

Who Is Jesus?

Prayer

Luke 11:29 NKJV

Seeking a Sign

And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, " This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

Israel wanted Jesus to do something sensational to prove he was the messiah. Israel wanted a deliverer to free them from the Roman occupation. They wanted a warrior king... God wanted to free all mankind from all oppression forever. His vision was greater and so he sent His Son.

Luke 2:12

And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

The sign was Jesus!

Jesus came as a baby, he did his ministry, he was crucified, he shed his blood for you to cover your sin and then he rose as the first from the dead to give us the hope of eternal life.

Now in your life, you may have accepted Jesus for various reasons, but there will come a time when you find yourself face to face with Jesus.

If Jesus were standing in front of you right now, what would you do?

Well... as we just read the men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah...

This morning, how secure are you in your relationship with Jesus? Have you truly given yourself over to him? My friends this morning, the Lord is calling you. Have you repented for your sin? Have you truly accepted him as your personal Saviour? Is he really your God?

Revelations 3:14-20

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing ’— and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked — I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

This morning, if Jesus isn't in your heart, he is standing at the door and knocking. He believed that you are worth dying for... Maybe you have invited him in and placed him in your living room, but have denied him access to the rest of your heart... Regardless, Jesus is standing at the door this morning. He is calling his people to stand up and be counted among his disciples. This morning let us affirm in our hearts that we will not be like the church of Laodicea.

The people of Nineveh were humble before the Lord. Now Jonah brought them the message didn't he? Yes, he did. But he got there after trying to be disobedient to God and not go to Nineveh. In fact, he detested the Ninevites. Fortunately for Jonah and the Ninevites God gives second chances.

Jonah 1:1-4

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, “ Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.” But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up

Jonah was disobedient to what God was telling him to do. He was free to choose, but not from the consequences of his choice.

Now Jonah began to realize that his disobedience was causing trouble for the others around him. Finally, willing to take accountability for his actions he said in Verse 12-15: *“And he said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.”*

Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them. Therefore they cried out to the Lord and said, “We pray, O Lord, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and do

not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O Lord, have done as it pleased You." So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging."

So... A giant fish swallowed up Jonah and finally he repented.

Jonah 2:1-10

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly. And he said:

"I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction,

And He answered me.

'Out of the belly of Sheol I cried,

And You heard my voice.

For You cast me into the deep,

Into the heart of the seas,

And the floods surrounded me;

All Your billows and Your waves passed over me.

Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight;

Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple. '

The waters surrounded me, even to my soul;

The deep closed around me;

Weeds were wrapped around my head.

I went down to the moorings of the mountains;

The earth with its bars closed behind me forever;

Yet You have brought up my life from the pit,

O Lord, my God.

"When my soul fainted within me,

I remembered the Lord;

And my prayer went up to You,

Into Your holy temple.

"Those who regard worthless idols

Forsake their own Mercy.

But I will sacrifice to You

With the voice of thanksgiving;

I will pay what I have vowed.

Salvation is of the Lord."

So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land

Jonah Preaches at Nineveh

Jonah 3:1 – 4

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, " Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three- day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city

on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

The People of Nineveh Believe

So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

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.

If you haven't had a real experience with Jesus, then hold on to your seats, because today he stands at the door of your heart and is Knocking.

Remember Paul on the road to Damascus? He had persecuted Christians and thought he was a devout Jew. Turn with me to Acts 9:5 where we will see what he asked Jesus when he came face to face: "*And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"*"
Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." (the prodding of the Lord)

So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"
Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.

This morning, Jesus is calling. He is calling you to be obedient to his will. Let today be your road to Damascus experience!

Jesus only lived 33 years. He was born to a carpenter and his wife. He was not rich. Even the Pharisees and Sadducees looked down on him. Yet 2000+ years later we are still talking about him. We are singing his praises, we acknowledge him as Lord...

Why? Because... for many of us, we have opened the door!

Israel expected him to build an earthy kingdom... They expected him to liberate them from the Romans. When they found out he was building a kingdom without hands, a spiritual kingdom, many abandoned him and were no longer interested. Jesus is building an eternal kingdom that will not pass away. Just like when he came as a baby at Christmas with a plan to save all mankind, his vision is so much more –

grand. That structure into which mankind tries to pigeon hole him is not enough. We simply cannot place God into one building where we go once a week on Sunday. He has a bigger plan! He wants all of you – completely.

Jesus is our great father. He doesn't want weekend visits he wants full custody!

He wants to bless his children, he wants to grow them, He wants to prosper them.

Jeremiah 29:11-14

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

Jonah listened to the Lord when God gave him a second chance. Jesus has come to set you free from your captive bonds! He has come to give you life and that life more abundantly!

Conclusion

Joshua 24:14,15 CEV

Then Joshua told the people: Worship the LORD, obey him, and always be faithful. Get rid of the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived on the other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt. But if you don't want to worship the LORD, then choose right now! Will you worship the same idols your ancestors did? Or since you're living on land that once belonged to the Amorites, maybe you'll worship their gods. I won't. My family and I are going to worship and obey the LORD

This morning we as a church we face the same choices... To be disciples of Jesus:

- We must choose to worship the Lord.
- We must choose to obey him and be faithful to him.
- We must choose to put aside the idols in our lives that take us away from Jesus.
- We must choose to be a Godly example to our families, knowing our children are watching.
- We must choose to renew our hearts in the Love of Jesus. We must choose to serve him and not ourselves.

Because he has given us the freedom to choose to serve him or not, we must choose. The battle lines have been drawn, the battle for your mind and your heart. He stands at the door.

2 Corinthians 10:4,5 NKJV

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

So this day... choose whom you will serve

Prayer