

He's our rescuer: Jonah

- Recap the whole story of Jonah.
- Just as when we looked at Noah a month ago and saw the need of a rescuer, so today we see that Jonah needed rescuing, the people of Nineveh needed rescuing, and just like all of them we need a rescuer too.
- I have 4 lessons for us from this story:
 - God has a purpose and a plan
 - God is a God who saves
 - You can run but you cant hide
 - God can use you

1. God has a purpose and a plan

- We see this through the whole Bible. God didn't just create the world and then leave it alone, no he continues to control and work his purposes out.
- The people of Nineveh were far from God, living their own way.
 - There sin/wrong living was so obvious – Jonah could see it!
 - They were living in wickedness
- God reveals that he loves everyone
 - Jonah and Nineveh
 - It doesn't matter who you are, what you have done or not done God loves you.
- Gods big plan is the plan of salvation – be saved
 - For all who believe
- He has a purpose for the lives of everyone.
 - If you are struggling to understand your purpose then ask God to show you.

2. God is a God who saves

- Some people have this image of God that he is just a judgemental God ready with his big stick to beat you when you mess up.
 - But the story of Jonah tells us differently.
 - It reveals a God of compassion who wants to save people.
- He saves Jonah
 - How?
 - By sending a big fish.
 - Jonah was one of God's people yet he made a foolish decision.
 - But God wasn't finished with him and provided a rescue for him.
 - Through that rescue God changed Jonah's heart.

- He saves Nineveh
 - These were people far from God's design
 - They were living to please themselves
 - Much like many people today
 - But God had compassion on them and the word of God transforms them.
 - Why does he have compassion on them?
 - Because he made them.
- He can save you!
 - Not because you are good enough or have earned it but because of Jesus.
 - There is nothing you can have done or ever do to make you to bad for Jesus
 - Story of George.

3. You can run but you can't hide

- Jonah thought he was being clever running from God, getting a boat ticket for the complete opposite direction. But you can never hide from God.
 - There is nowhere to hide from a sovereign God who created the universe and knows and sees all things
 - Thinking you can is a bit like playing hide and seek with a toddler.
 - They think if they can't see you, then you can't see them
 - They also forget to be quiet.
 - But Jonah was only fooling himself not God.
- Maybe like Jonah you don't like what God has to say or his plan/purpose. Jonah thought he knew better than God.
 - You can feel God calling you to follow him but
 - You read bits in the bible, and you don't agree so you run from God
 - Or you know your life would have to change in a certain way and you don't want to so you run from God
- Or maybe like Jonah you know God but you don't like what he is calling you to do so you are trying to run
 - As one person said at times, we need to be cast into the sea of God's soul surgery
 - Perhaps you are running from God, resisting His sovereign will for you and you are experiencing storms in life.
 - Like Jonah maybe it's time to be thrown into the sea in full surrender to God's will and direction.
 - God blesses when we walk in step with his will, but he rebukes when we resist and walk our own path.
 - AW Tozer once talked said our greatest fear is letting go and being cast into the depths of the unknown – we tend to resist and fear it.

- But it can often be the most rewarding and faith filled decision we ever make.

4. God can use you

- Jonah wasn't a special man, it wasn't that He was good enough that God choose him for his special purpose.
 - But God did choose him.
 - Maybe you feel unworthy
 - Unworthy to be a Christian
 - Or unworthy to serve God as a Christian
 - Well God delights in using us for his purposes
 - Its why he prepared in advance work for us to do
 - Its why he choose to put his treasure in jars of clay
 - Its why in our weakness he is strong
 - You don't have to be strong, eloquent, educated, trained even to be used by God
 - You just need to be willing.
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- Jonah needed a rescuer, Nineveh needed a rescuer, we need a rescuer!
 - Our rescuer didn't come in the form of a fish, or a prophet but in the person of Jesus.
 - Jesus came to rescue us from all our sin through his death on the cross.
 - All you need to do to be rescued is trust in Jesus, he has done the rest.
 - Once you trust keep living in Gods will, following where he leads and surrendered to his will.