

The Heartbeat of God

by Greg Locke

The sermon explores Jonah's journey of disobedience and the profound lessons about God's mercy and calling for obedience.

Duration: 58:34

Scripture: Jonah 1:1-3, Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8, 2 Peter 3:9

Topics: "Effective Preaching", "Book Of Jonah"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a teacher giving advice on how to deliver a sermon effectively. He emphasizes the importance of grabbing people's attention and keeping the sermon concise. The preacher then relates this advice to his own experience of preaching on hell and the topic of America's idea. He concludes by introducing the book of Jonah and highlights its significance as a well-known story from childhood, and promises to explore its four chapters in a brief and impactful manner.

Transcript

Good singing, and I appreciate all of you being here tonight. Thank you so much to all of the visitors that are here. I believe Pastor said there's about, what, 10, 11, 12 churches that are represented tonight, and for that I am grateful.

In November, I was at the Broaddus Memorial Baptist Church of Concord, North Carolina, and we had 43 churches show up on Friday night for the revival meeting, and it was standing room only, and 39 of those churches were Baptist churches from in the town. I'm telling you, that is unheard of for 43 churches to come together for revival, but I appreciate all of you being here tonight. Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart, and do support your pastor and your local church ministry tomorrow night.

Of course, if you don't have a good Bible-preaching church, you come here tomorrow night. We'll preach the Word of God to you, have some good music, and then, of course, Thursday night and Friday night, let's do our best to fill the building and to feel the fuse, because we're only responsible for those who come into the building, and so let's get a lot of people in here, and so we can preach the Word of God to them, and so we can help some people, because I'll tell you what America needs is not a showboat and a circus. America needs music and the preaching of the Word of God to serve them and to change them, and I tell you, I'm thoroughly blessed, and I'm thoroughly honored, and my wife and I count it a privilege to have the Robertson family travel with us.

I believe it's been a little over two years, two and a half years, something like that, they've been traveling with us, and I praise the Lord for the good music that they have implemented into our ministry, and it has increased my ability and my awareness of the pulpit, because I don't have to worry about the music. I don't have to pray for the Holy Spirit to come back when somebody gets done singing a special. All I got to do is just get up, and my mind is focused on the preaching, and I thank God for that, and I appreciate them so very, very much, and you do not know, unless you travel, you go to churches, you do not know what a struggle it is and what a battle it is to find good, solid, Christian, fundamental music, and so I appreciate their ministry, it helps mine so much, and it's good to have all of you tonight.

Appreciate Brother Reynolds coming, appreciate Brother Walker coming tonight, and thank everybody for being here. Jonah chapter number one, let's stand, please, out of respect for God's word tonight. You notice there are four chapters.

I'm going to preach through every single one of them, but I promise I'll not keep you very long tonight. Jonah chapter number one, please, and verse number one. Jonah one, in verse one, the Bible says, Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittiah, saying, Rise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before me.

But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa. And he found a ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it to go with him unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, verse four. But the Lord 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.

Then the mariner, that's the Bible word for the sailors, were afraid, and cried every man unto his God. And cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship, and he lay and was fast asleep.

So the shipmaster, or the captain, if you will, came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, fall upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not. And they said, Every one to his fellow come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lots fell upon Jonah.

Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us. What is thy occupation, and whence comest thou? What is thy country, and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath 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 had fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? For the sea roared, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea. So shall the sea be calm unto you, for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

Nevertheless, the men rode hard to bring it to land, but they could not, for the sea roared, and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood. For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea, and the sea ceased from a raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows. Verse 17, please.

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Tonight I bring you the simple subject, The Heartbeat of God.

Thank you very much. You may be seated. Let's bow our heads and hearts, and let's pray.

Let's ask the Lord to bless our service tonight. The Heartbeat of God. Now, Lord, I do pray that you would help me as I preach the Word of God.

I pray that you would empty me of myself. You would fill me with the Spirit. I pray I would say everything that you asked me to say, and I would not say one word that would dishonor you tonight.

I pray, Lord, that you would help me to preach the Word of God as a dying man to a dying congregation. For truly, this may be the last sermon I ever preach, and this perhaps may be the last sermon that some of these people ever hear. And so, Father, tonight, give me ocean, give me urgency, and give me the power of God more than anything else as I stand in this sacred pulpit tonight.

Dear God, for these, my friends, I pray that you would help this congregation as they listen to the Word of God being preached. And I pray, dear Lord, that you would change us, that you would convict us, and that you would show us some things tonight in your Word that would make us less of what we are by nature and more like the lovely Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

As we've heard sung about tonight, and ever since you've learned, since you were a wee little tyke, and kid for Christ, or a wander's club, or vacation Bible school, or more than likely Sunday school, we've heard about, we've told about, we've heard preached, we've memorized, and we've sung funny little songs about the man Jonah. Now, Jonah is a very interesting book. It's only four chapters long.

