



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Discovery Digs Series, Lesson 11

Lesson Title: Jonah Runs from God

Take Home Point: Don't run from God's purpose for you.

Warm-Up:

"Don't answer the door and let anyone in the house." "Don't talk to strangers." "Stay right beside me while we're in the store." These are all good instructions we give our children for their well-being when they are younger. Do they always listen and follow our instructions? No, not always. Occasionally they genuinely forget or misunderstand. We can excuse that as part of growing up and use it as a learning experience for them. But when they don't obey out of rebellion, it requires a response. Is the appropriate response to say they are no longer our children? That they can no longer look to us for any help even though they know their actions were wrong and they are genuinely sorry? Sounds terrible, doesn't it? So if that's how we feel as human parents, why are we so quick to assume that our Heavenly Father is that way; that he is an angry mean-spirited God who is ready to cut us off at a moment's notice when we sin against him?

Read: Jonah 1 & 2; Matthew 4:19

Observation (What happened?):

Why was Jonah to preach in Nineveh?

What attitude did Jonah display in his prayer while inside the belly of the fish?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why did Jonah run from God's command?

Why do you think Jonah suggested the sailors throw him into the sea?

Insight:

How true it is that our God is the God of second chances. And third, and fourth, and fifth, and on and on. Many people see the Old Testament as a book of judgment, and God's judgment does indeed show through. But look at the many times God gives opportunity to repent, to listen, and to be restored both in the Old and New Testaments: Noah, Moses, the Egyptians, the Israelites during their exodus to Canaan, Saul, David, Hezekiah, Elijah, the wife of the prophet Hosea, the population of Nineveh, Jonah, Nicodemus, the woman at the well, Pilate, Peter, Paul, and a host of others who were offered a second chance by the grace of God. And at the cross, Jesus shed his blood to give every soul a second chance to be freed from sin and death. He provides us the power to start again no matter how often we fail or how big we think our failure is. So we stumble and fall. We can always get up, and by his grace move forward. Not in our power, but in his. That's the present and eternal victory we have in Jesus.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Are you running from God's purpose for you? How do you know? What are you going to do about it?

Take a few minutes and thank God that he is the God of second chances.

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