

DATE: 3/15/2020

KEY TEXT: **MATTHEW 16:1-12; JONAH 1-3:10**

TOPIC/TITLE: FAITH IS GOD'S PLAN THAT INCLUDES YOU. (A MIRACLE OF MERCY)

WHEN YOU LOOK BACK AT YOUR LIFE IN CHUNKS OF TIME, CAN YOU RECALL THE DIFFERENT MISTAKES YOU'VE MADE? WITHIN YOUR MARRIAGE? IN COLLEGE? IN HIGH SCHOOL? ON THAT OVERNIGHT TRIP? OR AS A TEENAGER WHEN YOUR PARENTS WERE AWAY? I KNOW I CAN. BUT HOW ARE THE LESSONS WE LEARNED DURING THOSE TIMES, SHAPING US NOW?

EACH OF US HAS A STORY TO TELL. SOME VERY COLORFUL, AND OTHERS WHICH ARE RATHER EMBARRASING TO US. SO MUCH IN FACT, THAT WE OURSELVES DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT THEM AGAIN. WE'D PREFER TO JUST SKIP OVER THE MISTAKES, THE HARD TIMES, THE DISAPPOINTING MOMENTS OF OUR PAST. YET, OUR PAST WILL OFTEN HOLD THE KEYS TO OUR FUTURE.

IN TODAY'S MESSAGE WE SEE SOMEONE THAT TRIED TO RUN AWAY FROM GOD, AND OTHERS WHO WALKED WITH HIM AND STILL DOUBTED THAT HE WOULD ALWAYS PROVIDE A WAY. IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN NEED, BE ENCOURAGED TODAY TO KNOW THAT GOD SEES THE WAY.

**[1COR.10:13]**

#### **MATTHEW 16:1-4**

(1) ...THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES CAME TO TEST JESUS, DEMANDING THAT HE SHOW THEM A MIRACULOUS SIGN FROM HEAVEN TO PROVE HIS AUTHORITY.

- THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SO-CALLED EXPERTS THAT WILL DOUBT YOU.

(3) ...YOU KNOW HOW TO INTERPRET THE WEATHER SIGNS IN THE SKY, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO INTERPRET THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES!

- WE SHOULD ALSO BE HONEST ENOUGH TO SAY THAT WE CAN ALL USE HELP.

(4) ONLY AN EVIL, ADULTEROUS GENERATION WOULD DEMAND A MIRACULOUS SIGN, BUT THE ONLY SIGN I WILL GIVE THEM IS THE SIGN OF THE PROPHET JONAH."

- SOMETIMES WE LEARN FROM PEOPLE/ SITUATIONS IN WHICH WE LEAST EXPECT.

Q: WHO ARE YOU (WHO AM I/ WHO ARE WE) LOOKING TO RECEIVE SOME HELP FROM?

A: WE OUGHT TO BE LOOKING INSTEAD, FOR THE VERY HELP THAT ONLY GOD CAN PROVIDE.

#### **MATTHEW 16:5-12 [A PERSONAL LESSON]:**

- PRACTICE DEPENDING ON GOD NOW. FOR WHEN TIMES GET REALLY HARD, YOU WILL EITHER TRY TO DO IT ON YOUR OWN AND FAIL, OR YOU WILL RUN TO GOD AND WIN.

### **JONAH 1:**

- JONAH TRIED TO RUN AWAY FROM GOD, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT SO WELL FOR HIM
- HE WENT IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF WHERE GOD ASKED HIM TO GO, BUT GOD WAS THERE.
- HE TRIED TO GET AWAY AND TO HIDE OUT ON A BOAT. BUT GOD SENT A STORM.
- HE TRIED TO IGNORE GOD BY SLEEPING THROUGH THE STORM WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WAS IN DISTRESS. BUT GOD USED THE BOAT'S CAPTAIN AND SAILORS TO HELP HIM SPEAK OF HIS FAITH AND CALLING (RESPONSIBILITY) THAT WAS GIVEN TO HIM BY GOD.
- ONCE JONAH ADMITTED THAT HE KNEW GOD, HE COULD NOT CONTINUE HIDING OUT.

Q: ARE YOU HIDING FROM GOD? OR, RUNNING AWAY FROM WHAT GOD WANTS YOU DO?

A: CHOOSE GOD. GO PUBLIC WITH YOUR FAITH. DON'T HIDE FROM BEING HIS CHILD/ HIS SERVANT. **CHOOSE TO SURRENDER YOUR LIFE TO GOD TODAY.** DON'T WAIT.

### **JONAH 2:** FROM INSIDE THE FISH, JONAH PRAYED

- GOD GAVE JONAH SOME QUIET TIME TO GET HIS THOUGHTS IN ORDER.
- JONAH KNEW THAT PRAYER – A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD – WAS HIS BEST OPTION.
- ONCE JONAH SURRENDERED HIS LIFE AGAIN TO GOD, GOD HELPED HIM FIND THE WAY.

### **JONAH 3:** FROM NINEVAH, GOD USES JONAH TO HELP THEM SEE GOD'S MERCY

- JONAH HEARS GOD TELL HIM AGAIN, TO GO TO NINEVAH.
- JONAH SPEAKS OF THE COMING JUDGMENT OF GOD
- THE PEOPLE OF NINEVAH PUT ON BURLAP TO SHOW THEIR SORROW.
- THE KING STEPS DOWN FROM HIS THRONE AND ASKS EVERYONE ELSE TO PRAY & FAST
- GOD SEES WHAT THEY HAVE DONE AND DECIDES TO NOT PUNISH THEM.

### **LESSON:**

EVEN THOUGH YOU AND I DESERVE PUNISHMENT FOR THE THINGS WE HAVE DONE WRONG, GOD GIVES US OPPORTUNITIES TO TURN TO HIM. TO LET HIM KNOW THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO DO THE THINGS WE ARE GIVEN TO DO WITHOUT RECEIVING HELP FROM HIM.

- THE DISCIPLES EVENTUALLY UNDERSTOOD THAT GOD COULD DO ANYTHING. THEY (WE) ONLY NEED TO PLACE THEIR (OUR) TRUST IN HIM.
- JONAH REALIZED HE COULD NOT RUN FROM GOD. HE SIMPLY NEEDED TO SURRENDER TO HIM AND OBEY GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN FOR HIS LIFE.

Q: DO YOU **KNOW WHAT GOD'S PLAN IS FOR YOUR LIFE?** ARE YOU READY TO **EXPERIENCE IT?**

A: **JER. 29:11** FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU, SAYS THE LORD. 'THEY ARE PLANS FOR GOOD AND NOT FOR DISASTER, TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE.

A: **ACTS 3:19-20** NOW REPENT OF YOUR SINS AND TURN TO GOD, SO THAT YOUR SINS MAY BE WIPED AWAY. THEN TIME OF REFRESHMENT WILL COME FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, AND HE WILL AGAIN SEND YOU JESUS, YOUR APPOINTED MESSIAH.