Each one of those chapters does not have very many verses, and so it'll not take us very long to preachingly peruse through the book tonight. But as my title implies, I'm going to preach on the heartbeat of God. But you're going to have to be patient and bear with me, because the heartbeat of God is not revealed until the end of chapter number four, which obviously is the last chapter of the book.

But in order to understand what the main thrust of this book is, in order to understand what the main theme and what the main flavor of the book of Jonah is, we're going to have to quickly study chapter one, chapter two, and chapter three. Somebody said that a short pencil is better than a long memory, so I hope you'll write these down. Jonah chapter number one is simply what I call Jonah's disobedience.

Jonah's disobedience. Notice verse one, please, as we begin our message tonight. Jonah chapter one and verse number one.

It says, now the word of the Lord... Now, notice that it does not say the word of a preacher. It doesn't say the word of a man or the word of denomination. It says the word of the Lord, and that's what makes the difference in this story.

Now, the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittiah, saying... Notice, please, verse two, here's the command. Arise, go to Nineveh, that grave city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me. Notice verse three, tragically, but Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarsus from the presence of

the Lord.

And so we see in Jonah chapter number one, the first few verses, what I call for sake of an outline, Jonah's disobedience. In verse number two of Jonah chapter one, we learn two things about the city of Nineveh. Now, historically, we know that Nineveh was the capital city of a wicked, godless group of people called the Assyrians.

From Genesis 1-1 to Revelation 22-21, anytime God mentioned the Assyrians in this Bible, it was never on good terms. It was always on bad terms. And here is a wicked capital city of one of the most godless nations and groups of people on the face of God's earth.

But we learn two things about this city. God said, number one, it was a great city. Now, please don't misunderstand that.

Interpreting that, He's not saying it was great as far as its influence was concerned. He was saying it was great because it was a very, very large town. It was not what I would consider to be one of these southern towns, a poking plum town.

You poke your head around the corner, you plum out of town. OK, that was not Nineveh. Nineveh was a large place.

It was a place that had many, many, many acres and many, many, many miles. And so God said it was a large city. But secondly, God said it was a wicked city.

Now, you write something down, ladies and gentlemen, and remember it well. When God said a place is wicked, it must be a very, very wicked place. Here was a group of people that had no Bibles whatsoever.

Here's a group of people that had no Bible colleges. They had no seminaries. They had no fundamental pulpits.

They had no fundamental preachers. They had no pulpits that were preaching the word of God. There was no gospel message.

There was no preacher voice running up and down the land. There were no gospel tracts being passed out in the street. There were no Bible printing societies.

There was nothing like that in Nineveh whatsoever. And yet God said, Jonah, you're the man for the many. You are the prophet for higher.

You are the man to whom I want to go down to Nineveh, to Nineveh's land and preach to them, doth sayeth the Lord. That all about you. But if God were to entrust me with something that special, if God were to entrust me as an evangelist with something so honorable, as to preach to a group of people that had never heard the name Jesus Christ, that were not gospel hardened, that knew nothing about the word of God, I'm telling you, I do believe I would jump at the opportunity.

And Jonah did, but he jumped in the wrong direction. Because God said, Jonah, I want you to go to this big city, to a city full of lost people, people who are deplorable. They are depraved.

They are wicked. They are godless. They have no Bibles.

And I want you to go and preach the word of God. And God said, go. And Jonah said, no.

Now, suppose tonight we could raise our hands and have a discussion class, and we could come up with a lot of good excuses for why Jonah did not go. But I'd like to remind you, ladies and gentlemen, there's no good excuses for disobedience to the will of God. He got up and went in the opposite direction.

God said, I want you to go and preach. And Jonah said, I've got better plans. Now, historically, not scripturally, so take it for what it's worth.

But historically, we learn that his father Amittiah, which, by the way, is only mentioned one other time in your Bible, in the book of 2 Chronicles, believe it is. But his father Amittiah, history tells us, ten years prior to the writing of the book of Jonah, or the happenings of this book, his father Amittiah was slain in a battle by none the less than the Ninevites. And if that be indeed historically true, you can already see the apprehension in his heart for why he does not want to go to that wicked group of people.

You see, Jonah could have cared less if the Ninevites went to hell. That didn't bother him. They were wicked people.

In his mind, they deserved to go to hell. In his mind, they deserved the wrath and the judgment of Almighty God. But I'd like to remind you, ladies and gentlemen, everybody in this room deserves to go to hell.

Everybody deserves the wrath and the judgment of Almighty God. But I'm glad for Ephesians chapter 2 and verse number 4, that God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, for by grace are you saved. And so Jonah did not want to go in the direction that God wanted him to go.

But isn't it interesting that God always knows what buttons to press in your life to get your attention when you're disobedient? Look in your Bibles, please, in verse number 4. Jonah chapter 1, please, in verse 4. But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea. There was a mighty tempest in the sea so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners or sailors were afraid and cried every man unto his God and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them.

But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship and he lay and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster or captain came to him and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Rhymes called upon by God. If so be that God will think upon us that we perish not.

And they said, everyone to his fellow come and let us cast lots that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots and the lot fell upon Jonah. Now, ladies and gentlemen, here is a man that is on a boat who is not only the only preacher or prophet on the boat.

