

News & Notes

Sunday, November 29, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Arland Anderson; Mary Baily; Kian Boswell; Sue Daniels; Avery Frazer; Ron Gerry; James Grogan; Twyla Hanisco; Dot Ketchum; Dallas King; John and Deliah Mann; Carl Perkins; Lowell Poff; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Katherine Shaw; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

Responses: DezaRay Anderson and Amber Roberson came forward requesting forgiveness and prayers; Billy Joe Strickland responded desiring to be restored; J.T. Northrop was baptized into Christ this past week;

Pantry item for the month of November is deodorant.

Ashland Events: Today: Fellowship meal following morning service and early afternoon service at 1:00 PM;

Area Events: December 4: Lectureship at the Charleston congregation;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: The Man of 1Corinthians 5

PM: Service led by the young men

For the Record (November 22, 2009):

Attendance: 87 Contribution: \$1207.00 Budget: \$1459.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King

Jeff Roberson

Carrol Street

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

"Note Those Who So Walk"

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

Jonah — the Reluctant Missionary

Jeremy Northrop

The book of Jonah gives the account of a man who was swallowed by a big fish. Perhaps, it is this event more than any other which gives the allure or attraction to the account. Jonah, as an individual has many qualities, some good and some not so good. Yet, as the account unfolds, there are several lessons to be learned and which have application for the child of God today. Often times, the account is easily broken down into four points, one point per chapter.

Running From God

The first chapter gives an account of Jonah trying to run from God. The first three verses give the setting of the account. The creator or originator of the account in the Bible is God (1). God commands Jonah to go and preach to Nineveh in verse 2. Verse 3 records the contradiction of Jonah to God in that he tries to run in the opposite direction and flees to Tarshish. Hence, Jonah is *running from God*.

Next, the chapter records the storm. In verses 4-9, there is the account of the source, severity, sleeper, superstition, and sorrow of the storm. Verse 4 records God to be the source of the storm – He was punishing Jonah for running from Him. The storm was so bad that even mariners (people who deal with storms regularly) were afraid (5). Jonah had a false sense of security, sleeping in

the bottom of the boat (6). The people were casting lots to see who was responsible for the storm (in this case, God was involved in the process – Proverbs 16:33). Finally, verses 8-9 indicate that Jonah tells how his actions are the cause of the storm.

Verses 10-17 provide a solution to this dilemma. The mariners complain (10-11). Jonah explains the condition – he must be thrown overboard (12). The mariners try to compromise this condition but it does not work (13-14). They complied with the condition (15-16). Finally, Jonah experienced God’s chastisement by being swallowed by a great fish (17). Interestingly, many have argued that there is no fish big enough to swallow an adult man. But, the verse clearly says the fish was prepared by God.

Running To God

Chapter two begins with a preface. Verse 1 introduces the content of the chapter – Jonah’s prayer. Jonah prays this prayer from a very unusual place – the belly of the prepared fish (2). The prayer of Jonah is essentially Jonah recognizing God’s chastisement. He explains such in verses 3-6. This led to a change on the part of Jonah. He was willing to do the will of God (7). The last of the prayer is a commitment of Jonah to preach to those who worshiped worthless idols and to explain the promises of the one true God (8-9). God answers this prayer by speaking to the fish and the fish spitting Jonah out. This whole event was a show – he was vomited out on dry land (10).

Running With God

The next chapter begins with the proclamation of Jonah (1-4). God commanded Jonah again to preach what he was instructed to preach by God (1-2). Jonah complies with the command and preaches an eight word sermon – “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown” (3-4).

The preaching of Jonah to those of Nineveh worked! The people received the message and repented (5). They showed fruits or signs of their repentance (6-9). The king set the right example before the people and then commanded the people to do the same

thing. These actions caused God to relent from His promise to overthrow Nineveh. It is interesting the king was not convinced they could prevent God’s wrath but that did not keep them from trying (9). God pardoned the people in verse 10. This shows His patience and His divine principle. Generally speaking, if people will repent, God will relent.

Running Ahead of God

The final chapter of the book tells of Jonah’s human, almost childish, reaction. It begins with recording Jonah’s rage (1-4). He was infuriated with God’s actions (1). He was intolerant and thereby unwilling to consider the peoples’ repentance (2). Finally, he inquired God to take his life from him so that he would not have to witness God’s goodness (3). God also had an inquiry of Jonah asking him to really consider if it was right for him to be angry (4).

The next section of the chapter shows Jonah’s reaction (9-11). He pouted waiting for God’s wrath (9). God created a plant for Jonah’s comfort and then allowed the sun to dry up the plant (10-11). Finally, God’s power is demonstrated through the plant and His reason to Jonah (11). Jonah did not seem to understand God’s sovereignty.

The chapter ends again with the chastisement of God (9-11). The problem was Jonah did not seem to understand God’s actions and was very angry about them (9). God pointed out that Jonah had pity over a plant for which he did nothing (10). The book ends with God’s priority. God had mercy on the people of Nineveh (something much more important than a plant). It was not right for Jonah to be angry (11).

One of the main lessons of the book of Jonah concerns God being the God of second chances. He had mercy on Jonah and the people of Nineveh. He has patience and mercy for people today. His compassion is seen in this book and in this time. He allows time for people to repent: “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2Peter 3:9).