

“The Power Of God’s Word!”
Jonah 3:3-5

Introduction:

1. Let’s Head Back To Jonah 3 This Morning!
 - So Often, When We Think Of:
 - The Life & The Lessons Of Jonah!
 - We Think Of What Happens To Jonah:
 - In Just The First 2 Chapters!
 - When Jonah Runs From The Lord:
 - And Then The Lord Pursues After Jonah!
 - And Uses A Great Storm / The Great Sea / And Even A Great Fish To Capture Jonah & Then Prepare Him For Future Service!
 - And Everything We Have Learned:
 - In Jonah 1-2 Is Amazing:
 - But So Often, We Forget That There Are Still 2 More Chapters Left In This Book!
 - And That Is Why One Writer Says This:
 - “If The Miracle Of The Fish Is Great, Then [The Miracle] Of This Chapter [Chapter 3] Is Greater! For Here is The Record Of Nothing Less Than The Greatest Mass Conversion In History!” (Gaebelein)
 - And The Reason For This Miracle / Revival In Chapter 3:
 - Is Because Jonah Finally Responds:
 - To God’s Command Through Obedience!
 - And Then He Brought God’s Word:
 - To Those Who Were Spiritually Lost And Dying In The Great City Of Nineveh!
2. And Through It All:
 - We See The Amazing Power:
 - Of The Word Of God!
 - As We Look At Jonah 3:3-5 This Morning:
 - “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. / 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. / 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!”
 - God’s Word Is Powerful!

* God’s Word Has:

1. *The Power To Change!*

- The Power To Change:
 - Even The Hardest Of Hearts!
 - Like We See In The Life Of Jonah!
 - 3:1-3a - “And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, / Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. / So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD!”
 - What A Change!
 - What A Transformation:
 - That Took Place In Jonah!
 - From What We See In 1:3, Just A Few Days Earlier!
 - Before - In 1:3a - Jonah Disobeyed The Word Of The Lord, And:
 - “Rose Up To Flee Unto Tarshish From The Presence Of The Lord!”
 - But Now - In 3:3a - Jonah Finally Obeyed, When He:
 - “Arose, And Went Unto Nineveh, According To The Word Of The Lord!”
 - God’s Works & God’s Word Changed Jonah!
 - And Now Jonah Was Ready To Obey:
- For The Right Reason!
 - And With The Right Motivation!
 - Before - He “Rose Up”:
 - With The Desire To “Flee” & To Avoid The Lord!
 - But Now - He “Arose”:

- With The Desire To “Go” & To Obey The Lord!
 - And He Obeyed:
- With The Right Response!
 - Instead Of Running Away From God!
 - This Time, He Ran To God & His Will!
 - And He Obeyed Immediately & Completely!
 - He “Went Unto Nineveh!”
 - He Finally Went To Where God Wanted Him All Along!
 - There Was Also A Time In The Life Of The Prophet:
 - Elijah – When He Didn’t Have The Right Response!
 - And He Was In The Wrong Place!
 - But God’s Word Came To Elijah As Well!
 - And Asked Him This Powerful Question:
 - “What Doest Thou Here, Elijah?” (1 Kings 19:13)
 - It Was God’s Word That Finally Got:
 - Elijah To Move!
 - And It Was God’s Word That Finally Got:
 - Jonah To Move As Well!
 - And This Is What God’s Word Is For!
 - And What God’s Word Can Do!
 - It Is Meant To Move You!
 - And Change You!
 - To Get You To Make The Right Response!
 - Are You In The Right Place In Your Life?
 - In Your Walk With God?
 - God’s Word Is Powerful To:
 - Change You & Move You!
 - In The Direction God Wants You To Go!
 - You May Want:
 - God’s Word To Change Others!
 - But God Wants His Word To Change You!
 - And Then, You Can Obey:
- By The Right Rule!
 - “According To The Word Of The Lord!”
 - Jonah Finally Submitted Himself To The “Word Of The Lord” – Which Hadn’t Changed By A Single Letter!
 - Jonah’s Life Was Now Being “Molded” By:
 - God’s Word!
 - Like Clay In The Hands Of A Potter!
 - And He Was Following The Right Rule!
 - And God’s Word Is To Be Your Rule As Well!
 - For Your Life & Worship & Service!
 - This Is The Evidence Of A Changed Heart!
 - John 14:15 - “If ye love me, keep my commandments!”
- What A Change!
 - What A Real Change In The Heart & Life Of Jonah!
 - This Is What The Lord Wanted In The First Place!
 - But Never Forget What Had To Happen To Jonah:
 - To Get Him Back In Line With God’s Word!
 - This Is What God’s Word Is Meant To Do!
 - In Your Life As Well!
 - You Are Not To Be Just A “Hearer” Of His Word!
 - Like Jonah Was In Chapter 1!
 - But You Are To Be A “Doer” Of His Word:
 - Like Jonah, Here In Chapter 3!
 - Because Then & Only Then Can You Be:
 - “Blessed In Your Deeds!” (James 1:25)
 - And This Can Happen – Because God’s Word:

- Is Powerful Enough To Change You & Me!