But according to my Bible and yours, he's the only believer on the boat. He is the only Christian that you can find on this boat. So how do you know that? Because the Bible says when the distressing storm came, every man cried unto his own God, little g, little o, little d. These men were heathen.

These men were pagan. These men knew nothing about Jehovah God. And here's this great big boat.

It's going over the high seas of life. And all of a sudden it's being tossed around like a toothpick in a bathtub. And I mean, the water is getting bigger.

And I mean, the waves are getting bigger. And the billows are coming inside of that boat. And those men begin to scratch their heads.

And they sit around the table. They say, what in the wide world are we going to do? And so they come to Jonah and they have a little discourse. And Jonah says, listen, fellas, I'm running from God.

And it's my fault that we're in the mess that we're in. It's my fault that this storm is here. It's my fault that the lightning streaking its way to the sky like a snake's forked tongue.

It's my fault that the thunder has come and that the rains are falling and that this boat is about to sink. And if you would just throw me overboard, God's wrath would be appeased and everything would be all right. They didn't think that'd be a good idea.

Because if you study your Bible, you'll find out two times that they rode hard. Nevertheless, they rode hard to bring it to the land. See, they got all the boxes and they began to push them off the boat, trying to get that boat just a little bit lighter to bring it up out of those swales, to bring it up out of the waves so they could bring it to the land and wreck it on the sandy beaches if they had to.

They just wanted to get out of that terrible, terrible storm that they were in. And so they said two times, we're not going to have to throw you overboard. You'll be fine.

And so they throw off the extra boxes of clothes. They throw off the extra boxes of cheese and maybe the Cracker Jacks and some of the other food that they have. Maybe they were shipping some cars over to China illegally or something like that.

But whatever they were shipping, they kicked it off and they were trying to get that boat lighter. But the lighter they got it, the more the judgment of God began to fall. And finally, they got the picture and the light bulb went off and the bells and whistles.

And they said, you know what? We're going to have to get rid of you, pal. And so they picked him up, man overboard. One, two, three, heave ho, they threw him into the water.

And the Bible said that the sea, seeped from horizon. And there was a great calm on the ocean on top. But down below, there was a great, great tempest that was taking place.

Look in verse 17, would you? Jonah chapter one and verse 17. 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.

I don't know about you, but I do believe that would do something to get my attention. That's for sure. Somebody says, well, for the life, was it a great fish? Jesus called it the book of Matthew, a great whale.

I don't know what it was. It was a custom built boat ride for Jonah. And I don't want to see one of my bathtub.

That's for sure. And here is a man that because of his disobedience to God, God swallowed him up for three days and three nights into the belly of an actual, physical, factual whale. I don't understand that.

I can't explain that, but I take it for faith value because it's right here in the pages of the word of God. There was a lady in about 1976 or so that came to Dr. B.R. Lakin. He was preaching in Southern California.

He was preaching on prophecy. And one night he preached out of the book of Jonah showing how it was a picture of the Lord Jesus being in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. And he preached it just as I preached it, that it was a literal, actual, physical and biblical fact.

Well, she came to him after the surgery and that head was just a bobbing back and forth. And she shook his hand and she said, Mr. Lakin, there's one thing about the story of Jonah that we don't agree about. I do not believe that it was an actual whale.

She said, I think it was an allegory. She said, I believe it was a parable like Jesus taught in the New Testament. She said, I believe it was just a earthly type of an illustration to present a heavenly meaning.

And he said, ma'am, because it's in the word of God, I'm forced to believe that Jonah was actually, physically and factually swallowed by a great whale because that's what God said. So she argued back and forth. And he said, ma'am, I'll tell you what, it's obvious that you're not going to sway my thinking it's obvious I'm not going to sway nor change your thinking.

So I'll tell you what, we'll shake hands. We will agree to disagree. She said, that'll be fine.

He said, I'll set your mind and your conscience at ease. He said, how about when I die, when I get to heaven, the first week I am in heaven, I will look up Jonah and I will tap him on the shoulder, shake his hand. And when I get to heaven, I will ask Jonah if it actually happened.

She said, but what if he's not there? He said, then you can ask him. But the truth of the matter is this, according to the word of God, Jonah was swallowed by a big fat fish. I don't understand that, but it's right here in my Bible.

Somebody says, well, you Bible thumpers are foolish to believe something like that. Well, you not heads are foolish not to, because it's right here in the word of God. And if it's in the word of God, ladies and gentlemen, we must take it for faith value because God said Jonah was swallowed by a whale because of his disobedience.

Now, because of his disobedience, you have chapter two. Chapter number two is Jonah's distress. And you know what I've learned in my Christian life? Most of my distress is self-inflicted because of my disobedience.

I usually bring on most of my discouragement. I don't find anywhere in the Bible where God discourages his people. I don't find anywhere in the Bible where God causes his people to be backslidden or disobedient.

I do not find that in the word of God. But I do find where God's people get away from God and because of their disobedience, because of their rebellion and because of their backsliding, they do get filled with discouragement. They do get filled with distress.

