

Jonah - Part 1

by Dai Patterson

The sermon explores the story of Jonah, highlighting his disobedience and God's pursuit of him, and emphasizing the importance of being a sign to one's generation and surrendering to God's will.

Scripture: 2 Kings 14:25, Jonah 3:4, Matthew 12:41, Acts 13:36

Topics: "Effective Preaching", "Gods Power"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power of God's word in preaching the gospel. He questions the professionalization of sermonizing and highlights the need for the power of God to be present in preaching. The speaker speculates that Jonah's sermon in Nineveh may have been only eight words long, but it had a profound impact as salvation came to a vast multitude. The sermon also touches on the importance of serving one's generation and the need for individuals to recognize their own limitations and rely on God's strength.

Transcript

Okay, she's not here. She's way up north. Her name is Patience, by the way, and I tell everybody I married her because I knew all I could get.

And she is up with our son and daughter-in-law and their newish baby right up on the Western Highlands. So she says apologies and she's there partly having a little bit of a break and a rest. She's not been very well.

You ever go through things and you think to yourself, if only, if only, if only I could do something to change things. Yes. You haven't lived very long if you haven't got there.

And I discovered there are some things I can't do anything about. And do you know something? This is going to sound terrible for the beginning of a long weekend. I've had some debates and discussions with my Heavenly Father.

And I said to him, why won't you do something about this? If I were you, I would do something about this. Why won't you? And in the end, I discover that there is nothing to do but to come to the place of absolute yieldedness and brokenness in the heart, whereby you say, now, Father, in the midst of this, I trust you. And it's taken me just a little bit of time to get there.

Yeah. And you might think, well, boy, you shouldn't be speaking at a weekend like this then, should you? You ought to be going to a conference and getting some help somewhere. But I discover that unless you can be real and dead honest about things, we live in a make-believe, a sort of a pseudo-spiritual world that's not real.

And I want this weekend to be a time when, more than anything else, perhaps that is ministered to my heart as much as to anybody else's, the real spirit of brokenness, which I think is at the heart of the Gospel. When we come to look at Jonah, we're going to notice, I hope, one of the most wonderful pictures, I think in the Old Testament, of what truly the baptism of the Holy Spirit is all about. Now, I don't know whether you are kind of familiar with the phrase.

If you come from a Pentecostal background, well, yes, you would know it has to do with gifts. Or if you come from a holiness background, you know it has to do with holiness. I believe, more than anything else, that the baptism in the Spirit sets in a man a sign, and he becomes a sign to his generation.

And we'll notice it. We're going to go into our New Testament sometime tomorrow, I guess, and we'll notice it in the 11th chapter of Luke, and in the 12th and 16th chapters of Matthew, where Jesus speaks of Jonah. And I want to be a sign to my generation.

I don't know about you. Words are easy, are they not? The older I get, the easier it seems to me that words become. People can stand up and preach sermons.

I can do it. I've done it for so many years. I can almost do it standing on my head, and that's not meant to sound in any way sort of boastful.

I can just do it. But it's all so meaningless, unless I am a sign to the people, the generation in which I live. And I want to be that, and we're going to take a look at Jonah as a sign in one of our sessions.

We're going to take a look at spiritual baptism and the coming into death and resurrection that it portrays. But I guess we've got to go back to the beginning and notice some fundamental things about Jonah to begin with. Let's do that, shall we? You've got to find a book, first of all, haven't you? One of those little tiny obscure ones that sort of hides away.

And before we start to read and get into it, the first thing I want to point out is that Jonah is mentioned before this little book in the second book of Kings. Now that comes as quite a surprise to lots of people. They think, oh, I didn't know he was anywhere else in the Bible except in the book of Jonah.

Well, come on, how many of you knew he was in the second book of Kings? You knew he was somewhere, he was hiding away somewhere. Well, good to have a concordance mate. Let's notice then, shall we, in the second book of Kings.

