

On Eagles' Wings Pt 102

by Don Courville

The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering our lives to God, as exemplified by Jonah's journey and the call to love unconditionally.

Duration: 28:56

Scripture: Jonah 2:2-4, Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 22:39, Acts 9:4, Philippians 3:13

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that God is in control of our lives and circumstances. He urges listeners to be content with God's will and to die to themselves daily. The story of Jonah is used as an example of someone who forgot to die and experienced negative consequences. The preacher encourages forgiveness and letting go of past grievances, highlighting the importance of living in truth and having a right attitude towards others.

Transcript

Well, it's good to be back with you again today on Eagle's Wings. Last week we shared with you about love. Today we're going to continue on about love, only from a little bit different aspect, and that's from the life of Jonah.

I like looking at the characters of the Bible, studying their lives, gleaning details, learning things from their life that I need for my life. Jonah was one of those characters that's been pretty famous. By the way, Jonah illustrated the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

In probably one of the clearest forms, maybe outside of Isaac, the sacrifice of Isaac. He was a great prophet, but he had a bad day that day, and I believe Jonah had an area of his life that was not surrendered to the cross. My friend, if you and I have one area that's not surrendered to the cross, God is going to bring us to the point where we will face that area.

So when Jonah got up that morning, went down to the office, got his assignment, and saw Nineveh, revival for Nineveh, he rebelled against that assignment, and you know how he took off on a run. You and I are just like that. God's going to bring us to the point to do something we do not like, or bring a circumstance into our life that will upset us, just totally maybe shatter us, because he loves us so much.

He doesn't want anything there, and he knows that we must be clean and pure and have these bad attitudes out of our life. Jonah had an alabaster box, an area in his life that he wasn't willing to surrender to God. I don't know what yours is, but I know what mine has been, and God has come to me, and he said, let's have it.

You know, Jesus had said, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. I don't know why Jonah didn't like Ninevites, but something had happened in the past where he did not love them, and we've been talking about the love of God. You and I are not going to be any good for God unless his love is able to flow out to us without prejudice.

We can't love one and not another. We don't have that option to choose, and God had a prophet that had a problem, the prodigal prophet Jonah, and we're going to use this today for our lesson on love. But before we do that, let's just look a little bit about Mary and her alabaster box to get the setting and the flavor of the type of sacrifice that God loves.

Now, Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, and there came a woman having an alabaster box, a very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had an indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste? And you can imagine, maybe a sarcastic type of tone in their voice, for this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor. And when Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble you the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me.

For you have the poor always with you, but me you have not always. For in that she had poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached, in the whole world there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial to her.

My friend, you can be just as famous in God's heaven, someday in eternity, as this woman was, if you will let God have your alabaster box. Let him have that which is so precious that you're hanging on to. Actually, we should have nothing in our life, but Jesus.

Whatever he wants. The early Christians were so free, so clean, so pure, so sold out to God, so in love with him. They could take him and burn him at a stake.

It didn't matter. They could cut him in two. It didn't matter.

They were free. Are you free? Is there something that upsets you? Is there something you're not willing to do? Is there some place you're not willing to go? Is there someone you're not willing to talk to about Jesus? God's going to bring you to a crucial point to deal with it. Now, God knows the deep secrets of our heart, and I believe he often brings us to a point, brings us to a test, not for himself, but for us, to show us what we're really like, to show us what's there.

He's continually bringing us to become like Jesus. He's continually drawing us to Jesus. My friend, you may have never yet received Jesus as your Savior.

God has been working in your life to bring you to receive Christ as your Savior. He may fail at one point. He may have failed for fifty nine and a half years in your life, but he will never give up until the day that you go off into eternity.

He will not give up loving you. He may quit speaking to you. You may not be able to hear his voice anymore, but he will never quit loving you.

God does not give up on us totally. He loves us, and he will love us for all eternity, whether we accept him or reject him. He is love, and he's interested in reaching you, and if you've never come to the point where you realize that you're lost, where you realize you're a sinner, that you need Jesus as your Savior, that you cannot save yourself, you must trust the blood of the Lamb, and the blood of the Lamb only, not your good works.

The Bible says, for by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, and not of works, so that no man will boast. My friend, you can't pay for a gift.