And I believe Jonah was one of the most distress filled men in all of the Old Testament. Look in chapter two, please, in verse one. Jonah chapter two in verse one.

The Bible says, Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. Now, you know, I could preach on that verse for a long time and make a lot of applications, but I'm not going to. But let me just in passing say this, that verse as an evangelist greatly encourages my heart.

I'll see why, because I go all over the country preaching. Not that God will revive America. That's not the point.

The point is that he can revive America anytime he wants to. I did not say he is going to give us revival this week, but he can give us revival this week. Now, let me tell you why this verse encourages me, because I preach in local church, at the local church, at the local church.

God can give revival. God can give revival. And you know what? I believe if Jonah can have revival in the belly of a fish, then we can have revival at the Brush Harbor Baptist Church.

That's for sure. And so he prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. But what did he say? Well, it was one of the most distressing prayers in the Bible.

Look at verse two. And he said, I cried my reason of my affliction unto the Lord. And he heard me out of the belly of hell, cried I. And thou heardest my voice.

Thou hath cast me into the deep, into the midst of the sea. And the floods come past me about all thy billows and thy waves cast over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight.

Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters come past me about even to the soul. The depths close me round about.

The weeds were wrapped about my head. Now, you think about that. There's a funny verse right there in your Bible.

We have the idea that Jonah was sitting down there eating caviar. That he had on a nice little three-piece suit and his nice little Vaseline spit-shined polyester shoes. Had himself a nice little lapel microphone and a black-backed, soul-filled leather Bible.

That's not what he looked like, ladies and gentlemen. Everything that went inside that whale's mouth gave him square death in the face. I mean, when that whale opened his mouth and poured in all that salt water, right down his little goozle it went.

I mean, all that shrimp and all that stuff he was eating and all that sand and all that mud and all the juices and all that mess that was thrown inside that great big old whale. We have the idea he was in a hilt and high rise, though he was in a mess. He was filled with distress.

And he said, I have died and from the pains of hell I am calling to God to ask him for help. And here this man is in a mess. He said, the seaweed was wrapped around my head.

Can you imagine that? You know, we go to a restaurant sometimes and, you know, I enjoy Chinese food. I'm a noodle nut. I'll take a noodle any way you can give it to me.

I believe it was manna in the Old Testament. Believe what you want to, but I'm preaching not to you. But I believe manna was noodles in the Old Testament.

And I love a good old fat noodle. I don't care how big it is. I had noodles today.

I had noodles yesterday. I mean, I had noodles all the time. I enjoy them.

That's why I'm a little string bean. But nonetheless, as I eat noodles, I like to go to Chinese restaurants and I like to go to Italian restaurants. Now, more so with Italian than with Chinese.

You know what happened to me? And don't you laugh, fellas, because you've done it before, too. And honestly, you're a liar if you tell me you've never done it, because the most comfortable person in all the world that I can be around is my wife. I can ask my wife things I wouldn't dare ask you.

Do you know that? I can tell my wife things I would not dare tell you and vice versa. But I can come out of a restaurant and before I get in the truck, maybe I got to speak or maybe I got to shake somebody's hand or maybe I got to meet somebody or maybe I'm fixing to do something, this, that, and the other, know something and tell it. And I'm fixing to look at somebody.

You know, I want to make sure I ain't got no spaghetti sauce all over my face. You know, I want to make sure the thing's just right and it's high straight. But you know what I ask my wife sometimes when I come out of a restaurant after I've been eating something that's got herbs and spices and Mrs. Dash and all that kind of stuff.

You know, let's cover those. You've done it before, too. I look at my wife and I say, honey, have I got any greenies in my teeth? And she says, you got any greenies in your teeth? I say, yes, I got anything green in my teeth.

I need to run back real quick before I shake this person's hand. Hey, you talk about greenies in your teeth. Here's a man who had a mouth full of seaweed.

How's that for you? Here's a guy who had seaweed wrapped about his face. I mean, in his ears, plugged up in his eyes, up his nostrils. I mean, this man was in a mess of distress.

Now, you think that's bad. Look at verse five, would you? The water, excuse me, verse six. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains.

You don't go any lower than that. The earth with her bars was about me forever. Yet Haskal brought up my life from corruption.

Oh, Lord, my God. He said, I was in there, but I at least appreciate the fact you didn't let me rock. He said, I at least appreciate the fact you pulled me out before corruption set in.

Then he said in verse seven, when my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord. My prayer came in under thee into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

But I will sacrifice unto thee with a voice of thanksgiving. Notice, I will pay that that I have vowed salvation unto the Lord. I believe what Jonah is saying here from the belly of this whale.

I believe he's referring to the time when he completely surrendered his heart to the will of God. Maybe it was in a revival meeting and he came to an altar. I don't know.

But maybe it was inside his bed. Maybe it was at the feet of his mother. I don't know where he surrendered.