And you will, as we read, notice therefore that this man is a man who is somewhat strategic within Israel. He is not a nobody, he does not come out of obscurity, he is a fellow who moves in fairly high circles. In the 14th chapter of the second book of the Kings, we read this in the 23rd verse.

Now this is just background, but it's important background. And you will notice that Jonah has already effectively prophesied within Israel before the events which are recorded for us in the little book of Jonah. In the 15th year of Amaziah, the son of Joash, king of Judah, verse 23, Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and he reigned 41 years, and he did evil.

I've often asked myself the question, and in my thinking and praying, wondered why does God not remove somebody who for 41 years leads a nation into evil? And I come up with absolutely no answer. Except that in his sovereignty, I see that he does things, and overrules in things. But you would have thought, well if he's allowed to reign 41 years, I think I'd have chopped 40 off his days, and removed him, and found somebody else to take his place.

But there you are, it's recorded for us, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam. Now you'll notice there are two Jeroboams spoken of.

There is the first, and there is the second. The first is Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who is described as being the man who led Israel into sin. This is Jeroboam the second.

He's also a baddie, but there's a distinction, there's a one and there's a two. And he, that's Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he's Jeroboam the first, he made Israel to sin. Now he, Jeroboam the second, restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamas to the sea of the Araba, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he had spoken through his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gathepha.

For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter, and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. Okay? Now will you please just note then the occurrence of his name. He has already prophesied within Israel.

His prophetic ministry has been proven to be of God because what he prophesied came to pass. And if you can, in your mind's eye, picture Israel you will remember from the maps in the back of your Bibles, if you ever study them, that north of Israel is Syria. So Israel is there, north of Israel is Syria, and over here to the east is Assyria, and of course it was the Assyrians who eventually took the ten northern tribes of Israel into captivity.

Now I hope you're all familiar with that. If not, well, you've got some reading tonight, haven't you? But the Assyrians up here, they were invading from the north. It seems, if you read a bit of the history of the time, that the Assyrians over here, there was a bit of a lull in their attacking of Israel.

So Syria thought, here's their moment, and they were coming down from the north. And Jeroboam II was told by prophetic evidence that he was the man that was going to restore some of the northern areas that had been taken captive. So you noticed Hamath was spoken of, the Sea of the Arabah was spoken of, that's the Dead Sea by the way, and it was all according to the word of the Lord God of Israel spoken by this man Jonah.

Rooted high circles, something of a statesman. A man whose name was known in Israel for his prophetic ministry directly to the king, Jeroboam, and the consequence of that prophetic ministry was there was the restoring of territory, there was easing of the pressure coming down from the north. He was a man known, whether recognized, I don't know, but certainly known in Israel.

So he's no obscure sort of individual from the backwards. He is somebody of prominence within Israel. And so you come to the opening statements of the book of Jonah, and we see something quite remarkable happening.

This fellow is again spoken to by the Lord. We read in verse 1, the word of the Lord comes to Jonah, the son of Hamati saying. So he's a man who's familiar with the word of God to his heart.

Can I just, before we go any further, just ask everybody, myself included, would you be a man, a woman, to whom God could come in this day and speak his word to your heart in such a way that you could be his mouthpiece to this generation? I don't necessarily mean to speak in the same way and to declare the similar kinds of things, but nevertheless you would be somebody to whom God could come and speak. That is so very important in our day. There's a dearth, is there not, of the word of God.

There are lots of people who can preach sermons. I've already kind of indicated that. But how many of us in this room are men and women to whom the Lord himself can come and can speak into our hearts in such a way that we know we've got something to say to our generation.

God comes and speaks to Jonah. Did you know that his name means the dove? Now how interesting. And he is going to be very soon the dove upon the water.

But he's not going to be the dove that you read of in the time of Noah declaring God's mercy, the abating of God's judgment. He's fleeing the other way. What a tragedy.

His name seems to be a contradiction to the very spirit and life of God. So God comes and speaks to him and says to him, now I want you to arise and go. That's a phrase that's fairly commonly cropped up in the scriptures, isn't it? Arise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it for their wickedness has come up before me.

