**Jonah**

Theme: The grace of God.

Subtheme: Repentance and salvation is for the Gentiles too!

Subsubtheme: You cannot run from God.

Subsubsubtheme: Our loyalty should be to God, not our country.

Historical setting: About 782 BC Assyria was in a fairly brief period of partial decline. Assyria itself was in a time of failure and disappointment—open to the “gospel?” Prepared to repent?

But do not forget, Assyria was the avowed and hated enemy of Israel!

Nineveh: The greatest city in the world at that time. 1800 acres, 100 ft. high walls. 7.5 miles around. 120,000+ inhabitants? Chariots could drive three across on top of the wall. Jonah 3:3 “a visit required 3 days”

Jonah: a prefigure of the Messiah.

Jonah is like Jesus:

1. Matthew 12:39-41 “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.”

2. John 7:52 “Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find

 that a prophet does not come out of Galilee.

Actually, Jonah, the prefigure of the Messiah, came from Gath-Hepher, about 3 miles north of Nazareth. (2 Kings 14:25)

It is amazing that Jonah even made it into the OT.

3. Sleeping in a boat during a massive storm which could very well kill all

 those in the boat. (Luke 8:23) “As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall

 came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they

 were in great danger.

4. Right before he offered his life, they were gambling at his feet. (Jonah

 1:7 and Luke 23:34)

5. Calmed the storm. (Jonah 1:15 the raging storm grew calm, Mark 4:39

 “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm)

6. Most important of all, he willingly offered his life to save the Gentiles

 Jonah 1:12 “Pick me up and throw me into the sea.”

Outline of Jonah:

Ch 1 Running from God

Ch 2 Running to God

Ch 3 Running with God

Ch 4 Running ahead of God.

**Jonah 1**

Jonah 1:1-3 Go and preach against Nineveh.

Jonah went in the exact opposite direction—to Tarshish which is in Spain.

Q: Why did Jonah flee from the Lord? (v. 3) (We will see in Ch 4)

Point: It is possible to hate what God hates, but not love what God loves.

Q: How might we be like Jonah? It is more difficult than you think to “hate the sin, but love the sinner.” Suggestion: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” (Matthew 9:13, quoting Hosea 6:6.)

Our primary posture ought to be mercy, not sacrifice. But Jesus was hard-line about sin in certain cases (like those who did not show mercy)

Jonah 1:4-17 God is in control. (note, the lot fell to Jonah!) You cannot escape from God. Jonah is busted!

v. 4 The Lord sent a great wind…

v. 7 The lot fell to Jonah

v. 4 A familiar scenario in the OT. A group of people are all under a death sentence. The only solution is for God’s messiah/prophet to die.

v. 5 Like Jesus, Jonah is sleeping.

v. 7 Of course, as a prophecy, the lot falls to Jonah.

v. 8 Jonah, fleeing God, has not been sharing his faith.

v. 12 Jonah, the prefigure of the Messiah volunteers to give his life to save the Gentiles. He takes the fault (sin) on himself.

v. 15 Like Jesus, Jonah calms the storm.

Message: God may ask you to do something you desperately do not want to do. Do it anyway!

For me, it is public evangelizing and confronting sin in certain circumstances.

Notice 1:14 Please do not hold us accountable. You have done as you pleased. A lot like us and the death of Jesus.

**Jonah 2** Repentance, Grace and Salvation.

Rhetotical Q: Why did Jonah wait three days to repent?

Remember, we too, like Jonah have been lost—tossed by the waves and destined to be swallowed up and die.

My speculation: Jonah actually died in the big fish and was raised on the third day as a foreshadow.

V 8,9 to paraphrase. Those horrible heathens do not deserve to be saved, but if you INSIST, I will go.

You would think Jonah would be humbled and very grateful.

You would think he would get the idea that God loves these people too.

Q: Again, how might we be like Jonah?

**Jonah 3**

v. 1 Apparently, Jonah had reneged on his promise of 2:9. God had to tell him one more time. Us: OK fine, I will share my faith, but do not expect me to do it with a good attitude!

3:1-9

v. 3 Jonah obeyed. Did he really?

Q: What was Jonah’s message? Doom!

Did he preach repentance? Did he preach salvation?

Jonah must have been a really awesome preacher!!!!

But remember (as you evangelize) their hearts were prepared.

v. 6 Look what the most hated, violent, arrogant man in the world did!!! Get a vision!!!

v. 8-9 The Assyrian king taught himself to repent and that God might save.

3:10 God relented bringing disaster on them.

Jonah is fired up that his work has brought about the salvation of 100,000 people, right?

**Jonah 4**

4:1-3 Jonah having a self-pity party. Why is Jonah angry? Again, how might we be like this?

I am so mad that you are gracious and slow to anger (towards my enemies, of course, please be gracious and slow to anger toward me!)

v. 3 The ultimate pity party.

4:4-5 Jonah waiting for the destruction, wanting to be the first to bring the happy news to Israel.

These Catholics or Muslims went to hell. Cool! These gangsters… or fill in the blank.

The key passage in Jonah is 4:6-12 The Grace of God.

v. 6 Q: How has god provided a vine for our own shade?

v. 7-9 Now, God is disciplining us rather than showering blessings on us. How will we react to that? (Hebrews 12:6 The Lord disciplines those he loves)

Q: Are you more concerned with your own comfort than with the salvation of souls?

v. 10-11 Summary: God even cares about the cattle! Should we not have deep concern for this city?