

# The Path of Disobedience

by Charles E. Fuller

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's Word and the consequences of disobedience, highlighting the story of Jonah's sin and the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 50:58

**Scripture:** Jonah 1:1

**Topics:** "Disobedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, Reverend Fuller reads letters from listeners who have found hope and salvation through his broadcast. He shares a letter from a young teenager who was living in deep sin but found Christ after hearing the program. Another letter expresses gratitude for the comfort the broadcast brings to those nearing the end of life. Reverend Fuller then discusses the story of Jonah's disobedience, highlighting the character, cause, course, and consequence of his sin. The sermon emphasizes the importance of heeding God's word and the need for repentance and obedience.

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## Transcript

We have heard the joyful sound, Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Spread the tidings all around, Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Christian Heritage Ministry, in cooperation with Fuller Seminary, proudly presents the Old-Fashioned Revival Hour, a broadcast of the Gospel with Dr. Charles E. King.

Jesus saves. Can we know that Jesus saves us? Can we know? Be assured each moment, everywhere we go. Can we know our sins are all forgiven? Glorious we can be.

We can know, we can know, we can know that Jesus saves us. Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus. Steal away, steal away home.

I ain't got long to stay. He saves me, he calls me by the name of Jesus. I ain't got long to stay.

Steal away to Jesus. Steal away home. I ain't got long to stay.

I ain't got long to stay. Steal away to Jesus. Steal away home.

I ain't got long to stay. It was good for our mothers, it was good for our mothers and it's good enough for me. It's the old time religion, it's the old time religion, it's the old time religion.

Makes me love him. It's the old, it's the old time religion, it's the old time religion. For the prophet Dan.

It's the old time. Hold it, I can't wait any longer. I want to hear you sing that chorus, it's the old time religion.

We'll have a good old-fashioned Methodist revival here yet. Say amen. Amen.

All right, come on, everybody sing, it's the old time religion. We'll do you good. All right.

It's the old time religion, it's the old time religion. Sing it out. It will take us all to heaven.

It will take us all to heaven. It's the old time. As many of you know, January is letter month, which means a letter from each and every listener in commemoration of our 26 years on the radio.

Our hearts have been greatly encouraged and warmed by the thousands of letters which have already come to us, and we thank you from the depths of our heart for your gracious response. However, I know that there are still thousands of you who are listening regularly who have not written. Why not write a note at the close of this broadcast and get it on its way today? We shall be looking for your letter this week, and I'm confident that you won't disappoint us.

All right, Chorus Club. Ye who the love of a mother hath known There is a love sweeter far Love all sufficient for sin to atone Jesus is dearer than all Dearer than all, yes, dearer than all He is my King, before him I fall No friend like Jesus my soul can enthrall Jesus is dearer Far dearer than all Heaven with all of its beauty so rare With my Redeemer he is the glory transcendent Up there Jesus is dearer than all Dearer than all, yes, dearer than all He is my King, before him I fall No friend like Jesus my soul can enthrall Jesus is dearer Far dearer than all Chorus Choir will be singing in a moment but Calvary covers it all. And when I saw this song listed on our sheet today to be sung over the Old Fashioned Revival Hour, somehow it took me back many, many years ago to the state of Washington, northwest of our country.

I was holding some meetings up near Walla Walla in a little town called Tushi. Probably you never heard of it. But anyway, the meetings were going pretty hard, difficult times, soldiers being saved, but there was much opposition.

One afternoon the pastor and I got in our old Model T Ford and went up to one of the ranchers, wheat farmer's place. And there on the Old Fashioned organ, the book was open and they had the song, Calvary covers it all. And the lady of the house sang it for us and somehow it just lifted me up and we went back and had a glorious meeting that night.

I love this song, Calvary covers it all. Chorus Choir will be singing in a moment Far dearer than all After three weeks absence, I'm glad Mrs. Fuller to be here on the broadcast today and I know you're eagerly awaiting her voice. So go right ahead, honey, and read the letters.

Greetings, friends. I must tell you first how happy I am to be here again to take my little part in the program, reading bits from your wonderful letters. And here are a few letters from Iowa, dear Reverend Fuller.

I'm a young teenager and was in a world of deep sin three years ago and had no hope of ever being any different. But one night I heard your broadcast while driving along a country road and I pulled up my car on the top of a hill overlooking the city and there in the quiet I listened intently as the program continued. And suddenly I realized that I was going decidedly the wrong way and I wanted desperately to find the Christ

who said come unto me and I will give you rest.