Then we read that Jonah arose to flee. Now he's going in the opposite direction. Of course we've got indicated, you know, that Assyria and Nineveh, which is the capital of Assyria, was off to the east and he heads down to Joppa on the Mediterranean Sea and he's going to head west.

Out onto the Mediterranean Sea. There's speculation as to where maybe he was heading, but there he goes. Quite where Tarshish is or was, I've not the faintest idea.

So he's going in the opposite direction and we need to ask ourselves the question, well why? What's in this man's thinking? What is it about this word of God to this man which creates this incredible reaction? And I hope in the course of tomorrow and Sunday we'll be able to pinpoint some reasons as to why he goes in the opposite direction. But let me right away suggest something to you that I guess many of you will have already spotted. But there's another man, a New Testament man, who also ends up in Joppa called Peter.

And he is there unaware of the Spirit of God moving upon the Gentile nations. He is racist, prejudiced and there he is in Joppa and amazingly there comes to him at Joppa the Spirit of God moving and he realises that God has a gospel of salvation for all the Gentile nations. And I wonder when I read this story and I compare it with that story whether that lies very much at the heart of the attitude of Jonah.

Did he have deep down in his heart a real prejudice and he needed God to move upon him and deal with him and deal with that prejudice just as the Spirit of God had to deal with it in Peter. So when I was reading this and I've been kind of dipping into Jonah for weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks, something struck me. When I was a young fellow growing up and I heard the gospel and I heard people preaching about obedience, there was suggested to me one long time ago, well you know what, if you're not instantly obedient to the will of God in your life, he'll pass you by and he'll find somebody else to do the job.

Now were you brought up on that? I was brought up on that. Let me tell you something, I don't believe that. And here is one of the most wonderful testimonies to God's worthiness.

He's not going to give up. It's Jonah he wants to go to Nineveh, not you or me or Fred or Charlie, it's Jonah and he's going to get him and get him he does by the most dramatic and drastic means but he gets him because I've caused you to go and go you will. Do you know what, that does something to me.

I like a God like that. He can't be manipulated, he can't be maneuvered, engineered, he can't be forced to change his mind because of my disobedience. How do you like that? He's going to get you and I think oh Lord please, the sooner the better.

Make it tonight, make it now Lord, do what you must needs do so that the men and women to whom you will send me will hear and hear quickly and hear now rather than me think that I can escape from the calling of God on my life. Now I think back to those days and I think oh Lord, I can see that that's not true. You don't pass over men and women and find somebody else, you called him and it was him you were going to use and I guess you heard of God spoken of as being like the hound of heaven.

Have you heard that phrase? It's not a lovely phrase, he won't give up, he will not. Why? Why? Because my dear friend, he has the concern of the souls of the Nineveh upon his heart. He has the souls of those men who were in that boat upon his heart and the only way that he was going to be able to minister his saving life to the seamen on that boat and to the half million in Nineveh.

Did you know that's what they estimate? Something like that was the population of Nineveh. There was a greater Nineveh and there was a smaller Nineveh. The greater Nineveh was about 60 miles to walk around it.

It was an immense place with parks in it, farms in it, all kinds of buildings, some very ordinary, some majestic. The place was immense and at the very end of the little book you read that there were 120,000 who did not know their left hand from their right. Right hand from their left, whichever.

120,000 of them. That means they were children. So how many adults were there? A vast, vast number.

Estimated to be anything from half a million to a million. And I live not very far from where the Welsh Revival broke out in 1904-5 and they estimate that 100,000 came to the Lord as a consequence of that revival. But it never got anywhere near half a million.

And do you know that there's going to be a day when the men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment? So said Jesus. They will rise up. How will they? Because salvation came to a vast multitude.

