

Audio Transcript of Sermon

March 23, 2024

Jonah

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Jesus discouraged people from seeking after a sign to prove anything related to God. During His earthly ministry, He was asked by people to provide proof that He indeed was the Messiah. Jesus could have very easily provided proof just as easily as he could have called down legions of angels to protect Him if needed. Instead of being the Messiah for those who could verify He was the Messiah, Jesus taught of the need for faith, where something is believed without having all the proof. On one occasion, He was approached by the scribes and Pharisees who sought a sign from Him. Jesus explained that an evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign. Those who live by faith do not need a sign. He could have declined to give a sign yet gave them one solitary sign that Jesus was the Messiah. He told them that He would give them the sign of the Prophet Jonah, that just like Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, Jesus would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

Jesus then added that the people of Nineveh who repented at the teaching of Jonah would rise in judgment and condemn His generation because Jesus was greater than Jonah. He reminded them that even the Queen of the South would rise in judgment against His generation because Jesus was greater than Solomon. Matthew twelve verse thirty-eight.

Matthew 12:38-42

38. Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

42. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

The only sign that Jesus gave that he was the Messiah was that He would be in the earth for three days and three nights. Even though Christians live by faith, this is a sign that is ignored by virtually all Christians because in a week they will find themselves between their observance of Good Friday and Easter, a time frame that even with the most generous counting could be counted as three days and two nights, but that most people would count as one full day and two full nights. Most Christians observe a tradition that defies the only sign given by Jesus that He would be the Messiah. Some hold this discrepancy as a mystery of the Bible not realizing that for those of us who observe the Holy Days as provided in the Bible, that were also observed by the early Church, there is no mystery.

The Book of Jonah is worthy of our attention today, not just because of the sign that Jesus gave, but because of what we can learn from Jonah. Jonah was told by God to go to Nineveh and to let them know that their wickedness had gotten the attention of God. Nineveh was an incredible city of its day, a population center. It would be like today visiting cities like Tokyo, Mexico City, London, Paris, and New York City. It was a city of such size and importance that even people who had never visited there before knew about it. When told to go visit Nineveh, a city about five hundred fifty miles away, Jonah headed in another direction, to Tarshish, about two thousand five hundred miles away in today what would be the southern Iberian Peninsula along the Atlantic coast. Jonah went to the port of Joppa to find a ship to take him there, all to get away from what God told him to do.

Instead of getting away, a huge storm broke out that typically doomed ships like the one that Jonah was on. It was such a mighty storm that even the mariners began praying, each to whatever god they worshipped, and they worked to lighten the weight of the ship by throwing overboard anything that would lighten the load of the ship. While the storm was raging and with the mariners feverishly working to lighten the load, Jonah slept, and the captain came to him and told him to get up and pray to his God so that the ship would be saved. Jonah one verse one.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

Jonah 1:1-17

- 1. Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,**
- 2. Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.**
- 3. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.**
- 4. But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.**
- 5. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.**
- 6. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.**

Then, those aboard decided to cast lots to see if they could figure out if the ferocious storm was the result of one person, and the lot fell on Jonah. Most of us probably have hoped at some time in our life to win a cash lottery. What happened with Jonah is not the type of lottery we would ever hope to win. They began to ask Jonah lots of questions, almost like they were the police and Jonah was under arrest. He explained to them that he fled from God after God had told him to go to Nineveh, and Jonah's circumstances, along with the lot casting on him gave them reason to be very afraid because those aboard the ship saw themselves likely dying because of what Jonah had done. They asked Jonah what could be done. Verse seven.

- 7. And they said everyone to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.**
- 8. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?**
- 9. And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.**

10. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

11. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

Jonah told them to throw him into the sea. At first the mariners decided against that and worked very hard to row the ship to land. Realizing they could not reach shore, the mariners prayed to God begging first for forgiveness, and then tossed Jonah into the sea. It was then that the storm stopped immediately. All of this caused the mariners to offer a sacrifice to God, and they made vows. As for Jonah, God had a great fish ready to swallow him, and Jonah would be in the belly of the fish for three days. Verse twelve.

12. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

13. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

14. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

15. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

16. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

17. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

We all are aware that when we do not do what God expects of us, we should expect to have difficulties in our life. We probably would never think that not following God and doing what God expects of us could also cause those around us to also have difficulties. Jonah came face-to-face with that understanding in the middle of a raging storm, and so did these mariners. It might be easy for us in the face of public scrutiny to run away from what God expects of us, but we need to be aware there will be consequences not only for us but could also be for those around us as well.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

Getting back to the Book of Jonah, the mariners aboard the ship suddenly found themselves sailing in calm waters having just thrown Jonah overboard and having just offered a sacrifice. Jonah found himself in the belly of a great fish. We don't know what type of fish it was that swallowed Jonah, only that it was a great fish prepared by God. Jonah prayed to God realizing he was not in a great place and continued to pray for the three days and three nights. He realized he was in the middle of the sea below the surface of the ocean all the way to the floor of the sea, the bottom of the mountains. When the Bible says God prepared a great fish for Jonah, it could very well indicate a unique fish was created just for this situation as most fish tend to stay in one level of the ocean, either near the surface or near the bottom. After three days and three nights, the fish vomited Jonah onto dry land. Jonah two verse one.