You made the way so plain, Mr. Fuller that at the close I got out of my car kneeled down on the ground and accepted Christ right then and there. Afterward I joined the church and became a young leader. Recently I started preaching at youth meetings.

Now this is my first year in Bible school and I am having a wonderful time winning young men and women for Christ. In this world there is so much temptation that a young person sometimes gets discouraged. But I know that through God we shall have eternal victory.

From Florida, Dear Reverend Fuller God has been particularly close to us in recent months. A very dear uncle died and just a month later my husband and I had to part with our three day old daughter. Then in less than three months the dearest grandmother on earth departed.

She loved your hour more than anything in this world. She was nearly blind and couldn't read her Bible any longer so you can imagine what your opening up of the word each Sunday meant to her. Her husband is left now and he too is near that blessed land.

He sits each Sunday afternoon just where she sat and listens to your hour. It is one of the blessed things that the Lord has left him in his lonesome state. And just think, Mr. Fuller, as you broadcast that there are lots of people nearing the end of life who receive from your broadcast the only comfort possible when all else is gone.

I'll read you one more letter today. Dear Mr. Fuller, We are a young couple and my wife and I have enjoyed your radio ministry for the last eight years and have been blessed by it. While in the service during the last war I was not able to get your broadcast out in the Pacific but when returning home on the last night out of port during a terrific storm I was able to tune in and hear you and what a thrill it was.

It was so rough that at one time during the night the flight deck of our carrier sliced through the waves and was covered. But coming through that storm were the sweetest strains of gospel music I ever heard followed by the message from the word assuring us that peace and comfort which we have in Christ. There is nothing more reassuring than that hope that we have by simply putting our trust in God.

Your messages since then have been a mighty help and guide in our Christian experience. And that is all I shall have time for today, friends. Let's stand please and sing one verse of number 133 How Firm a Foundation Everyone sing out heartily Every head bowed in prayer please Our Heavenly Father we pray today that thy people may come more than ever to trust in thee the Lord Jehovah for in thee is everlasting strength.

And Father especially do we pray this today in view of the fact that this world is becoming so obviously an insecure place. We pray today that men and women, many of them may turn from seeking pleasure and peace and security and the material things of this world or trying to find forgiveness in Satan's false systems of religion. And they will turn from these that they will look upon Jesus Christ the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And today, O Father, as men are being warned on every hand to prepare for atomic war we pray that thy ministers everywhere may be more insistent than ever that people should prepare for the day of judgment. Father, we thank thee that while people are striving so desperately to find adequate protection against the atomic bomb that we know certain and sure protection against thy day of judgment. And we thank thee

that the door of grace is still open that men and women can still flee into the arms of Jesus and thus escape the wrath to come.

Today, O Father, we pray that thou wilt comfort those that are sorrowing, help those that are fearful give wisdom to those that are perplexed and, Father, especially we pray that thou wilt give wisdom to our leaders in Washington who are an authority in this land. Grant all these requests by revealing Christ thy Son to people. For we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Oh, they tell me of a home far beyond the skies Oh, they tell me of a home far away Oh, they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise Oh, they tell me of an unclouded day Oh, the land of cloudless day Oh, the land of an unclouded sky Oh, they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise. Oh, they tell me of an enclave.

They tell me of the king in his beauty there. And I shall behold snow in the city that is made of gold. Oh, that land mine eyes shall see.

Oh, that land of an unclouded sky. Oh, they tell me of a king on his snow-white throne in the land of an unclouded day. I have found rest in my wonderful lost king in here.

Weary of songs, weary of dreams that have never come. Weary of all that the world has in my wonder. Weary of, weary of, weary of dreams that have never come.

Weary of all that the world has in my wonder. You're listening to the Old-Fashioned Revival Hour from the Municipal Auditorium at Long Beach, California. This is Charles E. Fuller speaking.

Sweet are the promises, kind is the word, dearer far than any message man ever heard. Sinless I see, he the great example is, and pathless to his loving words. Sweet rest for thee, faithful and sure, lean upon the Savior and thy soul is secure.

Where he leads I'll follow, all the way, all the way, with us every day. Sweet is the tender love Jesus hath shown, sweeter far than any love that knows. Will you take your Bibles, please, and turn to the first chapter of Jonah.

For several months we've been on the minor prophets, and now we're taking the last of the twelve, the prophecy of Jonah, chapter one. And may you be much in prayer that God will use the message to bring the light of salvation to darkened souls everywhere. The prophecy of Daniel, or a prophecy of Jonah rather, is a record of actual facts, a record of real historical happening.