You will insult the giver if you try to. Many of you may have been thinking God will let you in because of all your good works, and that you believe in Jesus. You won't get in.

Not because you didn't believe, because of the believing in Jesus part, but because you're trying to mix your faith with your good works, and it comes out works. It's faith alone that saves you. Trust in Jesus alone, and not in yourself.

It's not one percent yourself, and 99 percent Jesus. It's all or nothing, my friend. Your good works, your baptism, your church attendance, are all fine after you receive Christ.

A lot of us have tried to get the horse behind the cart, or the cart before the horse. You've got to have it in the right order, and then we follow on, and we're baptized after we're saved, and we don't even trust baptism for our salvation. The Bible doesn't teach that.

If you've been believing that, you've been believing a lie. And then when he gets us saved, he brings us to the cross where we realize we can't save ourself. We trust him as our Savior.

He wants us to stay at the cross there, needy. When you're at the cross, you're needy, you're crucified, and he wants us to be dead to self, and alive to God, filled with his Spirit, filled to overflowing, filled with love, and God's been teaching us a little bit about love. You know, Jesus said in Revelation 2 23, he said, all the churches shall know that I am he who searches the minds and the hearts.

Remember the very first church, the church to the Ephesians, they had all these good things that they did, and God liked that. But he said, nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left your first love. He said, remember where you left off.

Remember where you went astray. Repent, go back, and start over, loving me, or else I'm going to come and remove your candlestick. Many of you have been very active in the church for years, but somehow or another, you may have been contaminated over the years through some bad experiences, a church split, someone did something to you, and you've lost your first love.

You won't be any good to God, just like Jonah. And God loves you just as much as he loved Jonah. God let Jonah go through and have that fish experience, and he's letting you go through your fish experience.

And you may have a whale of a tail, just like old Jonah, and that's because God loves you. But if you don't make it back to Jesus, God help you. There's going to be some trouble.

There's going to be some trouble. Now, I remember one time a preacher, Sharon, a pastor of mine, about David, when he left Jerusalem, when his own son had rebelled against him, and was running him out, and Shimei was throwing dirt and stones at him, and one of his mighty men said, let me go over and remove his head. And David said, no, the Lord's allowed him to do this.

And I remember what my pastor said. He said, no, Shimei can hurt you, but your attitude toward him can kill you. I don't know what's eating your lunch, my friend, but you better take care of it.

You and I will not be any good for God, as believers, unless we're filled with the Spirit, and the first fruit of the Spirit is love, and all the other ones come out of it. Without love, I'm nothing, and I can't do anything. Have you ever noticed in the Bible that those who had bad attitudes had wrong actions? If you look at your life, and you look at all of the actions, and look at your words, you know, Jesus said, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

You can tell what's in the heart by the way people talk, and you can tell what's in their heart by the way they act, their attitudes, and their actions. This is why we don't need more knowledge. We've already, we're already puffed up enough.

We need more character. We need more godliness, and those that had bad attitudes had wrong actions, and they had very uncomfortable experiences, just like Jonah. And you think about old Joseph.

All he went through, he come out pure. He had a good heart. God meant it for good.

God meant it for good. And even the disciples with Mary, when she made this sacrifice, they were contaminated by one bad one, by one bad disciple, Judas. Judas said, why wasn't this stuff sold for 300, what'd he say, 300 pence or something like that? For he held the bag, and they were influenced by him, and they grumbled too.

Be careful. Watch how you're around people, that they don't influence you. They got carried away with this, and they said, what a waste, what a waste.

Where do these attitudes come from? The things like Jonah. Let's get back to old Jonah here. We're gonna need to get into Jonah, so that we can get to the point that God wants us to see today.

But where do these bad attitudes come from? You know, think about it. God came along, gave him his orders that morning, okay? He went down to the office, and looked. Nineveh.

Oh, no, Nineveh. God's put Nineveh on the assignment for revival today? No way. So he packed up his bags, you know how, and he rose, it says, the scripture says, he rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

Anytime you and I are in rebellion against God, in any kind of area, we're trying to run from the presence of God. What Adam and Eve do? They, they were trying to hide from the presence of God. You can't get away from him.