And now let me speculate just a little bit, and it might be speculation, but I get the impression that the sermon that Job preached in Nineveh was eight words long. Now whether he developed it, whether he added, whether he expounded, whether he explained, I'm not afraid to stand here because all it tells me is that he said eight words. And he must have walked from one end of Nineveh to the other, stopping, stopping, stopping and announcing.

And from the top to the bottom, from the king down to the lowest, it seems as if the Spirit of God moved from one man who spoke eight words. That's why I wonder sometimes whether sermonizing has become such a professional thing in our day. Where is the power of God that accompanies the preaching of his gospel? Where is that power? And do you get the impression, as you've read Jonah, that he just preached

eight words? That's the impression I'm left with.

He didn't need to expound, he didn't need to kind of flower it up, he didn't need to make sure he went from five past eight till five to nine. He just spoke that which God had given him and God honoured it. Oh, I tell you what, I would love to see that happening again in my country.

I say my country, I mean Wales. I suppose you would like to see it happen in Scotland, would you? Would you like to? I wonder what it's going to cost, I wonder where it's going to take, I wonder what it'll involve for you and I. I know if you're a kind of, come from a sort of a Calvinist persuasion, you'll say, oh, it's all by sovereign will of God. And if you are sort of leaning towards an Arminian position, you'd say, well, Mr. Charles Spinney said, if we fulfill the conditions, we can have a revival and somehow both the will of God and man's involvement are married and he comes and moves.

I tell you what, I don't care much whether it comes one way or another, but all that it would come, all that God would move because we desperately need him to, don't we? Right. But you know that God had to do something incredibly radical with Jonah in order that he should become a sign to the people of Nineveh. He was already a prophet of God.

The spirit of God had moved upon him in ways that I can't relate because I don't know, but all I know is that he'd already prophesied to Jeroboam II. God had honoured his word and deliverance had come to Israel. And I see him here and I think, Jonah, why are you running, man? Why are you leaving? And notice in verse 3, will you, that we read he is fleeing from the presence of the Lord.

Now for him, Jonah that is, as part of the Jewish nation, he would have been aware that the land was the place of the presence. Those two things would have been synonymous in their thinking. To be in the land is to be in the presence.

Where is God to be found in the land? Now that's a very narrow way of viewing it, but that's how it was viewed. And we notice that he is fleeing from the presence of the Lord. And this man, this man who should be done like in his spirit, and you may remember that Jesus said you are to be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves, by his disobedience he is potentially bringing tremendous harm upon the men within that boat where he's going to sail and to the people of Nineveh.

Thank God for God's mercy, for his unwillingness to give up on any of us, his determination to get you and I to the place where he can make some use of you and use of me. Do you have an ambition in your life to be usable to God? Do you really? Let me suggest something to you that's going to cost you just about everything. Do you know that? It's going to mean that upon your life will be stamped the mark first of all of death and then of resurrection.

That is what the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost brought. He, the Spirit of Jesus Christ brought men and women into his death and resurrection and that is why Jonah is used by Jesus as a type, a picture of that which happened in his experience of life, Jonah's that is, and is used by Jesus to speak of himself. And not only of himself but I honestly believe of every man and woman who truly wants to become a follower of Christ.

I read the other day, in fact I was in Romania when I read it and I thought I've read this so many, many, many times and it just struck me. Do you recall the disciples had been having big discussions as to who was to be the greatest? Do you remember? And you may recall that three times in the Gospels it's

recorded they had similar conversations. One of them, the last of those three conversations, the very night before Christ was taken and arrested and crucified, in the upper room they were debating who's going to be the greatest, who's the greatest, who's the greatest.

And two of them, James and John, in one of the Gospels it says that they came, in the other Gospel, in Matthew it says their mother came. That's interesting isn't it? Mothers are very ambitious for their boys you know. And they came, mother came, all the boys came and they said, when you come into your kingdom will you glad that we want it on your left and want it on your right? And he said, it's not for me to give that.

He said, but. Then he asked them a question. Can you drink of the cup that I drink of and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And you know what they said? They said yes.