This statement is made on the ground of the testimony born to their reality by one whose word on this and every other matter is regarded as final. Two extraordinary events are recorded in Jonah's prophecy. First, the preservation of Jonah in the belly of the great fish, three days and three nights.

And second, the city-wide repentance of the Ninevites as a result of the prophets' preaching. Christ Jesus, our Lord, who is the way, the truth, and the light, the Son of God, stated in the most explicit and definite way that these two extraordinary events actually did happen. Matthew 12, 40.

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Christ speaking again in Luke 11, verse 32. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the prophecy or the

preaching of Jonah, and behold, a greater than Jonah is here.

And all of this foolishness about Jonah being just a myth and a story does not line up with the word of God. These things are true, actually happened. Jonah was a real person, a real man, and he was really in the sea monster's belly.

The men of Nineveh were real men. Jonah really preached to them, and the men of Nineveh really did repent. Truly all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, truly furnished unto all good works.

And the prophecy of Jonah, given by inspiration, is a profitable book to study, so we continue. In the first chapter we have Jonah's disobedience, the path of disobedience, running away from God. Chapter 2, we have Jonah's prayer, running to God.

Chapter 3, we have Jonah's preaching, running with God. And in chapter 4, Jonah's complaints, Jonah running ahead of God. And you had better give careful attention and heed to all sections of God's word, because it is God's true word.

Now briefly today may we consider Jonah's disobedience. His running away from God is recorded in chapter 1, especially in verses 1 to 16. In these verses we find four highlights to consider in Jonah's sin, his running away from God.

I'll give them to you slowly so that you can copy them down if you so wish. First of all, we have the character of Jonah's sin, disobedience. The cause of Jonah's sin, distrust.

The course of Jonah's sin, departure from God. The consequence of Jonah's sin, distress. First of all, the character of Jonah's sin may be expressed by one word, disobedience.

Jonah, the servant of Jehovah, deliberately disobeyed a direct command from the lips of Jehovah. For notice verse 1, the word of the Lord came unto Jonah. The word of the Lord came unto Jonah.

Seven times in the four chapters it is declared that the word of the Lord came or that the Lord spoke or that things were accomplished according to the word of the Lord. And seven is the number of perfection. And I want you to note we're not so much interested in how the word of the Lord came or in what manner it came as we are in the fact that the word of the Lord did come.

The direct command which came to Jonah was not a long, involved, wordy command but a simple, plain command, easy to understand. For in verse 2, the word said to Jonah, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me. Jonah arose, all right, but instead of going to Nineveh, we read in verse 3 as follows, But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa, and he found his ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

Now God's commandments are plain. His words are plain. They are very direct and easy to understand.

And when God says to you, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, it's not a long, wordy statement involved in great words that you have to go to the dictionary to look up the meaning of. He says, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy household. What could

be more simple and yet profound as John 3, 16? For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

He that believeth on him is not condemned, John 3, 18. But he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.

But the wrath of God abideth on him. Plain, simple, direct, easily understood. And to the unregenerated, to the unsaved, you are by nature children of disobedience.

And the entire course of your life is one of constant daily disobedience. You are walking according to the course of this age, fulfilling the desires of the mind and the flesh, constantly doing the works of the flesh as outlined in the fifth chapter of Galatians. You may not realize it, but you are fulfilling daily those works spoken of in that chapter as follows.

Here it is, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murderers, drunkenness, revelings and such like, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. So I want you to hear the Word, and the Word is coming to you right now. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

And God wants you, unregenerated friend, to be obedient to God's Word. Many times, unsaved friends, you have heard this word and refused, and there is no peace. And you are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest.

Your life is a constant state of turmoil, casting up mine dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked or to the disobedient. And I want you to be honest with me now.

Would you like to have peace with God? Would you like to have that troubled conscience of yours at rest before God? Would you like to know the rest and the peace that passes all understanding? You can have that not by any works of righteousness, but by receiving a gift. Christ Jesus, God's beloved Son, and passing from death unto life, have peace with God and then know the peace of God which passes all understanding. And sometimes after one has found rest, as in the case of the servant Jonah, and one becomes a new creation, becoming a child of God, he is disobedient to God's Word.

Then what? Has he lost his salvation? No, he has lost the joy of his salvation, the joy of his fellowship and his companionship. And this is set forth very beautifully in Jonah's life. And in the case of Jonah, the cause of his disobedience can be put in one word, distrust.