Jonah 2:1-10

- 1. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly,**
- 2. And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.**
- 3. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.**
- 4. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.**
- 5. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.**
- 6. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.**
- 7. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.**
- 8. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.**
- 9. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.**
- 10. And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.**

Jonah found himself on dry land and again was told by God to go to Nineveh, a city so large it would take several days just to cross it. This time, Jonah did what

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

God told him to do and entered Nineveh getting near the center of the city when he announced that Nineveh would be overthrown in forty days. Jonah three verse one.

Jonah 3:1-10

- 1. And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying,**
- 2. Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.**
- 3. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.**
- 4. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.**

Having heard how wicked the city of Nineveh was, it must have taken Jonah by surprise that after he announced God's intention for the city, that the people, all the people including the very rich proclaimed a fast. Even the king of Nineveh fasted and proclaimed that all people and animals would fast crying out to God and undoing the wickedness of violence that had overtaken the city. God saw their repentance and changed his mind, deciding not to act against Nineveh. Verse five.

- 5. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.**
- 6. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.**
- 7. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:**
- 8. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn everyone from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.**
- 9. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?**
- 10. And 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.**

When Jonah found out that God would not overthrow the city it displeased him, and Jonah became angry. From his perspective he had been asked by God to tell the people of Nineveh that their city would be overthrown and justified his journey to Tarshish because he didn't want harm to come to the people. Jonah wasn't told by God to offer them repentance to avoid their fate. The people responded that way and God honored their response. Jonah was probably thinking the three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish and the horrible storm aboard the ship were all for nothing. Jonah was so angry that he asked God to take his life. God responded by asking Jonah if he liked being angry. Jonah left from Nineveh setting up a tent to the east of the city so he could under the shadow of the tent see what would happen to the city. Jonah four verse one.

Jonah 4:1-11

- 1. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.**
- 2. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.**
- 3. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.**
- 4. Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry?**
- 5. So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.**

Jonah should have realized that nothing would happen to the city since the people repented but somehow he was just waiting for something bad to happen to Nineveh. As Jonah was there, God caused a gourd to grow near his tent to cast a shadow, and in the heat of the desert, shade is wonderful, and this made Jonah happy. The next morning God prepared a worm, and the worm caused the gourd and its vine to wither away, causing Jonah to lose his source of shade. God then caused a strong wind to come that along with the sun caused Jonah to faint. Once again Jonah wished he were dead and God explained that how Jonah had pity on the gourd, God had pity on Nineveh because one hundred twenty thousand people and many more livestock lived there, and none of them really knew what God expected of them. Verse six.

6. And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

7. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

8. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

9. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

10. Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:

11. And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

With that conversation, what we know about Jonah comes to an end and we aren't quite sure if Jonah understood God's mercy for the people of Nineveh. The mercy that God had for the people of Nineveh does not compare to the mercy that God has for humanity when He allowed Jesus to come as a man, die, and be resurrected so that our sins could be forgiven. Jonah was just waiting for God to take vengeance on the people of Nineveh, and today as Christians we cannot be just waiting for God to take vengeance on this world. From the second letter of Peter, we do know that in these last days there will be many scoffers, people who will disregard what the Bible says to do and instead will do whatever they want to do. Even with those scoffers who seem to live flouting sin in the face of everyone, we cannot be like Jonah just waiting for God to take vengeance. We should know that God wants to bring all people to repentance. Second Peter three verse one.

2 Peter 3:1-9

1. This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2. That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

- 4. And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.**
- 5. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:**
- 6. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:**
- 7. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.**
- 8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.**
- 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**

Knowing that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, died, and was resurrected so that our sins could be forgiven, should give us freedom that so many people do not understand. We are not called to be like those who do not know Jesus Christ, nor are we called to be super Jews. The faith we have is rooted in love and works towards righteousness. Galatians five verse one.

Galatians 5:1-6

- 1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.**
- 2. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.**
- 3. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.**
- 4. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.**
- 5. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.**
- 6. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.**

The Book of Jonah should remind us that God will hold us accountable for our actions and that if we try to escape what God expects of us, God will still make it work out. In Jonah's case, a great fish, gourd, and worm were part of what God did. For us today, what God does might look different. Whatever we sow we will

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

reap with only God being able to decide when mercy is an option. We cannot faint like Jonah fainted and must continue to do good to all people, and especially to those of the household of faith. Galatians six verse seven.

Galatians 6:7-10

7. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Jeremiah tells us that if we should ever choose to depart from God, a curse awaits us. Just like God extended mercy to the people of Nineveh, just because a curse is not immediately delivered does not mean a curse will not be delivered. Instead of trusting in ourselves or other people, we need to trust in God. If Jonah would have trusted in God from the beginning, there probably would not have been a need for a great fish. Let's see what Jeremiah writes about departing from God and trusting man in Jeremiah seventeen starting in verse five.

