

TRUTH & RIGHT

the bulletin of the Wellsburg church of Christ

 WELLSBURG
CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.wellsburgchurchofchrist.com

Volume 12 Issue 23

August 6, 2017

JONAH'S CARELESS HEART

"The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, 'Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.' But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD,"

(Jonah 1:1-3). As Jonah was given a commission to go to a great city to preach the warnings from the LORD, we have been given a great commission to warn the lost of God's coming judgment and the salvation available in Christ Jesus. And just as Jonah failed to share the same

sincere concern for the people of Nineveh as God had, we too often fall short in having genuine concern which would motivate us to spread the message more efficiently and eagerly. Take a brief look at three shortcomings in Jonah's life which may open our own eyes to see changes which must be made in order to be more effective messengers for the Lord.

1. Going In the Wrong Direction

When Jonah was told to preach to Nineveh, he jumped on a ship which took him completely in the wrong direction which would get him nowhere near the

destination God had in mind. While you may never find yourself buying plane tickets that will take you to some remote island where you never have to see a lost sinner ever again, do you ever find yourself guilty of steering the direction of your conversations with those who are lost towards areas which aren't remotely close to touching on anything that will bring up spiritual matters? Would you rather the conversation drift as far away as possible from anything that might bring up their views on God, the bible or their religion? Are you finding ways to bring Christ and His Word up as you interact with sinners, or, like Jonah, is your speech "sailing" in the complete opposite direction?

2. Sound Asleep

When the LORD threw a violent storm on the sea threatening the lives of everyone on board the ship set sail for Tarshish, the sailors were frantically trying everything they could think of to save their lives. To

their surprise, they found one virtually unconcerned about their well being who was sleeping in the hold of the ship. *"Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep. So the captain approached him and said, 'How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish,'"* (Jonah 1:5-6). Like Jonah, do you find yourself falling into a deep peaceful sleep at night without even once offering fervent prayer of concern for the well being of souls in danger? Is your concern for the lost condition of others so great that it is consistently on your mind, or, like Jonah, would the lost have to wake you up and beg you to pray for them?

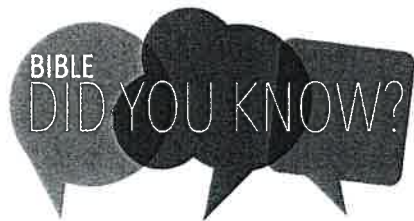
3. Lost Cause

Jonah predominantly views the pagans of Nineveh as worthless enemies of Israel

who deserve to be punished. Throughout the book of Jonah, we get to see pagan sinners exhibiting shocking behavior—shocking in that it is behavior full of evidence that some goodness lies within them which could very easily be overlooked by those who view them as a lost cause. Our first instance of this is with the idolatrous sailors, who when told by Jonah to throw him overboard in order to calm the storm, demonstrate a surprisingly compassionate merciful spirit when they respond by trying to do everything imaginably possible except put Jonah's life in danger, even though he is the very one responsible for putting their lives in danger! When Jonah eventually does get to Nineveh to preach, the entire city who was described by God only as "wicked" (Jonah 1:2), gives a quite shocking display of penitent remorse for their sinful ways. It can be easy to be overly dismissive of those who consistently engage in shockingly gross sinful immorality of being capable

of having any noble qualities at all. We can callously label them as a "lost cause" unworthy of any attempts of introducing them to a righteous and holy God.

As we take a look at vital lessons brought to light in the book of Jonah, let us examine our attitudes and level of genuine concern for lost souls. Perhaps, like Jonah, God needs to awaken us to a more compassionate disposition desperately seeking sinners to turn to the Lord.
— Daniel Ruegg



Paul had a nephew who got him out of a jam. "When it was day, the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul...But the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, and he came and entered the barracks and told Paul," Acts 23:12,16



DIRECTIONS: Each first Sunday of the month, we will have challenges that you should attempt to complete by the end of the month. If we all, as members, complete these challenges, our church will grow in spirit and in number.

1) Hospitality Challenge

John 4:34 "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.'"

Jesus often used our daily relationship with food as an example of the need to feed our souls with the bread of life of God's word. If we hunger and thirst for His righteousness we will be satisfied. Jesus often utilized social hospitable settings where meals were shared to teach others and provide spiritual bread for hungry souls. "Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table...and Jesus answered him, 'Simon, I have something to say to you,'" Lk. 7:36,40. Having someone over for a meal is a great way to provide a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere for good conversation and for discussing God's word. Can we each make a goal this month to invite someone who needs the gospel into our home for a meal and discuss God's word with them? You've been challenged!

2) USING YOUR BIBLE IN THE WORLD

Share the following verses with someone who does not attend this congregation at least twice this month:

Psalms 20

"May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high! May He send you help from the sanctuary and support you from Zion! May He remember all your meal offerings and find your burnt offering acceptable! May He grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your counsel! We will sing for joy over your victory, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners. May the LORD fulfill all your petitions. Now I know that the LORD save His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand. Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God. They have bowed down and fallen, but we have risen and stood upright. Save, O LORD; May the King answer us in the day we call."