

KK '20 DQT Devo: Day 3
"The Wonderous Way"

Lesson Passage:

Jonah 3

Lesson Focus: The children will learn that we have a loving, merciful, and patient God who shows and makes Himself available to all.

Key Verses: 3:4-5, 10

Lesson Intro: Many of you have seen videos of how people react to different things. Maybe you have seen how kids react when parents tell them they ate all their candy. Maybe you have seen videos of how kids react when they are pranked with a fake gift. We all react to things that happen. The kids with no candy or gifts reacted by crying or getting mad. There is also the opposite reaction of joy when you get good news. Like when kids are told they are going to go to a place they like. It can be a reaction for going to their favorite restaurant to a great vacation sometimes. How do you react when your parents or teacher tell you that if you do not start behaving you will get in trouble? Let's be honest how many of you still keep doing what you are not supposed to? How many of you quickly straighten up and do not move until they tell you it is okay? In our story with Jonah today we find out that the Ninevites reacted with sackcloth and ashes. Let's find out what this means.

Story Outline

- I. God's Persistence. Jonah 3:1-3 (Jonah 1:1-2)
- II. God's Patience. Jonah 3:4
- III. People Grasp. Jonah 3:5-9
- IV. God's Perception. Jonah 3:10
- V. God's Personality. Jonah 4

Story Overview

God and who He is, is displayed in the whole story of Jonah. God wanted Nineveh to have the chance to know they were doing wrong. God wanted them to have a chance to turn. God was even patient with His own servant Jonah to get him to understand His great love and mercy is for all people.

Start with the story of Jonah in Jonah 3 (Review the rest of it for continuity)

I. God's Persistence. Jonah 3:1-3 (Jonah 1:1-2)

The book of Jonah deals mostly with the prophet. But here in chapter three the Ninevites are introduced to the story. The whole story of Jonah surrounds the Ninevites but only here is some brief insight given about Nineveh. First it is to be noted that the message God had for the Ninevites was important. God had not quit on the opportunity that He was going to give to the Ninevites just because Jonah had tried to quit. Once God had dealt with the disobedience from Jonah and Jonah had turned to God, God once again commanded Jonah. God wanted Jonah to go and proclaim the message of warning to the Ninevites. If you look at the history of the Ninevites they were indeed some pretty bad people. Yet God still wanted to give them a warning against their evil.

No matter how evil any person is God is willing to reach them. He is willing to have His Word and instruction reach that people as a warning. People who believe that God is "bad" or "mean" do not really know God. Although many times punishment comes to people for their wrongdoing God is willing to warn people of what they are doing wrong. Many times, God is persistent so that people will hear His truth as a warning before any judgment or punishment comes. God did this with the Ninevites.

II. God's Patience. Jonah 3:4

The patience of God then is displayed in the message Jonah went out to preach. God gave the people of Nineveh 40 days to turn from the wrong they were doing. God gave them 40 days to realize they were wrong and turn to Him. God gave them 40 days to change. The wrongdoing the Ninevites were involved in may have deserved less time than 40 days before punishment. But God in his love, mercy, compassion, and patience would allow them 40 days before He took action.

God is so good. Many time people fail to see that God is allowing us the time now to know who He is. To know that those who do not have Jesus need Jesus as Savior. He allows us who know Jesus many times to realize that maybe we are not doing what we are supposed to. God is so good that most of the time He allows us the time to turn from whatever wrong we are in and turn to Him. Aren't you glad that God is not only loving, merciful, compassionate, but to add to that He is patient with us. He is willing to count to 10 sometimes with us even though we should get a grounding or punishment from Him immediately.

III. People Grasp. Jonah 3:5-9

The message of God was heard by the Ninevites. It was not only heard they immediately responded to the word of God. This was why God wanted Jonah to go and preach this message. God wanted to give the people the chance to respond to the warning. The word of God immediately began to move the people to change. From the little ones to the big they all began to show their great heartache knowing they had done wrong against God and deserved destruction. Even the ruler of Nineveh took the word of God serious. He passed a law that everyone was to show their grief through wearing sackcloth and ashes. These were used as a way to show the great heartache. They king even commanded for people to call out to God. They were to call on Him perhaps God would forgive them and not bring the destruction Jonah spoke about.

This is the difficult part for all people. Those who blame God for being a "mean" God for punishing are the same people who hear His Word and do not believe. They refuse to turn away from doing what is wrong. When the truth is God wants everyone to believe so that punishment would not have to come (1 Tim. 2:3-4). Not only does God want everyone to know Jesus, He also wants us to walk right. When God gets our attention with His Word for something, we are doing wrong it is not because He is mean or He does not like us. It is because He loves us and wants what is best for us that He constantly tries to reach us with the message of His word. He wants us to know what is best and understand that if we do not follow things could get bad. The question is how do we usually respond? Do we turn like the Ninevites? Or do we find excuses or refuse to accept the warning?

IV. God's Perception. Jonah 3:10

God saw the actions that the Ninevites took. He saw them in sackcloth and ashes. He saw them turn from the wrong things they were doing. He saw them calling on Him. He knew they believed. When God saw all of this, He turned from the destruction that He was going to punish them with. He did not destroy them after 40 days because He saw that they turned.

What a great and loving God we serve. The Ninevites deserved punishment. Just like we deserve punishment for our sin. But when God sees that we turn to Him. When He sees that we believe in His Word. When we seek Him, He responds. He looks in love, mercy, compassion, and patience. He is ready to embrace us when we embrace Him. Not because of something we did or deserve but because He is a gracious God.

V. God's Personality. Jonah 4

Jonah was mad with God about this. But God displayed in this His patience even with Jonah who knew God. If there was anyone who should have understood and appreciated that God was good, it was Jonah. He had deliberately disobeyed God. He had tried to walk away from God at any cost. Yet God had not punished Jonah as he deserved. God had shown so much love and patience that He even kept him alive in the belly of a fish. God had had so much patience with Jonah that he allowed Jonah to survive three days in the belly of the fish just to give him a second chance. Jonah missed this completely. Jonah only saw himself and Israel who deserved the goodness of God. But he was convinced that not the Ninevites. God was patient with Jonah through his stubbornness. Even though Jonah was completely wrong, and God could have given Jonah 40 days to repent from his wrong attitude.

God is patient even with His children. How often we walk with the wrong attitude that we deserve the goodness of God and others do not. But if there is anyone who should understand that everyone should be welcome to it, it should be us. We did not earn it with good works. We could never pay for it. So, we should never keep it to ourselves. The good news of Jesus we must share with everyone. The instructions for the abundant life that Jesus provides should be something we want to share. Someone shared it with us because God is good and provided that for us.

Conclusion: We have an awesome God! A God who loves us so much that He would go out of His way to get us to be in the right way. A God who love sus so much He wants us to know Jesus so that we can be saved from our sin. A merciful and patient God that constantly is trying to get our attention through His Word so that we do not continue in what is wrong. A God who gives us love, mercy, compassion and displays patience not because we deserve it or earned it but because He is good. If God grabs our attention to correct us may we be like the Ninevites and turn from what is wrong to what God wants us to do. If we need Jesus as our Savior may we understand that we are sinners. That because of sin we fall short of the glory of God. But the message God has for us is that He loved us so much He gave Jesus to die, be buried, and rise again the third day to save us from our sin. He is alive and He has paid for the gift of eternal life. God wants us to have this gift that is found in Jesus. He allows us to choose to believe or not to believe in Jesus as our Savior. If you are here and you need Him would you respond to His message for you? Would you call on Him and receive Him as your Savoir?