He's everywhere. He sees that habits you're doing. He sees what you're doing at work.

He sees if you steal money. He sees if you lie. He sees if you cheat.

He sees if you speed. He sees whatever you do. He sees if you beat your kid.

He sees if you cheat on your wife or your husband. He sees it all. You don't get away with it.

There's a payday comes someday, and for some of us, the payday is today. He sees. We must live with him in truth.

So, here he is. He rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord. Two times, in verse 3, it says, from the presence of Lord.

But the Lord sent a great wind into the sea. He's out there in that ship, you know, he got on the ship to flee from the presence of the Lord. And the Lord sent, God's been sending your way.

God sends my way, what I need to keep me going along with him, to keep me right with him, to keep me walking with him. And so, these boys are having trouble in the ship because of a prodigal prophet. And they're up there fighting the ship, and verse 5 says, Jonah's down in the bottom asleep.

And that's about where the church is today. Basically, it's asleep. Asleep with rebellion in its heart.

Asleep in need of revival. Well, these guys, they come along after a little bit and say, what are you doing sleeping? We're fixing to die. Come on, help out.

And then they come up with the idea that they'd cast lots to see who was the problem here. And so, God's calling Jonah's number up. His lot was picked.

And they said, hey, tell us what's going on. What have you done? What have you done? You know, he never did answer them. He never did tell them that he didn't like Ninevites.

He never did tell them about the rebellion in his heart. But he just said, I'm a Hebrew. I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which had made the sea and the dry land.

Then were the men exceedingly afraid and said unto him, why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then they said unto him, what shall we do unto thee? Well, now he's right. He said, throw me in the sea.

And they said, we don't want to do that. We fear God. And so they tried to do everything they could.

And then finally they came and they took old Jonah up and they threw him in the sea. Then the men feared, you know, because the waves stopped. And I think revival broke out there on the ship.

God's going to bring men to him whatever way he can, whenever he can. And then, you know, the story how Jonah ended up in the belly of the fish. And I believe Jonah had revival.

It says he was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. And the scripture says that Jesus was in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. How was Jesus? He was dead.

I think if you look at the scripture passage here, you'll see that Jonah died. Jonah had a death, a burial, and resurrection. And he went down to the save compartment in the heart of the earth, into Sheol.

And if you look at the scriptures in verse 5 and chapter 2, it says, The waters compassed me about, even to the soul. The depth closed me round about. The weeds were wrapped around my head.

My friend, he's drowning. That's the experience of a drowning man. I almost drowned once.

I know what it's like. It's a hard experience. And then I was saved just before I lost it all.

It said, I went down to the bottoms of the mountains. The earth. Now he's in the earth.

Wither bars was about me forever. Yet has I brought up my life from corruption. My friend, he died.

The miracle of Jonah is not that he survived the fish. The miracle of Jonah was that he was resurrected. And that was why Jesus, as Jesus was in the heart of the earth three days, as Jonah was in the heart of the earth three days, so shall Jesus be.

And so he said, my soul fainted within me. I remember the Lord. My prayer came into thee, into thy holy temple.

And he said, I'll perform my vows. And so the Lord spoke to the fish. The fish vomited him up.

And let me tell you, when Jonah hit the beach, man, he hit the beach on the run. He was headed for Nineveh. And you know how the story goes.

When he went into Nineveh, I think he was one wild sight. Here he had been in this fish. His body had been in there for three days.

The gastric juices had did a little work on him. Patches of hair here, torn clothes, seaweed wrapped around him. And he goes running through this town preaching, repent, repent, repent.

Man, you might repent too if you saw a wild Jonah coming along. And they did. Man, the people of Nineveh believed God.

It says in 3-5, Jonah 3-5. So the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast from the greatest of them down to the least of them. And they had revival there.

And you know what old Jonah did? When he got down to the end of the line, he got done going through the city. It displeased Jonah, chapter 4, exceedingly, for he was very angry. He had something in his heart.

And so he prayed unto the Lord and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before thee to Tarshish. For I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, I take, I beseech thee, my life from me.

For it is better for me to die than to live. And my friend, you don't know how true that is. It is better for you and me to die than to live.