But at some point in Jonah's life, not only was he saved by faith, but he surrendered to the will of God. And he said, Lord, I make a vow to you. Here is what I'm going to do with my life because that's what you want

me to do.

And he said, you know what, God? I went back on that vow. He said in chapter number one, because of my disobedience, I'm filled with distress and with discouragement. I went back on that commitment that I made.

I went back on what I told you that I was going to do. And he says, Lord, if you get me out of this mess, I will pay that that I have vowed. I'll preach anywhere you want me to.

I'll hold a revival meeting. No more if you want me to. Just get me out of this mess that I find myself in.

And so God honored his word. Look what happened in verse number 10. And the land staked unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

Isn't that a wonderful thing? In chapter number one, God speaks to his man, the prophet, and he disobeys. In chapter number two, God speaks to a fish. There were no questions asked.

He immediately obeys. It's pretty bad when fish are more obedient than Baptist. That's for sure.

And here is a man because of his disobedience. He was filled with distress. But chapter three is my favorite chapter.

Notice it, please. It's what I call Jonah's declaration. And if there was ever a declaration in the Bible, if there was ever a message that was preached straightforwardly, it's the message you're about to read about in Jonah chapter three.

It says in verse one, and the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time. I'll thank God for that verse right there. You see, I'm glad I don't serve a God that speaks one time and gives up.

I'm glad my Bible says in 2 Peter chapter three, in verse number nine, the Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men shall slacken. But his wrong suffering, boy, I like that word, wrong suffering to us, we're not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance. And I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that we have a God that'll speak once.

He'll speak twice. Thank God, some of you know that he's a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh time God. And the Bible says that he came unto Jonah and he asked him to do something the second time.

Thank God for his mercy. But you will notice, ladies and gentlemen, Malachi chapter three, verse number six, I am the Lord, I change not. Hebrews 13, eight, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Although God spoke twice, the command was still the same. He killed since a man on the same mission that he was disobedient to in chapter one. Let me show that to you, please.

Verse two, chapter three, in verse number two, please. Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I did thee. So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh according to the word of the Lord.

Now, Nineveh was an exceeding great city, a three-day journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey. And he cried and said, Yet 40 days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

Here the Bible tells us that this fish, and if you look upon a map, you will find out that Nineveh and Tarshish were about 1,400 to 1,500 miles diametrically opposed to one another in the opposite direction. And that was a supersonic spiritual fish, if you've ever met one friend. And I mean, he did some quick swimming in just a couple of days.

And he took Jonah back and he sent him up onto the dry land. Now, I know some of you in here have some weak stomachs, Ms. Lamb, but nevertheless, here is a preacher who is laying around in sand, and excuse me, according to my Bible, he's laying around in whale vomit. That's what the word of God says.

I didn't make it up. It says he vomited up Jonah upon the dry land. Now, I know some preachers that were going to that and had preached on just about everything laying around there, but I'm not going to, but I'm going to tell you something.

He was in a mess, if there was ever a man in the Bible. You talk about stinking. You ever drove by a pond and had one dead fish in it? It'll smell up the whole community.

Can you imagine a man that lived inside of one for three solid days and three solid nights? Everybody he preached to probably had a clothespin on their nose for three days. I mean, he went from point A to point B. He went from one bed to the other door. He went from one house to the next house.

I mean, for three solid days, he went from one side of the city all the way to the other. And you know what he said? He had an eight worded sermon. That's it.

Eight worded. Yet 40 days. And none of us shall be overthrown.

Yet 40 days. And none of us shall be overthrown. By the way, unless you misunderstand your Bible, had those people not repented, God would have destroyed every one of them in 40 days, just like he said he would have.

But he had mercy upon them because they believed and they cared. Notice what verse number five says. It says, So the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them, even to the least of them.

You'll find out that the king all the way down to the street paupers got right with God. I mean, they covered their donkeys. They covered their oxen.

They covered their dogs, their cats, their kids, everything they could get their hands on. They covered it in sackcloth and ashes and they proclaimed a day or two of a fast and they repented of their sins and they turned from their way and they turned to God's way and they believed God. And over 175,000 people that didn't know their left hand from their right got saved by the glorious grace of God over an eight murdered.

That's something right there in your Bible, ladies and gentlemen, that's recorded right here in chapter three. That's enough right there to drive a homiletic teacher out of his mind. There wasn't one thing homiletical about that person.

He didn't know what alliteration was if it caught up on his doorstep. I mean, he didn't know what three points in a poem was. He never even heard of the sword of the Lord.

I mean, here's a guy that had one simple eight worded, no tear jerking illustration, no jokes. He didn't even have a snappy sermon title. You know, as an evangelist, I like snappy sermon titles.

I don't really know if it really gets people's attention, but it does when you sell them on a tape table. I'll tell you that. I think it's a sales pitch.

If you know you're selling tapes and they're back there and I don't have any this week and I apologize for that. Maybe I need to make a few more, but I've just been so busy. I've not been able to.

But you know, you put some tapes back there and you have some titles back there and it never fails. Somebody come by. You know, I'll be at the table or my wife will be at the table or one of the Robertsons be taking care of their table.

