The Church of Jesus Christ

Lessons for the church in Jonah

Jonah Chapter 1 – Running from God

God's Word uncovers Jonah's sin (v. 1-2)

God calls Jonah to preach to Nineveh, the wicked capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrians were a wicked, cruel, and sinful people. Through Jonah, God reveals to us a deeper understanding of the concept of sin.

- Sin is more than doing bad things and breaking "rules."
- Jonah believed in sin and even condemned it. Yet there was sin in his own heart that flew under his radar.
- Jonah tried to make an identity without God.
- Building your life on any other "cornerstone" or "savior" will ultimately have devastating results.

God's Word sends Jonah running (v. 3)

- You cannot use "circumstances" to determine God's will. You can always find a "ship" ready to take you in the opposite direction. God has revealed His will to us in the Bible.
- Jonah cannot run or hide from God, for God is omnipresent and he knows it (v. 9). Jonah is running "relationally" away from God. You can do that under morality and church-going etc.

God's Storm uncovers Jonah's sin (v. 4-9)

- Sin is forging your identity apart from God, where you make something other than God the supreme love of your life.
- We can often have "functional saviors" that reveal to us what we are really living for.
- Jonah needs to experience and understand the grace of God.
- To help Jonah see himself and experience God's amazing grace, God sends a storm.

God's Deliverance in the midst of the storm (v. 10-17)

- God brings the storm because He loves and wants Jonah.
- If Jonah continues to run, he'll perish. He has to stop running to be saved.
- Jonah has himself thrown into the wrath of God to find that beneath the wrath is grace and love.

Years later, the reality, of which Jonah is but a sign, takes place (Matt. 12:38-42; 16:4; Luke 11:29-32). Jesus cast Himself into the wrath of God. We are saved by the true Jonah. Nothing rescued Jesus when He went under the flood waters of God's judgment, and He did that for us.