They said yes. Well what does that mean? What does that mean? Because if that is possible for you and I, then my friend, there will be set in your life the mark, the sign, the evidence that you are now a man, a woman, who is not fighting for position, you are not ambitious for yourself, you are not seeing yourself in some false artificial light, you see yourself as you truly are. A man, excuse me, a woman who's been down into death and being raised up into resurrection and they set upon you the sign.

You are a sign to your generation. Jonah had to go that way. You've got to go that way.

I've got to go that way. And thank God that the Spirit has come to take us that way. The way of drinking of that cup and being baptized into that baptism of his, that we might be men and women marked out.

Oh, I wonder whether you would say to yourself tonight, that's me. Yeah, I know that there is set upon me something that marks me out. Let me give you an example from the New Testament.

At the end of the Galatian epistle, Paul the apostle said, now don't let any man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. There is set upon my life that which marks me out as being a man who is identified, united with Christ in death and in resurrection. And he was marked, he even uses the phrase, I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

God marked you out and marked me out as being his man, his woman. Now Jonah is on the run and he, we will notice in verse 3, he flees to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He said, what a crazy thing to do that.

Do you really want to go from his presence, surely into his presence, into all that he is, into all that he's got, that you should go, for there's something that needs to be resolved in this man's life. He goes down to Joppa. The word Joppa, and all the names in this little book are some significance, means a place of height and beauty.

Isn't that interesting? And he is about to go to Tarshish and the word Tarshish means a place of hardness, beggar of breaking in pieces, a place of destruction. Now that's the direction he's heading in, from the place of beauty, from the height where he could ascend into the presence of God, heavenly places, and he's heading down into darkness and brokenness and destruction. Isn't that always the case when anybody heads away from the presence of the Lord? Now I don't know about you, but I lived like that for very many years until the Lord got hold of my life.

But I wonder how many of us in this room are people who instantly, instantly, when God speaks to our hearts, we are obedient. Or do we sometimes fight, procrastinate, argue our case, tell God it's impossible,

fight our corner, even suggest that we are incapable, unable to do the thing that he has asked of us. All such attitudes need to be thoroughly dealt with in our hearts, don't they? You and I, if we truly are his, he is sure to provide by his grace and by his Spirit that which is needful for me to fulfill all that he calls me to do.

It's a great adventure in the end, you know, to be a Christian, is it not? I hope Christian life is not dull for you, is it? I hope it's not sunk into the ordinary. Now you might think, oh come on, now did I? We have to do very ordinary things. We have to do very ordinary everyday things.

Surely life is just like that. Yes it is. But if you and I are living in the knowledge that we are right in the center of God's will, that changes it from being dull and ordinary and produces in our hearts something that's glorious and wonderful and delightful.

I hope you have that, something of real joy, in the very ordinary things of life. And most of us, I guess probably all of us, are called to ordinary everyday things most of the time, aren't we? Yes. Well, how wonderful.

Okay, now he pays his fare and he went down into it, the boat, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. So now you know, you notice he consciously is doing something that takes him away from the presence. And twice you will notice the word the presence is used.

And he, by deliberate choice, is saying I'm forsaking that presence. The moment you and I ever do that in our lives, its hardness, it's going to lead us into a place of breaking. It inevitably must, because God wants us to be ever in fellowship with him.

Will you please notice in verse 3, he went down. And then again in verse 5, he went down into the lowest parts of the ship. And there again in verse 6 of chapter 2, I went down to the moorings of the mountains, right down into the depths of the sea.

It is down, and then further down, and down into the very deepest place, to what he describes as the extremities, the moorings of the mountains. Of course, now he's in the belly of the great fish. But down, down, down.

Oh boy, when you talk like this, I don't know if there's something in you that reacts. But I think to myself, oh Lord, this sounds so hard. Down, down, down it all.

The natural man reacts against all of that, doesn't it? But Jonah is going in that direction by his own choice. And God is not going to let him go. He's not going to give up on him.