I just have my stuff there. Somebody come by and say, whoa, isn't that a nice title? What is it? What bothers Satan? Take it home. You can figure it out.

And so it's kind of a sales pitch. So I like them snappy sermon titles. I like them long sermon titles.

They kind of get people's attention, but Jonah didn't have one. It sounded like that fella, he was a freshman in Bible college. I mean, he was so excited about preaching, he couldn't think straight.

And so the teacher, they went through the three points. They went through the poem. They went through the introduction.

They went through the conclusion. They went through the TS, you know, the transitional sentences. They went through all of it.

They went through the hand gestures. They went through the diaphragmatic breathing and all that type of stuff that you're supposed to do, how you're supposed to preach and how you're not supposed to preach. And I mean, they went through every bit of it.

And so at the end of the semester, they're supposed to preach their trial sermon. And they just went over the title to the message. And so that boy got up on Wednesday and he told those people, he said, I'm going to preach this morning on Paul's powerful preaching on the process of practical predestination.

And the teacher stood up and said, wait just a minute. He said, I like alliteration. He said, it's good when your title can start with all the same letters and things like that.

He said, but Paul's powerful preaching on the process of practical predestination is just a little bit too long, a little bit too lengthy and a little bit too doctrinal. You're going to have to cut it back. How about I let you preach tomorrow and we'll let somebody else go.

So another guy got up. He sat down, but he was boiling hot mad. He got ready to go out of the room and the teacher grabbed him by the arm and said, son, don't you be upset about it.

He said, that gets a little bit too long of a title. He said, let me tell you how you get a sermon title to get people's attention. He said, let's just pretend you're a pastor in the first Baptist church in town.

He said, it's right on the main thoroughfare, right on the main traffic road where everybody drives by. And he said, let's just say that a busload of public school, high school teenagers came driving by on Sunday morning. And on the marquee, on the sign of your church, you had the name of the sermon that you're going to be preaching that morning.

And he said, that sermon title ought to be so snappy that it would make those public high schoolers stop that bus, run off that bus and run into that place and sit on the front row to hear what she had to say. He said, that's how snappy your sermon title ought to be. He said, all right.

He went home and, buddy, he prayed all night. I mean, he stayed up and fasted before God. He got that message just right.

He got the title just down. He prayed and prayed and prayed. I mean, he read everything he could get his hands on it.

He got up the next day and said, I'll be preaching this morning on this subject. There's a bomb on your bus. The truth of the matter is this.

Here's a man that didn't have a snappy sermon title at all. Here's a man that didn't have alliteration. Here's a man that had nothing but the best.

The preaching of the Word of God. And lest I remind you, ladies and gentlemen, can I please tell you what happened when he preached that 840 sermon? The people of Nineveh believed God. And you believe anything you want to, it's on tape and you can give it to your liberal church friends.

And we'll tell you something, preaching still gets the job done. I'm sick to the gills of people saying, well, if we're going to reach teenagers, we got to have a hot dog smothered in onions. And if you reach a crowd full of teenagers with a hot dog smothered in onions, the church down the road will reach them with a piece of pizza, that's for sure.

What you get a crowd with is what you'll keep a crowd with. You reach them with hamburgers and contemporary music. When you get rid of the hamburgers and the contemporary music, you lost your crowd to the church right down the street.

If you get a crowd of people that love old-fashioned singing and old-fashioned gospel worship and old-fashioned gospel preaching, then when you crank up the worship, you crank up the singing and you crank up the preaching, buddy, they'll stick around and they'll listen to anything and everything you've got to say. And you know why our churches are dead and dying on the vine? I'll tell you why. Because we built our churches nowadays on programs, but years ago, we used to build them on preaching.

I mean, the man of God would get in the pulpit. I mean, he was a wild man. It's kind of like Billy Sunday one night, he was preaching in Chicago, Illinois, and he was preaching on one of these big old wraparound pulpits.

Now, it's a pretty big pulpit, amen. But I mean, he was preaching on one of these big old wraparound jobs, like it would be at Bob Jones University or something like that. And he was up there just preaching away.

And I mean, he's a wild man. You ever even think about Billy Sunday, he'd jump on the pulpit, jump over the pulpit. He'd spit, holler, pull off his jacket, pull off his shirt, pull off anything.

I mean, he'd preach and run all over the place. And he was up there preaching, and this little boy stood up on the front row and said, Mama, if they let him out of that box, he's going to tear every one of us in half, amen. And there was a day, ladies and gentlemen, when people would preach the word of God.

I mean, there was a day when churches were built on preaching. But nowadays, we've got sermonants for Christian aunts who smoke cigarettes and nobody wants preaching anymore. Everybody wants to come to church to feel good.

I'm sorry, pal, you don't come to church to feel good. You come to church to worship God and have the devil preached out of you. Now, I don't know about you, but I was just saying this, I don't get a whole lot of live preaching.

I get a lot of tape preaching. I listen to it all the time from every preacher you can imagine. Crazy ones, good ones, slow ones, fast ones.