For if we will die, Jesus will live. Like I saw on a soap making plant one time, there was a sign, we die to live and live to die. The problem with us, my friends, is some of us are just like the little saying, some men die in battle and some men die in flames, but most men die inch by inch as they play silly little games.

Jonah was trying to play games with God. Are you? It doesn't work. He's going to call our bluff.

He's going to move in on us. It doesn't work. We try to play little games and we die inch by inch.

But Jonah said, it's better for me to die than to live. And this is a scriptural truth. Paul said, I die daily.

He said, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

And he says, I do not frustrate the grace of God. Are you frustrated? Well, you may be frustrated, but maybe so is the Holy Spirit in your life. And he's working, and he may have brought an accident into your life.

He may have blown you 35 foot up into the air, like I was talking to a man the other night who was blown 35 foot up into the air, and he survived. And he knows God got his attention very well. And now I hope he has ears to hear whatever else God has to say for him, that he'll obey and that you and I will obey.

God may not have to be that severe with some of us, but he in love deals with us. So God's dealing with Jonah. And Jonah, man, he went out here on the east side of the city, made him a little booth, sat under it in the evening so that he could see what would become of the city.

He doesn't believe yet that revival is going to come. And it's happening. It's going on out there.

He just doesn't want it. He's so angry with God. Are you angry with God? Has God brought something in your life and you've just been angry at him? Huh? Who really was it that Jonah was upset with? It wasn't really none of them.

It was God. And this is what God's bringing him to see. And so God, here he is out here in all this heat.

So God prepared a gourd and it grew up over Jonah and gave him a shadow. And you know, Jonah liked that. He really did appreciate that gourd.

Then God made a worm. The worm came and ate the thing down. The sun came back on him.

And then Jonah didn't like that. God made a harsh, hot east wind and the sun to come beat on him so that he almost fainted. And he wishing himself to die.

And he said, it's better for me to die than to live. And that's the spiritual truth. And so God said to Jonah, does that well to be angry? Are you getting anything good out of life by being angry? Being bitter, upset, anything good coming out of this? And he says, I do well to be angry.

I've got a right to be angry even into death. My friend, that's false. You and I don't have any rights.

When we trust Christ as our Savior, we surrender them all at the cross. And this is why when Paul said the preaching of the cross is foolishness. And a lot of people are supposedly getting saved today.

They're not getting to the cross. They're not really getting to Jesus. A lot of getting some kind of emotional experience, intellectual experience.

But until the will is affected, we've never made it to Jesus. So many of us have been exposed to Christianity. So many of us have been close, but we've never really been born again.

Have you been born again? Have you have you made it to Jesus? Have you made it to the cross? And God said to Jonah, do you doing well to be angry? And he says, I'm not. I'm doing well. And the Lord said, you had pity on this gourd.

Why can't I have pity on this great city of Nineveh? Where are more than six or thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand? And also much cattle. We don't know how the story ended. I don't know.

That might have been the end of Jonah's life. But I do know that the story continues in your life and my life. Are you and I willing to be forgiving and to forget those things which are behind? Philippians 3, 13, forgetting those things which are behind.

How many of you right now can think of someone right now that when you see them or hear of them, you have a bad attitude toward them, a bad experience? I share today with a barber a little a little thing that happened to me when I was in fifth grade. My dad used to cut my hair up to the fifth grade. I'll say that.

And he had these little clippers and he put these little plastic things on and he would cut my hair. Well, one time we was out in the storage room and he started to cut my hair and and he went right up the middle of my head. Then I heard they stopped and he said, oh, he forgot to put the little plastic thing on and he had just shaved my head right up the middle.

Well, there wasn't anything to do. That looked pretty, pretty stupid. And so he cut it all off.

Do you know, my friend, I wore a hat to school for one whole month and I had a teacher that kept after me. She wanted to see what looked under what was underneath that hat. And I wouldn't let her.

I wouldn't let her. Oh, she pleaded with me and she begged me. And I said, if I show you, you'll laugh.

And she said, no, I won't. No, I won't. No, I won't.

I said, OK, I'll show you. So we went out in the hall and I took and already had a bad problem with a with an inferiority complex, which is the other side of pride. Superiority complex, inferiority complex are both pride.

And and so I took it off and she laughed. Man, my spirit just was just crushed. Oh, something happened in my heart.