Though he was a prophet of Jehovah, a servant, he did not trust the Lord sufficiently to render unquestioning obedience to his Word. Hence he lost the joy of fellowship, of service as a prophet for the time being. And he did not want to go as a prophet to that capital of the Assyrian Empire, Nineveh, those people that were, oh, murderous, ruthless.

For Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire was a constant threat to the security and peace of Israel. And Jonah, a loyal, patriotic Israelite, put his own will over against God's or Jehovah's will. And Jonah thought that his plan to let Nineveh be destroyed or perish, the better way than to have Nineveh repent, repent.

Hence his distrust of not taking God at His Word. And Jonah was not willing to say, Thy will be done, not mine. Does not God's Word say in Isaiah 55, 8 and 9 that our thoughts are not His thoughts or His thoughts are not our thoughts, that His ways are higher than our ways? God demands complete, unquestioning obedience to His Word to prove His good and acceptable and perfect will.

And in the third place, we learn the course of Jonah's sin, departure from the presence of the Lord. Sin causes one to depart. And this departure from the presence of the Lord is a downward path.

To Nineveh, God says, 600 miles away across the mountain range and through the forest and over the burning sand. No, says Jonah, Tarshish is where I'm going 2,000 miles to the west. And it was a downward path.

First of all, he went down to Joppa. Second, he went down into the ship. Third, he went down into the sea.

And fourth, he went down into the great fish's belly. It's a downward path. Any man that sins departs from the presence of the Lord and your path is downward.

Even in the parable of the good Samaritan in the tenth of Luke, a certain man went down from Jerusalem, 2,700 feet in elevation. Jerusalem representing the presence of the Lord there in the temple. Went down to Jericho, 850 feet below sea level.

And what happened to him? He fell among thieves. He was robbed. He was beaten.

He was stripped and left for dead by the pathway. And I say to you outside of fellowship with God, it will lead you down until you're stripped and left as dead, dead especially to fruitfulness and to the things that honor God. I wonder if Jonah, in his fleeing away from the presence of the Lord, did not know that Psalms 139, verses 7 to 12, reads as follows, Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there.

If I make my bed in Hades, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me. And if I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day, and the darkness and the light are both a light to thee. You can't get away from the presence and the hand, or from the hand and the leading of God. You can get away from fellowship and companionship through sin, but God says, I'll never leave thee and never forsake thee.

And so the consequence of Jonah's sin was distress. Though Jonah having paid his fare, having gone down into the boat, having fallen asleep, we find Jehovah who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Jehovah, the Creator and Controller of all things, graciously providing events and causing events to come to pass to awaken Jonah to his real need, to arouse Jonah from his slumber, to prick his conscience, to lead Jonah back to a place of restored fellowship and blessing.

Every son God receives He child-trained, chastened. And so we see Him chastening Jonah, child-training His disobedient servant Jonah. For the Lord, verse 4, sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

And Jonah's distress, through the storm Jonah was awakened, and he knew he would be found out. For according to verse 7, they said, Everyone to his fellow come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil has come upon us. And so they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

Be sure your sin will find you out. And we have in that quickly, in that chapter, not only danger and distress, but God's detection of Jonah and Jonah's disgrace and degradation. I haven't time to read it, but I want to say to you that this beautiful chapter closes with this verse, the 17th.

I like these words. Back of the scenes, God moving, neither slumbering nor sleeping, anxious to bring His child, His disobedient servant, back to Him. We read these words.

Listen carefully. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

And I say to you, sinner outside of Christ, while we were yet sinners, God has prepared a place for you in Christ Jesus. For while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And He who was in the heart of the earth three days and three nights rose the first day of the week.

A seal of our justification if we believe on Him. And I point you today to the great hiding place. The Lord Jesus Christ prepared for the foundation of the world for you how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

And God now is not willing that any should perish. But He says to you, believe, be obedient, receive Christ, and live. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

No one stirring, please. Take the name of Jesus with you, child of sorrow and of woe. Pray with me now as I deal with the friends in the radio audience scattered over the world.

Friend outside of Christ, I plead with you today not to put off, but take now the name of Christ with you. Take Him as your Savior. Take Him as your companion.

He'll be a shepherd to you to lead you beside the still water, to lead you in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Oh, He says, come, I'm not willing that you should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God bless you wherever you're making the decision.

Continue in prayer as we leave the air.

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