But I don't get a lot of live preaching. But I'm telling you one thing, buddy, I love to soak up the preaching of the word of God. And you'll be hard pressed, hear me, you'll be hard pressed to make me believe that a real blood-bought, born-again Bible believing son of God doesn't like preaching.

I believe spirit-filled Christians like preaching. Now, it may not always be what they want to hear, but they will understand that it's preaching that gets the job done. Hey, you've heard some wonderful music this week.

You've heard first-class Christian real gospel music. And I'm going to tell you something about their music. Paul never said by the foolishness of music, he's going to save them that belief.

He didn't say by the foolishness of fellowship and potluck dinners, he's going to save them that belief. He didn't say by the foolishness of programs, but he did say by the foolishness of preaching, not foolish preaching. I've heard some of that.

He said, but by the foolishness of preaching, he would choose to save them that belief. You know what? God's never needed the world's methods to reach people. You know what? He still doesn't need the world's methods to know.

It's always been the straightforward, unadulterated preaching of the Word of God that's got the job done. It worked for Nineveh and it still works for America. I know it, Robert Schueter and the rest of them guys on TV in the Christmas season, let that mess say, they get up there and they put their little robes on and they stand up and they say, now, ladies and gentlemen, the problem in America are the preachers who preach on sin and hell and condemnation.

No, Mr. Schueter, the problem in America is the false preachers who won't preach on sin, who won't preach on hell and who won't preach on condemnation. Because I'd like to remind you, both Jesus, John the Baptist and the apostle Paul were the most straightforward preachers that ever walked the face of God's green earth and people did not like what they had to say, but they still preached the Word of God. You know what Jeremiah said? Be not afraid of their faces.

And I'm going to tell you what, friend, you stand right on that, there's a lot of scary faces you can be afraid of, that's for sure. Jeremiah said, don't worry about it. He said, if they laugh, let them laugh.

He said, if they frown, let them frown. He said, if they say amen so loud, you can't preach, don't be it. But if you can't get a grunt out of them, just preach to them anyway.

If they're mad as a junkyard dog, preach to them. And if they're nice to some little old lady, preach to them. You know, Sam Jones said, if you throw a rock into a pack of dogs, the one that chases you, probably the one you hit.

And you can always tell who you hit in the church, they're the first one to make a beeline and shake your hand and tell you, I'll not be back. They're the first ones to come running up to you, not the spirit-filled people like preachers. And I'm not talking about the little playing game preacher.

And by the way, I'm not talking about styles of preaching either. I preach fast, that's obvious. Some people preach slow, that's fine.

Some people quote a lot of scripture when they preach. Some people quote hardly any. Some people use a lot of illustration.

Some people use very little illustration. I'm not talking about the style. I'm talking about the content.

And we're living in a day when both the pulpit and the pews have been vacated by preaching. Nobody preaches the Word of God for me anymore. And we wonder why we got popsicles in the pews.

It's because we got polar bears in the pulpit, that's why. We're going to have to get to the place, ladies and gentlemen, where we get back to the straightforward preaching of the Word of God. I call it the old-fashioned, independent, blistering, blazing, thundering, lightning, hail, fire, and brimstone, independent, fundamental, Bible-believing, dispensational, hard-nosed, step on your toes, red-hot, looting, shooting, without apology, Bible-shooting, Baptist-preaching.

That's what's going to turn America around. It's always worked in the past, and contrary to popular belief and what Norman Vincent Peale thinks, and by the way, he knows better now, preaching still gets the job done. It still works.

By the way, it's still what I love to do more than anything else. There's a couple of things in life I enjoy. There's a couple of things in life I am okay at.

I can do fairly well. But there's one thing I love more than anything else in all of the world, and I don't care if I can do it well or not, I love... I was sitting in a place one night in Rochester, Illinois, preaching up there. They've got this thing called Reformers Unanimous.

I don't know why I'm getting off on all this. I normally don't, but that's all right. I was preaching this place, and there was a bunch of addicts were there.

I mean, dopeheads, crackheads, porno pushers, pedophiles. I mean, you name it, buddy. I mean, these people were addicted to everything.

Video games, jelly beans. I mean, these people were strung out on everything you can imagine. About 150, 165 of them, something like that.

And Steve Curran invited me to come up. This is about the first, maybe the second time I'd preached for them, and I've preached for them eight or 10 times by now. But I was up there, we went one night, and we got a cup of coffee after it.

I was preaching this thing, all these addicts, you know, and so I preached on dying to yourself. I preached the message from Romans chapter number six on why don't you just drop dead, or how sometimes we got to let our flesh not get the best of us, but rather let the spirit of God get the best of our flesh. And so I preached on that that night.

How, you know, if you try to feed a fleshly appetite, you're not going to be able to fight it. I just preached on that whole deal. Well, when we got ourselves a cup of coffee after service, and we're sitting down there, and I said, Brother Curran, I said, I've got a confession to make.

He said, what's that? Well, I don't know, 15, 20 people were there, and they were all talking. They weren't paying attention to me no matter what. And so I thought, well, I give this attention real good.

