

DAY 3: June 4, 2025, Wednesday (Love and Obey)

Titus 2:11, *“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,”*

Ephesians 2:8-9, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”*

2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”*

The act of repentance. Turning away from sin, asking for forgiveness of sin and going in the opposite direction of a sinful lifestyle is repentance. We want to do our best, with the guidance, teaching and conviction of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit draws us to salvation and continues to teach us after we have accepted Christ as our Savior.

As we look back to Jonah’s calling to go to the city of Nineveh, he was the one to tell them they were headed for destruction spiritually which would bring about physical destruction too. We’re moving into Jonah chapters 3 and 4 today. Jonah did pray and repent. Repentance brings about change in us. It did change Jonah, and we see him making the journey to Nineveh.

The warnings Jonah proclaimed to the Ninevites from God makes it all the way to the king. They have 40 days until they will be overthrown. The king calls for fasting, a turn from evil and praying to God. The king has faith this will cause God to be compassionate on Nineveh. That is exactly what happened. God saw their humility and repentance, and he didn’t bring the destruction that had been threatened.

Put yourself in Jonah’s position: At this point, after your own rebellion, causing a great storm, being thrown overboard, being disciplined by being swallowed by a great fish and living there for a few days, being spit up on the seashore, finally repenting and asking for forgiveness, traveling to Nineveh, walking a day’s journey into Nineveh, all the while I’m sure you’re thinking hard about those events, then delivering this horrible news to them, then FINALLY seeing them come to their senses and them repenting! Wouldn’t you be overjoyed that it paid off? Wouldn’t you want to celebrate? Oh, no. Not Jonah.

Jonah went right back to being bitter against these people. “He prayed to the Lord, ‘Isn’t this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. Now, Lord, take away my life, for it is

better for me to die than to live’” (Jonah 4:2-3). Wow! So the same compassion and mercy that was given to him, he didn’t want given to the Ninevites. I want to judge Jonah harshly, but all of us need to examine ourselves. Where and how do we do the same thing? There are people or situations where we have double standards—we want one standard for ourselves and hold another to a different one. Once we realize it, we must repent and ask for God’s help to change and not repeat it.

When we are a new creation, we have the Holy Spirit to help us realize our strongholds and pitfalls.

- We will be wrapping up Thursday night with a call for repentance and salvation.
- To prepare our hearts, I want you to think about your salvation experience. Mentally walk through it, and if you need to journal it. Whatever you need to do to be prepared so at any point you would be able to share it with someone. “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,” (1 Peter 3:15).
- Now, I want you to actually write down the verses and how you would lead a child to Christ. If we are not prepared, how can we lead someone else when the opportunity arises? The Spirit will not be able to use an unprepared vessel. This is why we do what we do. Your testimony is a big part of leading someone else to Christ. The three scriptures at the beginning of this devotional can even be used! Scripture is the living, breathing Word of God. He will guide you.

Praying for you today!

MEMORY VERSE: John 13:34-35, “I give you a new command:...You must love each other as I have loved you. All people will know you are my disciples if you love each other.”