And I didn't really realize what had happened to years later when I heard that she died of cancer. When I first heard that, my first thought was God has judged you for laughing at me. That was when the Holy Spirit showed me that I had a bitter attitude towards her and I had not forgiven her.

And he told me I better forgive her and and and watch my heart in that area. And I forgave her. But do you know that that's the same thing? I carried that all my life, all those years.

We pick up a lot of garbage in life. People do things to us. My friend, love forgives.

We will not forgive because we are not perfect in love. So many times a preacher will stay put in a church, but he's discontent and disgruntled with the people and actually he's with disgruntled with God because things won't go the way they're supposed to go. And actually, it's God that he's after.

And he's just like Jonah. Jonah went and did his job. Oh, boy.

When Jonah hit the beach, he was on the run and he preached, but he didn't have his heart right. And God blessed in spite of Jonah and God blesses in spite of us preachers. But his heart wasn't right.

You see, Paul was angry at God, taking it out on Christians. Who have you been taking your frustrating situations out on? I know God has really convicted me because of discipline, sometimes in anger with my children. I mean, he's told me I'm taking it out on the wrong person.

He said, I'm the one that needs the spanking. And this is why Jesus, when he showed up with the apostle Paul, he said, why are you persecuting me? You, Lord, who are you? He says, I'm Jesus. You know, God's been doing something in your life and you've been blaming somebody else.

You've been blaming your preacher, the mother in law, your father, your kids, your job, your situation. But it's God, my friend. He is God and he does control circumstances.

He works in our life. Are you content with the will of God right now? Are you content with the will of God right now? The will of God is the only place of contentment. If you're not happy, then there's something wrong.

Paul said, I die daily. When Jonah got up out of that bed, we'll give him the benefit of the doubt and just say he had a bad day that day. But he forgot to die that one day.

What happens when we forget to die? Well, all of a sudden, we can't forgive. We can't yield our rights. We can't yield our time.

We can't give our money. We can't sacrifice to somebody. We're out of sorts.

We're no good for Jesus that day. My friend, you and I can't afford to live one day out of the will of God, much less one minute. It's too crucial.

Life is too short. The price, the cost is too expensive. It's too valuable.

Souls are at stake. And so the Lord brings some tests along to get us back to him. If I will not die to self, then Jesus dies in my life.

His resurrection life is denied existence. His power is quenched and grieved. Paul said, I do not frustrate the grace of God.

Oh, my friend, let's don't frustrate the grace of God. Remember in 2 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 15, and that he died for all that they which live should not, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. And I'm sorry to say this, but many of us have really never been born again.

All we live for is ourself. And many of us have been born again. And all we live for is ourself.

And you can't hardly tell the difference. And that's a real problem. And I don't have the ability, but God does.

He knows where you're at. So where do these bad attitudes come from? They come from the flesh. What are we to do with the flesh? How do we, how are we to win over the flesh? Victory was at the cross secured.

Victory today is still at the cross. The cross means death to self. That's all the cross means is death.

And if we will die to self, then Jesus will live for us. So when Paul said for, or when Jonah said for, for it's better for me to die than, than to live, that was true. Do you know what it said of Samson? That he slew more in his death than in his life.

And God will be able to do more through my dying and through your dying than he will through me being alive. The, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Not only is the flesh weak, it is corrupt to the core.

We can't trust it. And we have many around. I know this is a thing that, that almost devastated my life is because I had some education.

I thought I had it all. I thought that man, I could go out and God could use me to tear up the world. And I found out that that was a stumbling stone in my life.

Wow. We need the cross. We need to die to self.

John 12, 24, 25, verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die. I mean, it's just got to be crushed, pulverized, disintegrate and die. It abides alone.

If it won't do that, it abides alone. But if it died, it bring it forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it.

And he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. Where you at? Where you at? Are you alive? I mean, is your self life alive? Is it alive? Paul said, For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is bitter destruction, whose God is their belly. Who's your God? Your flesh.

And whose glory is in their shame, and who mind earthly things. Who do you love? Well, until next time, I trust that God will continue to work in your life and bless you. And remember, Jesus Christ is all you need.

Is he all you want? Till next time, may God bless you.

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