And he has to go down and down and down and down. I wonder whether that's ever happened in your inner experience of life. You've discovered that God said, I'll just take you down to the end of everything.

And I guess when Jonah ended up in the belly of that fish, he must have thought, this is the end of everything. It's the end. Although, he did know that at least safety and salvation had come to the sailors on top of this vast sea into which he had been plunged.

Have you ever noticed, when you read about the actual throwing of Jonah into the waters, in verse 12 of chapter 1, he says to them, to the sailors, pick me up, throw me into the sea, then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that this great tempest is because of me. Please note, he knew that it was his death that was the only guarantee of their safety. At the time he spoke those words, I do not know whether

Jonah believed that he would be resurrected, raised from the dead.

I have no idea. Maybe he had some glimmer, some idea of it, possibly. But it certainly is true to say that he knew it was his death, it was his immersion into that sea that was going to be their safety and their salvation.

Well, both those things came to the sailors in that boat. Please take that with you to your heart. It is by a man's immersion into death.

And you and I tonight will all be very well aware that Jesus Christ was baptised into death. And when he said to the disciples, are you able to drink of the cup that I drink of and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with? He was speaking about his death. And he said, can you be baptised into that? And they said, yes.

And then he said, you shall be. How about that? You shall be. In other words, what he was doing was going as the forerunner, to quote from the end of Hebrews chapter 6, he was going to be the forerunner who was going to not only open a way but take all others in there with him.

And he went into death in order to take you and me into death. And Jonah knew, it's by my immersion, by my death, that's the only guarantee that you men on board this boat have got. If I don't die, you die.

What a wonderful truth to get hold of. What a marvellous thing to grasp. It's by death that life comes.

And you might say, ah, but does that all have to do with Christ and his death? Absolutely it does. But, but, but, let me quote it again. Can you drink of the cup? And you may remember, and he was in agonies in the garden of Gethsemane, he said, Father, must I drink of this cup? Must I? And his father said, you must, son.

And he said, then I will. I will drink of it. That's the cup, the cup of death that was in front of him.

Baptism was baptism into death. And when he said to them, could you drink that? And could you be baptised into that? They said, yes. I often wondered what went through their minds that enabled them to say yes.

Was there already dawning upon their understanding the fact that that was the only way that they were truly going to be disciples of Christ and be to their generation what he wanted them to be? But their answer is astounding. It is not? They said yes. And he said, you shall.

He knew that they hadn't, and they knew that they hadn't, at the time that the question was asked. But he said, you shall. And my dear friend, when the Spirit of God came upon them on that first day of Pentecost, that is when they drank.

They drank into his death. They entered into, and they rose up, new men and women, to be to their generation what we are meant to be to ours. And I ask myself, now am I? Am I? Are you? If I'm not, then Lord, you must do something.

Please, you must do something, Lord, because the men and women of my generation are like those on that boat. They're lost. And they're like the multitude in the river.

They're lost. And as I go and fulfil your commission within my life to those to whom you send me, I believe that what I'm saying has tremendous implications for our day. And I dread, almost dread, the idea of going somewhere, preaching something like this, and we all go home and say, well, that was, you know, it was all right.

I might go back tomorrow night, but I'm not too sure. Isn't it incredibly important? What's your life going to be in this day, in this generation? Do you recall in the, is it the 30th chapter, I think, in the Acts of the Apostles, it says of David, there's a little phrase that says, David served his generation, and then he fell asleep. I discovered I am not quite the man I used to be.

I don't have the stamina I used to have. I don't have the energy I used to have. So, he said, you shall.

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And they're like the multitude in Israel. They're lost. Unless I go and fulfill your commission within my life to those of whom you send me.

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Isn't it incredibly important? What's your life going to be in this day and generation? Do you recall in the, is it the 30th chapter, I think, of the Acts of the Apostles, it says of David, there's a little phrase that says, David served his generation and then he fell asleep. I discovered I am not quite the man I used to be. I don't have the stamina I used to have.

