Jonah 4

4-13-14

Jonah and the Worm

I. Slide#1 Announce:
   A. Slide#2 Baby Dedication (3rd):
   B. Slide#3 Good Fri Communion - Crosswalk - Easter Service:

II. Slide#4 Intro:
   A. If God just wanted to save Nineveh the book would have ended in chapter 3, but there was still more to do. God wanted to save Jonah…from himself.
      1. This is the only book which God focuses on the prophet rather than on the prophets message.
      2. Jonah’s actions are both pathetic & humorous at the same time.
   B. Slide#5 Story: Back in 2002 our family went to Magic Mountain & went on Goliath. It was the tallest ride & right before the very top...we broke down & had to get out & walk back down.
      1. Jonah was right at this spot in his ministry when he could have enjoyed the ride of his life. i.e. Church plants, discipleship, raising up leadership,…of a whole nation.
         a) Not to mention the largest, & most influential kingdom of the world.
      2. Slide#6 Instead Jonah choose the “roller coaster of emotions” instead.
         a) We’ll see him 1st angry & wants to die. Then happy because of some shade. Then spittin’ angry & wants to die again, because his little Chia shade plant died???
   C. I think some salt water got in Jonah’s open wound.
      1. But notice how tenderly God deals with His prophet w/a toxic heart.
   D. Slide#7 Title: Jonah and the Worm
   E. Outline: Reviled by Revival (1-4). Pining over a Plant (5-8). No Pity for a City (9-11).

III. Slide#8 REVILED BY REVIVAL (1-4)
   A. Slide#9 DISPLEASED OR PLEASED
   B. (1) Jonah’s problem? – He was not completely yielded to God.
      1. His mind knew God’s truth. His will obeyed Gods orders. But his heart did not follow his mind & will.
      2. Eph.6:5,6 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, w/fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not w/eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart
   C. What a contrast from Lk.15:10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. Ouch, that stings.
D. (2) This sounds very similar to Ex.34:6,7 The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.

E. Slide#10 ANGER OR SLOW TO ANGER

F. The audacity, to treat God’s goodness as badness.
   1. Interesting, Jonah is angry in vs.1, but God is slow to anger in vs.2. Who do you emulate?

G. Slide#11 HATE OR LOVE

H. If you want to be like God then be: Gracious, merciful, slow to anger; have loving kindness, & hold back from showing harm when you have the right to show harm.
   1. It’s as if Jonah is listing 5 things he hates about God???
   2. In your life how have you seen/witnessed God demonstrate these qualities?

I. (3) Was this because he’s thinking, “if wrath doesn’t fall, then I’m a false prophet?”
   1. Was Jonah more concerned with his reputation then with God’s?
   2. Or did Jonah think, Will I be seen as a traitor to my countrymen for helping out the enemy?

J. Slide#12 NO OR YES

K. (4) 1st time no answer. Next time(9) he answers an emphatic YES!
   1. Either place he didn’t have a reason to be angry. Though he might have thought he did
   2. Slide#13 Ever put a mirror in front of a betta fish, the Siamese fighting fish?
      a) Jonah, just like this fish, there’s absolutely no reason for him to be angry & postured for battle…except for a wrong perception in his mind.
      b) His anger only proves 2 things: He doesn’t understand God’s grace & He still doesn’t trust God’s ways.

IV. Slide#14 PINING OVER A PLANT (5-8)

A. (5) He went out of the city. [Now there’s some real good follow up for his new converts]
   1. He already knew God wasn’t going to destroy Nineveh, therefore his actions are simply stubborn & childish.
      a) So, he heads outside the city to pout & to wait for something he wishes would happen but which he knows will not happen.
      a) (28) But he was angry & would not go in.
3. Here is a guarantee **recipe for depression**: Do what Jonah did & remove yourself from people.

4. Here are 10 steps to **overcoming depression**: Step 1: Do something good for someone else. Step 2: Repeat step 1, 9x’s.

B. **Slide#15 JUDGE OR PARDON**

C. (5b) Till he might see what would become of the city.
   1. I think we’ve all doubted someone’s salvation. Maybe that’s what was going on in Jonah’s mind?
   2. So there he sits feeling sorry for himself & **judging** the city God had just **pardoned**.

D. If I were God, I would have blasted Jonah the 500 miles back into the Mediterranean, & this time had him picked up not by a big fish, by a very small shark w/big teeth.

E. But what’s God’s response now in the next verse? Grace (6).
   1. **Look at Jonah pouting because I saved close to 1/2 million people…I think I’ll bless him by bringing him shade from the hot Middle Eastern sun.**

F. (6) That’s Gods Grace – When we **least** deserve it, is often when He brings it on **thick**.
   1. **Slide#16 Grace** is when you **get** what you **don’t** deserve.
   2. **Mercy** is when you **don’t get** what you **do** deserve.
   3. **Justice** is when you **get exactly** what you **do** deserve.
      a) There is only 1 thing more shocking in this book more than Jonah’s sin…it’s God’s grace.