Jeremiah 17:5-13

5. Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

6. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

7. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

8. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

9. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

10. I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

11. As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

12. A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.

13. O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters.

David, a man after God's own heart, very well knew that there was no place where he could flee from God's presence. If Jonah would have understood that he would have never fled to Tarshish. Psalm one hundred thirty-nine verse seven.

Psalm 139:7-10

7. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8. If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

9. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10. Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

In Proverbs we are told that the eyes of God are in every place looking at both what is good and what is evil. If Jonah would have understood this, he would have had no problem going to Nineveh. Proverbs fifteen verse three.

Proverbs 15:3

3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Paul reminded the Ephesians of the need to be followers of God and to walk in love as Jesus loved us by giving His life so that we can have the hope of eternal life. If we live our lives pursuing sin when we have this hope of eternal life, we are not doing what God expects of us. Jonah had a rough situation for not doing what God expected of him, and if we choose to not do what God expects of us, we should also expect a rough ride. Ephesians five verse one.

Ephesians 5:1-14

1. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

- 3. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;**
- 4. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.**
- 5. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.**
- 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.**

If we see people living a life opposed to what God expects, we are not to become like them but are to live our life proving what is acceptable before God. Instead of focusing on what these other people are doing, like Jonah focused on those evil Ninevites, we are to be focused on what we should be doing. Verse seven.

- 7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.**
- 8. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:**
- 9. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;**
- 10. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.**
- 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.**
- 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.**
- 13. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.**
- 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.**

As we do what God expects of us, we are to do it without murmurings and disputes. By his actions, Jonah demonstrated he thought God should have done something else with the people of Nineveh. He became frustrated when after they repented, God showed them mercy. Instead, we are to live so that we are without blame and harmless. Philippians two verse twelve.

Philippians 2:12-18

12. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14. Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16. Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

We are to live our life so that the light of God shines through what we do. We cannot think the light of God shines through us if how we live our life reflects what is dark and evil. We cannot live our life pretending we are without sin, because if we think we are without sin, all we are doing is deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. We cannot be like Jonah who when he ran from God thought in his mind, he was supporting what God intended to do. First John one verse five.

1 John 1:5-10

5. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Everything that happens here on Earth is done with God aware of what happened. There is nothing that can be hidden from God, and if we think like Jonah, that we can run away from God, we will be mistaken. Instead, we are to work so that we are part of the Kingdom of God and cannot allow the unbelief of others to cause us to come up short. Hebrews four verse eleven.

Hebrews 4:11-16

11. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Following Christ means we follow His direction. We do not run off in our own direction. We cannot be like Jonah who when directed to go to Nineveh decided instead to go to Tarshish. Luke nine verse twenty-three.

Luke 9:23-26

23. And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26. For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

Jesus taught of the need to count the costs in following Him. Choosing to follow Jesus means that He is in the lead, and we go where He tells us to go. We cannot pick and choose how and when to follow Jesus. We cannot be like Jonah who when told to go to one place went to an entirely different place even though to him it all made sense. Luke fourteen verse twenty-five.

Luke 14:25-33

25. And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

26. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

29. Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30. Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32. Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

We are to be living our lives so that the light of God shines brightly through what we do. We cannot hide that from other people, and we cannot hide from God. Matthew five verse thirteen.

Matthew 5:13-16

13. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

15. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

We have been called to a place of distinction where we must choose God over what is in this world. We must not only do what God expects of us, we must also accept whatever mercy God has for this world and not complain as did Jonah. First John two verse fifteen.

1 John 2:15-17

15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and to many in this world, a peculiar people. We have been called and must live our life so that the light of God brightly shines through what we do. First Peter two verse nine.

1 Peter 2:9-10

9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

10. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

We must let the light of God brightly shine through what we do even though we live in a world that embraces evil and darkness. What we do must be of God. John three verse sixteen.

John 3:16-21

16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Knowing that we are to let the light of God brightly shine through what we do and knowing that God gave his only begotten Son so that all can have the hope of eternal life, we should know that nobody can withstand us, nor will anyone be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ. Romans eight verse thirty-one.

Romans 8:31-39

31. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36. As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This transcript Copyright Tom Laign 2024 and is free to be used for non-commercial purposes. Verses from the King James Bible.

Jonah was told by God to go to Nineveh, and to tell the people there that their city would be overthrown in forty days. Instead of doing what he was told, instead of trusting that God would be with him as he was doing what God expected, Jonah rationalized in his mind the need to flee to Tarshish. Through the direct intervention of God through a strong storm at sea and through a great fish prepared by God for Jonah, Jonah was told once again to tell the people of Nineveh that their city would be overthrown in forty days, and this second time, Jonah did what God expected. God expects us to live our life so that the light of God shines brightly through what we do, and that light cannot be hidden. We also know that nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ, so whatever God may expect or require of us is never a reason to flee from God. Jonah fled from God, and we must not only run towards God, but we must also stay with God.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.