doesn’t remove Danger it reveals it.

On August 1st 1945, Army Major General Curtis LeMay ordered the dropping of some 63 million leaflets over 35 Japanese cities. These leaflets said in Japanese –

“Read this carefully as it may save your life or the life of a relative or friend. In the next few days, some or all of the cities named on the reverse side will be destroyed by American bombs. These cities contain military installations and workshops or factories which produce military goods. We are determined to destroy all of the tools of the military clique which they are using to prolong this useless war. But, unfortunately, bombs have no eyes. So, in accordance with America's humanitarian policies, the American Air Force, which does not wish to injure innocent people, now gives you warning to evacuate the cities named and save your lives. America is not fighting the Japanese people but is fighting the military clique which has enslaved the Japanese people. The peace which America will bring will free the people from the oppression of the military clique and mean the emergence of a new and better Japan. You can restore peace by demanding new and good leaders who will end the war. We cannot promise that only these cities will be among those attacked but some or all of them will be, so heed this warning and evacuate these cities immediately.”

*Note – Historians tell us that many of the Japanese believed the fliers and fled.

*Note – It was the Mercy of the United States that informed the Japanese people of the Danger of the United States.

*Note – It is by the Mercy of God that informs us of the Dangers of God.

*note – The Message that warns of Judgment is the Message that is Commissioned in Mercy!

III. For the Wicked Multitude

A. It is seen in Sending the Message

1.) The Lord said in the Bible, “I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked.”

a.) Wickedness HAS to be Judged.

(1.) Nahum 1:3 – “The LORD *is* slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*.”

*Note – There is no such thing as Righteousness that Ignores Judgment. – If you remove Judgment, you remove Righteousness. – God CAN’T NOT BE RIGHTEOUS!

b.) Psalm 119:142 – “Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth.”

*Note – It is only RIGHT and Good to condemn Wrong and Bad. Yet it is the Mercy of God that delays that Condemnation, so that He can send the Information needed to repent.

2.) The fact that God desires the salvation of the sinful is an act of mercy all by itself.

B. It is seen in Ending the Sentence

1.) 3:10 – “God saw their works that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them, and He did it not.”

*Note – The repentance of the people was the purpose of the message, which was the purpose of the mission, which was the purpose of the master!

Adrian Rogers said, “God would rather Forgive than Judge”

*Note – Know this – Judgment delayed, is Mercy Displayed! Jeremiah said in Lamentations 3:22 – “*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed,*”

Conclusion: - Mission Work is Message Work and Message Work is Mercy Work!

I want to tell you something about Mercy. – You’re in desperate need of more than you have.

- If you are running to the Lord, you are fortifying it.
- If you are running from the Lord, you are forsaking it.

In 1989 Zita, the last empress of Austria and the last queen of Hungary, died. She was buried in the royal crypt in Vienna where the other Hapsburgs lie. When the procession arrived at the church, someone knocked on the door. One of the friars asked who was there. They answered, "Zita, Empress of Austria, Queen of Hungary and of Bohemia, Princess of Bourbon-Parma." They were denied admittance. A second time someone knocked. "Who's there?" "Empress Zita," was the answer. Still she was not admitted. There was a third knock. "Who's there?" "Zita, a poor sinner," was the answer. Then the procession was allowed to enter.

Will you use the Mercy you have, to accept the Grace that God offers?

Will you serve the Master of the Mission, and labor to get out the message of Mercy?

How will you respond to God’s call today, to Arise and Go?