



“ARE YOU IN A STORM THAT ISN’T YOUR FAULT!?!”

- Our **mission** is to *Reach* people in the Name of Jesus; *Disciple* people in the Way of Jesus; *Empower* people in the Service of Jesus.
 - Our **method** is to ensure that everything we do is *Christ Centered; Word Focused; & Ministry Minded*
 - Our **message** is *the Gospel*.
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Jonah 1:1-17

THOUGHT TO PONDER:

This evening we could look at this passage and talk about:

- I. Running from God
- II. A merciful God (actual theme of the book)
- III. The significance of Jonah’s profession of God (v 9)
- IV. God’s call on your life

I don’t want to discuss that this evening. Instead, I want to talk about the sailors on the ship. Often times we tend to focus on Jonah, but overlook the sailors.

These sailors were in the middle of a violent storm that wasn’t their fault. It wasn’t just any storm...being sailors they were used to storms at sea, but this one was really bad. This one was different.

INTRODUCTION:

Often times we endure the storms of life. Some of them we are accustomed to: Financial pressures; Physical ailments; Etc., but then there are those storms that are really bad. Those storms that are different than the typical storms we may have faced...those which we think will never end and are almost impossible to endure.

My question to you this evening is, “Are you in the middle of a storm that isn’t your fault!?”

The sailors were throwing their “stuff” overboard. “Stuff!” A cartoon that I was watching once dealt with the perennial problem facing most superheroes. The villain had plans to destroy the world and the superhero had to figure out a way to stop him. When the superhero heard of the villain’s plans to destroy the world, he said, “But you can’t destroy the world, that’s where I keep all my stuff!”

Remember, not all of the “Stuff” in your life is bad...there are those things which God has given you to accomplish His plans and purposes in your life. Here we see these sailors throwing over their precious cargo...their livelihood...in order to stay afloat.

BIBLICAL STUDY:

Personal ‘Jonahs’ can keep you from using your “Stuff.” They can drag you down, and in order to try and keep your head above the water, you start throwing away those things that God has given you.

A) Jonah was sleeping deep in the boat (v 5)

Most of the time, the source of your storm really isn’t aware that they are the cause. The captain went to Jonah to wake him up. For all Jonah knew this was normal.

Life Application: The captain actually did what Christ said to do in Matthew 5:23-24

“So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.” – NLT

B) Jonah said for the sailors to throw him over

If Jonah knew he was the problem why didn’t he throw himself off? There are those who know they are a source of turmoil in your life, but they won’t do anything about it.

Life Application: If and when they do come to you and ask for forgiveness, forgive them no matter how bad of a storm they may have put you through.

“I am warning you! If another believer sins, rebuke him; then if he repents, forgive him. Even if he wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness, forgive him.” – Luke 17:3-4 NLT

C) The sailors tried to row ashore with Jonah – but they couldn't make it

If they didn't throw him off, they'd all go under. You can't make everybody happy, and if you try, you're going to be miserable. God arranged for the fish to take care of Jonah.

Life Application: God will take care of your Jonah(s), but you have got to get him off the boat first. Take your personal Jonah off of your hook and give it to the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

Jonah on board this ship is very symbolic of how we can allow people or things to get into our lives that don't need to be there. It could be a sin. It could be harboring a bad feeling toward someone. It could be a wrong relationship. It could be allowing something in our lives that keeps us from moving forward with God.

Here are some lessons on getting Jonah(s) out of your boat.

I. Don't let him board in the first place—v.3. These men didn't realize who was getting on their ship. All the trouble that they were about to face could have been avoided by not letting Jonah on board in the first place. Prevention is better than cure. So many times we allow people or things into our lives before we fully know if the Lord is involved in them coming into our lives in the first place.

II. Realize why the storms are in your life—v.10. These men did a personal examination of what was going wrong. They cried out to their gods, then they confronted Jonah to see if he was the cause of their storm. Too many times people just keep riding through storms when they need to get rid of a Jonah. You will not have that perfect peace until those things that need to be removed are removed.

III. Don't get rid of the wrong things—v.5. When we try to fix our problems and situations, we end up throwing out all the wrong things. I don't know all that they lost in their efforts here, but I do know this: Jonah was their problem, **NOT** the things they threw overboard.

IV. Don't work to keep Jonah(s) in your life—v.13. It is amazing even after they discovered that Jonah was the problem, they worked hard to keep him aboard. If God tells you to get rid of something, get rid of it. You can do a million other things, but until you obey the voice of the Lord, there is no peace; there is no end to the storm!

V. When you get rid of your Jonah(s), your life will immediately get back on course. v.15. We find out an amazing thing here, as soon as they threw Jonah overboard, the sea calmed. It is true today, that as soon as you surrender it over to the Lord, your sea will calm.

There is no doubt in my mind that there is some healing that needs to take place in your life. Today, throw Jonah overboard! An old hurt, a bad habit, a wrong relationship, even a wrong or negative attitude, etc. Get it out of your life today, so you can have the peace of God in your life anew. If you have a Jonah, slip out from where you are and cast him off your boat and let God take care of it!