

DON'T BE A JONAH

Part Two

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Jonah is a perfect example of how people can get in the Lord's way of bringing restoration and defeating death. Jonah had the God-given ability or talent to preach and had an anointing that would encourage repentance and bring restoration, but he just plain did not want to preach to Ninevah. They were the enemy that was responsible for capturing and scattering the Hebrew people throughout the nations causing them to lose their very identity. He absolutely did not want to offer them a chance to repent. He wanted God to punish them, not to forgive and restore them! So Jonah boarded a ship to Tarshish in effort to escape God's request for him to warn them. We see this request in Jonah 1:1-2.

Jonah 1:1-2

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,
2 “Arise, **go to Nineveh**, that great city, and **cry out against it**; for their wickedness has come up before Me.”

We must fully comprehend that each of our talents, like Jonah's ability to preach, are avenues that God uses to exercise His ability to help others

through. This is why He gets so angry with those that refuse, are too busy, or perhaps are even fearful of using their talents. Sadly, there are people that have set routines concerning their personal lives that refuse to change from them even for the Lord's work. It's their day to shop, do laundry, mow the yard etc. Sorry God, I don't have time. Or, I don't understand why would we fear using our gifts and callings if we really believe the Word that says it is God's ability through us? Does that not mean He knows exactly what He is doing, and maybe we don't have to worry? Bottom line, He cannot work at all through this kind of behavior on our part. As for being too busy, if we really believe we, as well as our gifting, belong to the Lord, why would we even want to control when or how we are used? Is this not just plain being lawless? Remember, He allowed Jonah to be thrown out of a ship into a raging sea and swallowed by a great fish for his disobedience. We sure don't want to be like him! The story is found in Jonah the first chapter.

Jonah 1:15-17

15 So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging.

16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows.

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

Jonah finally gave in, repented, and promised to give the warning message God had previously commanded him to preach. So God caused the fish to let him go.

Jonah 2:10

10 So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Guess what, Jonah warned Ninevah! So, the big lesson learned is, one, we belong to God, and two, He is our Creator and Master as well as our Father, therefore what we are, and all that we have, is really His. So if we are ones that tell Him we want to be used, then He will call the shots! This includes whatever talents, gifting, provisions, even money we have. Everything that happens in the life of His children is the result of Him causing or allowing circumstances that have a part in our physical and spiritual growth.

Ephesians 2:10

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Let us use money as an example. When God provides money, or allows us to acquire more than usual, our own financial needs are met of course, but at the

same time the money is His to spend on His people or other Kingdom interests of His choice. Notice I said “His choice”. It's His money! Do we dare to tell God how much we will give Him or who or what we will spend it on? This is big time manipulation of something that is not ours in the first place, and an attempt to control our own destiny. This is not to say we should not live well, but the Word says we must share with those in need in our midst. In fact, here is exactly what the Word says.

I John 3:17-18

17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

I've heard people say “I've helped them so many times. Their situation is like a sinkhole or a sinking ship, what good is my help?” Well maybe this controlling, self-righteous person is the tool God is using to keep this situation from going in the hole or sinking with the ship! It is the same with the personal talents God blesses us with. If we claim these talents for our own, we like Jonah will begin to think we have the right to use them as we see fit or even use them to our advantage. A prophet for instance may say, “I perceive the Lord would have you give your car to my ministry.” This is the

action of a false prophet, using the gifting for personal gain. Or perhaps a spirit of pride is causing us to think of ourselves as more gifted than others, or more talented, or perhaps we are ones after acquiring the above-mentioned wealth, that think we are extremely clever and handle our money better than our brothers and sisters. **We are, with this attitude, taking the glory for our success** in these areas **away from God**. The Word tells us clearly God shares His glory with no man.

Isaiah 42:8

8 I am the LORD, that is My name; and **My glory I will not give to another,** nor My praise to carved images.

Side Note: Stealing God's glory is very serious to God. All the thought patterns above are the result of believing the original lie that Eve bought. Satan told her she could be like God. She could decide if something was good or bad herself. This knowledge comes straight from the tree of good and evil. God's wisdom on the other hand tells us like it really is. We cannot do or accomplish anything without Him.

John 15:4-5

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. **As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.**

5 “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for **without Me you can do nothing.**”

Pretty dumb to think too highly of ourselves is it not? In fact, did you realize, nine times out of ten, the things we think we are superior in, may be the very areas where we are failing the worst? It may also be that we, like Jonah, have to learn these lessons the hard way in order to become a part of the meek and humble people that actually are to possess God's Kingdom. Some of us have a hard time graduating from the school of hard knocks and making frequent trips to the wood shed! Our Father chastens those He loves.

Philippians 1:6

6 being confident of this very thing, that **He who has begun a good work in you will complete it** until the day of Jesus Christ;

JONAH ANOINTING

Understand, Jonah did nothing special on his part to make the people of Ninevah repent. No signs and wonders, just a different gifting. God simply placed an anointing on him to preach that caused the people to respond to his message of judgment. This anointing or presence of God that was on Jonah broke the yoke that had the Ninevites in bondage to their hard-heartedness. If

the talents we have truly belong to God, and we allow Him to use us as He chooses, He will amply anoint us to do the job. We still cannot pick and choose whom we will minister to however. So, to not be like Jonah we put aside our own opinions and obediently minister to people we do not particularly want to. We even show God's love to our worst enemies. If we can't, we need to check our hearts and minds to make sure where our thoughts come from. Our Father is a God of Love. Jonah so hated the Ninevites for what they had done in the past, that it actually made him angry when the people expressed their sorrow and repented.

Jonah 3:10-4:1

10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.

In closing, we truly must guard our minds and hearts from allowing spirits of pride, self-righteousness, unforgiveness, and anger to operate through us. We do not want to exhibit the Pharisee attitude Jonah walked in. He just couldn't forgive, forget, trust God's opinion, or willingly submit to God's directions. Even though a major victory was won through this man, Jonah was **never**

used by God again!

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