* God's Word Also Has:

2. ***The Power To Conquer!***

- The Power To Conquer:
 - Even The Greatest Of Challenges!
 - Like We See In The City Of Nineveh!
 - 3:3b - "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!"
 - Nineveh Was A "Great" City!
 - And Was Filled With Challenges!
- The Challenge Of Their Separation:
 - From God!
 - Nineveh Was An Exceeding Great City:
 - In Their Idolatry!
 - And They Were Far From God & His Will!
 - What A Challenge!
- The Challenge Of Their Wickedness:
 - Before God!
 - Nineveh Was An Exceeding Great City:
 - In Their Sinfulness!
 - In 1:2 - God Tells Jonah That:
 - "Their wickedness is come up before me!"
 - What A Challenge!
- The Challenge Of Their Need:
 - For God!
 - Nineveh Was An Exceeding Great City:
 - With An Exceedingly Great Need!
 - They Needed To Hear From God!
 - They Needed To Be Warned By God!
 - Otherwise, They Would Continue Down The Same Path Of Sin, Until They Would Meet Their Bitter End Of Death & Destruction!
 - Romans 10:14 - "How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?"
 - This Is Why God Told Jonah In 3:2 To:
 - "Preach unto it the preaching that bid thee!"
 - This Is What They Needed Most!
 - The Word Of God!
 - What A Challenge!
- The Challenge Of Their Population:
 - Before God!
 - Nineveh Was An Exceeding Great City:
 - In Their Number!
 - In 4:11 - God Reminds Jonah That There Were At Least:
 - 120,000 People In That City!
 - And Likely Many, Many More!
 - If Those Were Just The Children, Who Could Not "Discern Their Right Hand & Their Left Hand!"
 - But God Had Compassion On That Great City!
 - That Was Full Of People!
 - Even As Jesus Did In Mark 6:34 - When "Jesus . . . came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things!"
 - Jesus Knew That The Challenge Of The Multitude Could Only Be Met With The Power Of His Own Word!
 - The Number Of People In Nineveh Was A Great Challenge!
 - But It Was A Challenge That Could Be Easily Met With The Power Of God's Word!
- The Challenge Of Their Size:
 - Nineveh Was A Large & Vast City!

- Full Of People That Needed To Hear God's Word!
- "Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey!"
 - This 3 Days Journey Shows The Vast Reach Of The City!
 - The Region Of Nineveh Would Have Been Around 60 Miles Across!
 - Which Is Even Greater Than The City Of Indianapolis!
 - Which Is Only About 45 Miles Across!
 - And Would Take About 2 Days To Walk Across!
- But Wherever Jonah's Feet Took Him:
 - It Was Filled With These Challenges!
 - And It Could Have Been Very Intimidating To Jonah, If He Were Left Alone!
- But Jonah Wasn't Alone!
 - He Could Meet These Challenges Head On:
 - Because He Brought With Him The Word Of God!
 - And Even All These Challenges:
 - Would Be No Match To God's Word!
- Hebrews 4:12 - "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!"

* God's Word Also Has:

3. The Power To Convey!

- The Power To Convey:
 - The Most Important Message!
 - Like We See In God's Message To Nineveh!
 - 3:4 - "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!"
 - Here - Jonah Finally Delivers God's Message:
 - To The People Of Nineveh! And It Was:
- A Compassionate Message!
 - As Jonah Walked About A Day:
 - Through The Surrounding Fields & Villages Of Nineveh - He Was Heading To Its Center!
 - Where Most Of The People Would Be!
 - The Down-Town Of Its Day!
 - God Wanted Jonah To Give His Message:
 - To Everyone In Nineveh!
 - Because Everyone Needed To Hear It!
 - From The "Greatest" To The "Least!"
 - Do You Realize That The Most Compassionate Thing:
 - You Can Do For Those Who Are Lost:
 - Is To Give Them The Word Of God?
 - It's Great To Help:
 - Financially / Materially / Even Emotionally!
 - But If We Withhold What They Need Spiritually:
 - Then There Is No True Compassion In Our Hearts!
 - But God's Word Shows His Compassion!
- A Constant Message!
 - Everywhere Jonah Went In Nineveh:
 - He "Cried & Said" God's Word / Message!
 - Jonah Is Serving As God's Prophet:
 - Once Again!
 - And He Never Changed His Message!
 - Whether He Went:
 - Door To Door!
 - Or Neighborhood By Neighborhood!
 - The Message Was Constant!
 - And This Is How We Are All To Deliver God's Message!
 - John Gill - "The Word Of The Lord Must Be Spoken Just As It Is Delivered; Nothing Must Be Added To It, Or Taken From It; The Whole Counsel Of God Must Be Declared; Prophets And

Ministers Must Preach, Not As Men Bid Them, But As God Bids Them!”

