

Mission Minded - Part 2

The Miracle of Missions

Jonah 3

Memory Verses: Romans 10:14

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

The Great Commission in **Matthew 28:19-20** says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Our mission is clear. We are to go. We are to reach people with the Gospel message of Christ so that they would be transformed and discipled. We are to teach them all that Christ in his Word commands us to do, and we are to depend on the power of Christ in us to accomplish this mission.

But easier said than done right? It's easy to have a mission statement, but it's a completely different thing to put it into action. Here at Stone Creek we have reframed the Great Commission into a very concise and focused vision / mission statement that says – say it with me - “Depending on Christ we will Reach the world with the Gospel to see lives completely Transformed.” I think most of you have memorized it. But have you done it? It's easy to know the mission but it's something else to be mission minded.

As we continue in this series, our goal is that we would leave this place with our minds transformed to know what our mission is and to be empowered to go and do it. And just as last week, we will continue looking to the book of Jonah as our guide. Last week we saw that we must repent of our lack of obedience to the Great Commission and we spent a good amount of time in prayer asking God to forgive us and to give us a second chance.

This week we are going to be looking at how God fulfills his mission through us when we are obedient to his command. **It is a miraculous thing to see God working through frail and fallible people like us** in order to see pagan people turn from their sin and turn to the salvation of our Lord. Think about it. If the goal of all life is to see God glorified, then why doesn't God just speak his message from Heaven and then let the lost determine whether or not to trust him in salvation? Why does God want us to be a part of the process?

It makes me think of **Mopsy**. This is Mopsy. Mopsy was given to me when I was two years old, almost 39 years ago. Mopsy has been through a lot. He doesn't have any stuffing in his body anymore, he's missing an eye. He's a wreck. But for some reason I've decided to keep

him around all these years. When Vera was two years old, I introduced her to Mopsy. Now Mopsy lives on her bed and gets snuggle times with Vera every night. And I love to see that my favorite stuffed animal as a child got to be loved by my kids. Now how does Mopsy relate to us and missions?

We are worn out, ragged, and pretty much useless... but God keeps us around anyway. And instead of just throwing us in a storage bin or taking us to Goodwill he says, you know what... I'm going to use them to share my love with others. Not because I need them, but because I love them and want them to be a part of the process. God is glorified not just when people are saved but when we are obedient to be his messengers of salvation.

And this is exactly why he keeps giving Jonah second chances. Because he wants Jonah to be a part of the blessing of missions. He wants Jonah to be a part of the miracle. Go ahead and let's read **Jonah chapter 3** and see how God uses Jonah and how he wants to use us too.

As you can see, God will draw men, women, cities, and nations to himself, if only we would be obedient to answer the call and be obedient to the mission. The struggle isn't whether or not God will save people, the struggle is whether or not we will surrender our lives to be used by God to see people saved. This morning I want us to see that **The Miracle of Missions Isn't That God Saves Sinners, But That He Uses Saved Sinners To See People Saved.**

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

So as we look over this short chapter about our buddy Jonah, there are a couple things we should stop and take notice of. The first is... **We've Been Blessed With Everything We Need To Fulfill The Mission (Jonah 2:1-4)**. In verse 2 we see that God told Jonah to arise and go. The same can be said for us. God has called us to arise and go. But he doesn't call us without equipping us. Jonah had to walk across a city the size of New York to minister to the people, so God gave him the strength and voice to do so. If he calls us to do the same then he will equip us as well... and he has. What would one need in order to arise and go? Mobility. We've been blessed with bodies that are capable of amazing things. We can rise, we can walk, we can run, we can jump, we can climb mountains, swim rivers, and trek through jungles. Our bodies are miraculously equipped for wondrous feats of mobility. I just watched a documentary on Amazon about James Lawrence, the Iron Cowboy. He's the premier Iron Man athlete in the world. An Ironman is a triathlon race consisting of a 2.4 mile swim, a 112 mile bicycle ride, and a 26.2 mile marathon. It is considered one of the hardest types of races in the world. Well James Lawrence thought one ironman was too easy and so he decided to do 50 ironman's in 50 consecutive days in 50 different states. That's over 7k miles in 50 days only using the power of the human body. Don't tell me you can't go.

But we've also been blessed with all kind of transportation. We can

take a car, boat, train, or airplane. With today's aeronautical technology we can fly from one side of the world to the other in less than 18 hours. We can make it to any part of the world to and go to any people that God calls us to. What a blessing to be able to accomplish the mission of going wherever God calls us to go.