G. **Slide#17 ANGRY OR HAPPY**

H. Here we have for the 1st & only time in the book, that Jonah is **happy**...and its over **his own personal comfort** being met.
   1. **Very grateful** = (lit.) rejoiced w/great joy.

I. **Slide#18 PLANT OR WORM**

J. (7) God brought the **plant** & the **worm**, he brings the **blessings** & the **bummers**. God prepares them both.
   1. And Job in Job 1:21 **The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.**
   2. Verses 6,7 tell our life story – 1 day a blessing & comfort, the next He **deals** with us & **develops** us.
      a) God is more concerned for our **character** rather than our **comforts**.
   3. When we are angry w/God, everything in life gets out of perspective, & we say & do selfish things.
a) **Things** become more important than **people**, & **comfort** more important than **ministry**.

4. **Slide#19** God is always about **people** first. Augustine said, *The city of God is a place where the inhabitants love people & walk on gold.* *The city of man is a place where the inhabitants love gold & walk on people.*

K. The Lord used a **plant** & a **worm** as object lessons in Jonah’s life. What object lessons has God used in your life lately? [Maybe through a toddler? Your pet? An automobile? An illness?]

L. Now the Lord **gently exposes** how mixed up Jonah’s **values** are...

V. **Slide#20** **NO PITY FOR A CITY (9-11)**

A. **Slide#21** **PLANTS OR PEOPLE**

B. God’s lesson on Priorities:

1. The **plant** was temporal; **people** are eternal.
2. The **plant** was of little value; **people** are highly valued.
3. Jonah played no part in making the **plant** grow; God had every part in creating the **Ninevites**.
4. Jonah sought his **own comfort**; God sought Jonah’s **character**.
5. Jonah cared for the **destiny of 1 plant**; God cared for the spiritual destiny of 1000’s of **people**.

C. (9) Jonah’s **Chia Pet** died :( What little things irritate or bug you?

   a) These **petty irritants** always invite us to reexamine what we really care about.
      1) **Jonah would have been happy** about Nineveh’s **destruction**, but **he wanted to die** because of a silly vine’s **destruction**.

2. **Slide#22** What about the **26,000 children** who die daily from preventable disease...every day?
   a) **Slide#23** Jesus asks, **does that bother you?**

   b) We have the awareness, the access, & the ability to stop it. **Why haven’t we done something about it? Because its not our kids? They’re somebody else’s. They’re Assyrian kids. [Iraqi’s, Afghani’s, Palestinian children, Somali, children]**

   c) **Let my heart be broken for the things that break God's heart.**

   d) **What about the many people who die spiritually daily? Jesus asks, does that bother you?**

D. **Does the Lord ask you** this…Is it right for **you** to be angry? Answer, **yes**, at the time we sure do.

1. God asks me this every time I’ve had **intense fellowship** with Kelly. My 1st answer like Jonah’s is usually, **YES, this time, I have every right to be angry.**
2. Then He graciously shows me how I’m 100% wrong…AGAIN!

E. Your anger is debilitating: God asks him…(and maybe you?)
   1. Is it **good for you** to be angry with Me?
   2. Are you **happier** now that you’re angry w/Me & refusing to submit to Me?
   3. Is it **satisfying**? Do you wake up **rejoicing** in the Lord always, or do you wake up on the **wrong side of the bed** every single day. Is it **adding color** to your life?
      a) Jonah’s biting The Hand that feeds him.

F. Slide#24 Today being Palm Sunday, reminds us that Jesus wept for the people as he walked over the Palm branches. Jonah here, walked over the people, while he wept for a plant.

G. The book ends abruptly talking about cattle & without telling us Jonah’s response.
   1. Regarding the livestock - Prob a glimpse of the size of God’s redemption.
      a) Rom.8:21,22 the creation looks forward to the day when it will **join** God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.
      b) Gods in the process of **gaining it all back**, not giving it all up!
      c) God’s up to something **huge**, Something **cosmic**.
   2. As for Jonah - let’s remember…he wrote this book. He’s been brutally honest and given us the directors uncut version, about his backslidden escapade. Maybe by giving us the story is letting us know...he gets God’s Grace now.

H. Slide#25 Jonah chapter 4 summed up:
   1. From Evangelism-busy. To a 1st Class Tizzy.
     City Saved. I’d rather be in the grave.
     I knew it, I knew it. You’d go & do it.
     Instead of wrath on their Head. It’s Salvation instead.
     Right for me to be mad? Do You wanna see mad?
     I’ll Pout over here. If even for a Year.
     My Chia-Pet for a friend. Boy that was a Quick End.
     A Worm not fed. There goes shade for my Head.
     I Guess I’d rather grieve for my gourd. Then have the heart of the Lord.
     All Because I showed no Pity. For an Assyrian City?
     I’d Rather be dead. Then Assyrian led.
     Well, I want the last point to be mine. Can I Sum it up in a Line?
     There’s 2 Ways in Choosing **the Will of God** you see: **#1 is by Land & #2 is by Sea.**