- A Certain Message!
 - God’s Message To The Ninevites Was Simple & Clear & Certain!
 - “Yet 40 Days, And Nineveh Shall Be Overthrown!”
 - It Was A Warning!
 - The Timing Was Certain!
 - At The End Of 40 Days!
 - The Place Was Certain!
 - Nineveh Itself!
 - For All Of The Reasons & Challenges We’ve Seen!
 - The Outcome Was Certain!
 - They Would Be Overthrown & Destroyed!
 - Either By Another Nation!
 - Or By God’s Supernatural Judgment!
 - Like He Brought On Sodom & Gomorrah!
 - All Of This Was Certain!
 - Because It Was The Word Of God!
 - Psalm 119:89 - “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven!”
 - But Something Else Was Certain & Even Intended In This Message!
 - God’s Mercy Was Certain!
 - Because God Gave Them Time To Repent From Their Sin! 40 Days!
 - God Was Reaching Out To Nineveh!
 - To Save Them!
 - Jonah Was Preaching To The Ninevites:
 - Nothing Less Than The Gospel Itself!
 - Because Everything That Happened To Jonah Pointed To Jesus!
 - And His Death / Burial / Resurrection!
 - And It Is This Same Word:
 - That We Must Give As Well!
 - Without Any Change Whatsoever!
 - We Must Tell People Of Their Sin:
 - And What God Thinks Of It!
 - We Must Tell People Of Hell:
 - And What Happens There!
 - We Must Tell People Of The Impending Judgment:
 - And How Suddenly It Can Come Upon them!
 - But Then - We Must Tell People:
 - That Now Is The Time For Them To Repent & Turn To The Lord!
 - That They Need To:
 - “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near! Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon!” (Isaiah 55:6)
 - We Need To Realize:
 - That This Is How God:
 - Convicts & Corrects Sinners!
 - It Is Through His Own Powerful Word!

* Because God’s Word Also:

4. Has The Power To Convert!

- The Power To Convert:
 - Even The Unlikeliest Of People!
 - Like The Ninevites!
 - 3:5 - “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!”
 - A Real Spiritual Conversion Took Place In Nineveh!
 - And This Too Shows Us How Powerful God’s Word Really Is!
 - It Can Save An Entire City!
 - In Fact - All Of The Elements:

- Of Real Conversion Are Present Here!
- There Was: A Great Response!
 - Of Faith!
 - “So The People Of Nineveh Believed God!”
 - All Of The People!
 - When They Heard Jonah’s Message:
 - They Believed It Was God’s Message!
 - And It Was!
 - They: “Received the word of God . . . not as the word of men, but as it [was] in truth, the word of God, which effectually [worked in them to] believe!”
 - God Blessed The Faithful & Fervent Proclamation Of His Word!
 - And He Still Does!
 - God’s Word Is Still The Greatest Solution:
 - For Man’s Greatest Need!
 - And: “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God!” (Romans 10:17)
- There Was Also:
- A Great Repentance!
 - A Willingness To:
 - Deny Themselves!
 - And Forsake Their Sins!
 - And Turn To The Lord!
 - They: “Proclaimed A Fast, And Put On Sackloth!”
 - These External Actions:
 - Were Evidence Of An Internal Change!
 - It Is The Same Thing That Paul:
 - Witnessed In Thessalonian Church!
 - 2 Thessalonians 7:9-10 - “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. / For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of!”
 - And Then, There Was:
- A Great Revival!
 - 3:5 - “From The Greatest Of Them Even To The Least Of Them!”
 - This Was Perhaps The Greatest Revival & Awakening Any Nation Has Ever Seen!
 - And This Kind Of Revival:
 - Can Only Take Place Through The Power Of The Word Of God!
 - Because “All” That Were In Nineveh!
 - “All” Of Them Turned To The Lord!

Conclusion:

1. “The Word Of God Is Quick & Powerful & Sharper Than Any Two-Edged Sword!” (Hebrews 4:12)
 - It Has The Power To:
 - Change!
 - Even The Hardest Of Hearts!
 - It Has The Power To:
 - Conquer!
 - Even The Greatest Challenges!
 - It Has The Power To:
 - Convey!
 - Even The Most Important Message Of All!
 - The Gospel! The Good News Of Jesus Christ!
 - And It Has The Power To:
 - Convert!
 - Even The Unlikeliest Of People!
2. And The Great Awakening In Nineveh:
 - Is Not Only An Illustration Of:
 - What Can Happen!
 - When The Word Of God Is Preached & Taught!
 - But It Is Also An Example Of:

- What Should Happen!
 - In Your Life & In My Life!
 - When It Is Heard & Believed!
 - And Obeyed & Applied!
3. Do You Believe In The Power Of God's Word?
- Do You Want To See The Power Of God's Word:
 - In Your Life?
 - Then - Like Jonah Finally Was:
 - "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only!" (James 1:22)

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