But also in verse 2 we see that God calls Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. Just like Jonah, God has called us to preach his message too. And what would one need in order to accomplish such a mission? Communicability. And what a coincidence, we've been blessed with an amazing voice. We can yell, sing, shout, and learn to speak in different languages. You say, well what about people who can't speak? The famous Hellen Keller was deaf, blind, and mute and still learned to share her voice with the world. She said, "we can do anything we want to if we stick to it long enough." If she can do it, we can do it.

But, we've also been blessed with an amazing amount of technology. We can call anywhere, and facetime anyone. Lisa facetimes her sister in Senegal Africa every single day. We have radio and television to help us get the Gospel into countries that are closed off to missionaries. And we now even have satellite communications to reach the most remote areas of the world. There is literally no where on earth we can't communicate with now through technology. What a blessing it is to be able to communicate God's message anywhere we need to.

Suffice to say... when it comes to fulfilling the mission God has given us, we are without excuse. We are his hands his feet and his voice and he has equipped us to do it, we simply just need to be obedient to do it. **The Miracle of Missions Isn't That God Saves Sinners, But That He Uses Saved Sinners To See People Saved.**

The second thing, and this is the major focus of this passage, is this... **We've Been Beckoned To Share In The Miracle of God's Forgiveness & Mercy (Jonah 2:5-10)**. Jonah obeyed, he arose, he went, and he preached... but no one really expected the people to respond right? Least of all Jonah. But the people did repent and the king did believe, and not only that but they fasted and prayed and sought the Lord, and the Lord forgave them.

And as I look at my own experience, I think... i've preached in a dozen countries, i've preached over a a thousand sermons, and rarely do I get to see someone come to Christ, much less experience revival like this. And so I know something is a little off. It doesn't make sense. These were a pagan people who did not believe in the God of the Hebrews as the one true God. They weren't even primed? And Jonah was only one man, one voice, a foreigner, and an enemy amongst a city of 140,000 people – he had no influence and yet he was able to influence the whole city to turn to God? How?

Well, here's what we know about God & Salvation. First, it is a gift of God, not of men's doing, **Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5**. Secondly, no one else can save but God, **Acts 4:12**. And third, God must draw them, **John 6:44**. And so, we know that it couldn't have been Jonah's influence that drew them to repentance, but rather God's sovereignty. God saves.

But that leaves us with another dilemma. Why did God beckon Jonah if God didn't need him. We find our answer in **Romans 10:13-15**. It is God's plan for people to be saved through the Gospel preached. Can God save without a preacher? Yes, most likely, but that's not plan A, he wants to use us!!!!!! He called Jonah because he wanted Jonah to be blessed to see the miraculous forgiveness and mercy of God poured out on those that don't deserve it. And that's what he wants for me and you too. If we are willing to preach God will most certainly forgive those who repent and he will undoubtedly show mercy to those who place their trust in him. **The greatest blessing we can be a part of on this earth is seeing sinners awakened to the goodness of God. The Miracle of Missions Isn't That God Saves Sinners, But That He Uses Saved Sinners To See People Saved**

Application

So what's the application? What are we to leave here this morning with? It's simple, obey the call to go, and obey the call to preach. But what do we preach? The last thing we need to know is that... **We've Been Bestowed The Final Message (Luke 11:29-30)**. The only sign, the only message that the World needs to hear from us who are called to preach is the sign of Jonah. Look at **Luke 11:29-30**. What does that mean? Just as Jonah was given a storm Jesus was given the cross. Just as Jonah was thrown overboard and left for dead Jesus was thrown in a tomb and left dead. Just as Jonah was in the fish for three days Jesus was in the grave three days. And, Just as Jonah was saved by the mercy of God so can we all be saved by the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. We've been blessed by this message to be saved and we've been given this message to pass onto others. And that message is clear; Jesus saves so repent of your sins. Jesus saves so believe in him as your Lord, and the wrath of God will depart from you, just as it did Jonah, and just as it did the Ninevites. **Jesus, crucified, dead, buried, and resurrected is the only message we must preach for it is the only message that saves. The Miracle of Missions Isn't That God Saves Sinners, But That He Uses Saved Sinners To See People Saved**

Conclusion

So, we must recognize that even though God doesn't need us he wants us to be a part of the mission and the message to see people saved. Just like **Mopsy** here, we are kind of raggedy and useless, but he loves us and includes us in his mission. What a blessing it is to be a part of seeing

people come to salvation. To see God's love, mercy, and forgiveness on display. And so God equips us to be a part of his mercy and message and so we must obey to go and preach. And, the only message we must preach is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **The Miracle of Missions Isn't That God Saves Sinners, But That He Uses Saved Sinners To See People Saved**