I don't have the energy I used to have. I am getting a bit older. And what I think to myself is, oh Lord, I don't want to get old, my life come to an end, and there I am on my Zimmer frame, looking back and thinking to myself, oh Lord, I haven't fulfilled all you've got for my life.

Wouldn't that be awful? It would, wouldn't it? I think that would be so sad. So I think to myself, well I've got perhaps, I don't know, 22 years left of active service, maybe. It could be 32, couldn't it, or 42.

None of you know just how young I am, do you? But I just think to myself, oh I want my life to come, David served his generation, and then he fell asleep, and that's what's going to happen to everyone else. So what are we going to do with these lives of ours? Do you know that this night you are not fleeing to a carcass, you're not heading to hardness and destruction and breaking, but you're in a place of beauty and height and love, and staying here in your presence. And I will go to my Geneva, wherever that might be, I will fulfill your calling upon my life, because, to quote from the Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10, there are works that have been ordained for you and I to do, there for me to do, there were works for Jonah to do, and God said to Jonah, you're not getting away with it, mate.

I'm after you, I want you, I need you, I'm going to never suspend you too, and you're going to understand my compassions and my ways, for I'm going to teach you. And God takes him down into death, and we're going to pick up on that theme probably tomorrow evening and pursue it a bit more, and raises him up into a resurrection life, and makes him a sign. When I was in, uh, where was I? Oh, in a little tiny village, in a place called Balint in Romania, and in the meeting, that is a fact, with Yvette and his wife, and after the meeting was over, I was talking to him through an interpreter, and I asked him about the aghast condition inside a fish, a big one, and what would be the effect upon somebody inside it, and he said, oh, he will come out alive, what, bleached.

He would have been a sure sign to his day that he'd been down there in a place of death, and the marks would have been on him, and I think to myself, Lord, put a mark upon me, set something in my life that marks me out, not marks me out to be, um, sort of somebody that kind of draws attention to himself, I don't mean that, but marks me out as a man who's been there, into death, and up into resurrection life, because that's the only thing that's going to speak to our day, and Jesus said, that will be the final sign, no other sign will be given, and then it says, and he departed from them, and just to say, that's it. Now, I believe, and I'm sure many of you do believe, that he can move in healing power, in delivering power, yes he can, but the ultimate sign is the one of death and resurrection, because it's in that that real power operates. And we need to see it, don't we, don't we? Your church needs to see it, I think, mine does.

Our lands need to see it. And of course, the first thing that has to happen is we have to go off into obscurity, right down into the deeps, to be buried out of the way, and that was the great tragedy of the three occasions I've already mentioned, when the disciples argued, who's the greatest, must be me, I went up on the mountain with him, Peter, James and John, you lot didn't, we must be the greatest, we must be the more exalted, and he said to them, listen, it shall not be so among you. What a prophetic word he spoke to them.

The fact of the matter was that they were arguing the case, who was the greatest, and he said, it shall not be so among you. Lord, you must be naive, listen to them, fighting and arguing. He said, ah, but I'm going to do something that's going to change it all.

I'm going to bring them into death, but up into resurrection life, and they will be men and women who are a mark, a sign to their day, and I want to be one. I hope you want to be one. Are you prepared to go that way? That's the question, of course.

Now, listen, Jonah had no idea that was going to happen to him. He thought he was going to get away with it. He had no idea that somebody was going to be preaching sermons about him, and telling people it's death and resurrection, because as far as he knew, he was just on the run, and he was going to get as far away as he could from his responsibilities, and the calling of God on his life, and God went after him and got him.

Is that what you want? I wonder whether you're prepared, even tonight, to tell him, Lord, I want you, please, to set it in my heart that you will never, ever, ever cease working until you've got me to be a man, a sign to my day. Prepared to do that? It's going to cost everything, of course, but it would be the means of being untold blessing to many, if we will not go that way.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dai-patterson/jonah-part-1/>

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