I said, you know, I said, I feel real bad that you paid my expenses and brought me all the way up here. I said, I didn't apologize to you about something. I said, I said, I'm addicted.

He said, you're addicted? He said, you just preached 150, 165 actions. He said, you got a problem? And I mean, this guy comes in to start counseling me right there at the table. You know what I mean? His eyes got bigger than Jimmy Dean's sausage case.

He said, you're addicted? I said, yeah, I said, I got an addiction. I said, I got a real bad problem. I said, I can't take it.

I said, every night before I go to bed, it stirs me up. I said, every morning I get up, I said, it stirs me up. I said, I can't think straight throughout the day.

I said, I can't do one single cotton-picking thing without thinking about it. I said, I pour all two teasers inside. I had him go, I had him eating out of my hand like a little baby deer.

He said, well, Brother Locke, can I ask you what it is? I said, yeah. I said, I like this in the case. I said, glory to God.

I said, I can't get enough of it. I love it. I mean, Brother Dole says to me sometimes, Brother Craig, you don't need to take this opportunity.

You're going to wear your coat out. You're going to do this. And I'll be honest, I try to listen.

I try to do what's right. Then I turn it back off. But I'm telling you, if you let me preach 500 times a week, bless God, I'd preach all 500 times and beg you for three more.

I just love it. I mean, you know why I love it? Because I've seen it work. Because I got saved in the preaching.

I got right with God in the preaching. I grew under preaching. I surrendered to preach under preaching.

I surrendered to go to Bible college under preaching. Every decision I ever made came under the preaching of the Word of God. Don't you tell me preaching doesn't get the job done.

It worked in the end of his day and it works today in America too. And so he preached. He declared the Word of God.

Everybody got saved and Jonah got mad. Look in chapter number four, would you? Jonah chapter number four and verse number one. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was very angry.

For sake of an outline, I call chapter four Jonah's displeasure. We have his disobedience. Because of his disobedience, you have his distress.

He got right with God. He had a declaration. He declared the Word of God.

But then when everybody got saved, Jonah sat down and sucked his thumb like a big baby and got upset and got mad. And he said, God, I can't believe you saved all these people. I can't believe you gave us revival.

I can't believe you actually did what I've always wanted you to do. But I just didn't quite want you to do it in this way. Notice what happened in verse number two, please.

Jonah chapter four. He prayed unto the Lord and said, I praise you, O Lord. Is not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore, I fled before unto Tarsus.

For I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful. Slow to anger and of great kindness and repentancy of the evil. You know what Jonah just said? He gave us one of the telltale reasons he didn't want to go to Nineveh to begin with.

He said, I knew if I got there and I preached and those people repented and they believed, I knew you'd save them. He said, I knew, God, if I got there, you would save those people from their sins. I'm glad we've got a trustworthy God like that.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10, 13. Acts 16, 31.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved. And I'm telling you, ladies and gentlemen, I'm glad we've got a trustworthy God who will save anybody that had come unto him by faith in Jesus. And I want to know why.

Cast you out. Revelation chapter 22 and verse number 17. The spirit of the bride say, come and let him that is a thirst come.

And whosoever will that I hairlift every calvary from the face of God's earth. And whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life. God will save anybody that will come to him in humble repentance and humble faith.

For Jesus said, repent and believe the gospel. That's all you got to do to be saved. And God's done everything for you.

Made every preparation. And Jonah said, you know what? I knew if I went to that place, you'd save every one of them. And God did.

And so Jonah wanted to argue some more. So notice what he said, please, in verse three. Therefore now, O Lord, take I beseech thee my life from me.

For it is better for me to die than to live. He said, listen, we won't even divvy up on the love offering this week, God. He said, just go ahead and kill me and take me to heaven.

I'm through with the whole thing. He said, I'm just casting in the Bible. I'm turning in a suit and tie.

You can have the lapel mic. And here is a preacher who is mad at God's saving thousands. And thousands of people.

But it gets worse. Notice, please, what happens in verse number four. Then said the Lord, doest thou well to be angry? Notice.

So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. And there, the word there referring to the east side. And there made him a booth and sat under it in the shadow.

Notice, till he might see what would become. Now, those are loaded words right there in your Bible. I don't have to have a raise of hands because most people in this room tonight, as fundamentalists, we believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible.

Does that mean? I mean, every word of God's perfect. I mean, every word of God is pure. God didn't just sit up in heaven and twiddle his thumbs and kick around pop cans and say, you know what? I think east side of the city would be a good feeler right here in this verse.

So he put that there for our learning and for our admonition. You know, if we'd get our noses out of the newspaper and put them in the Bible, we'd find out that the Bible is a living book. It's a breathing book.

It's an abiding book. And God wants us to learn some things from the word of God. Words are important, even to these and to them, every one of them.

And so here is Jonah. He didn't go to the north. He didn't go to the south.

He didn't go to the west. The Bible said he went to the east. You know why the Bible says that? If you look at a map of Nineveh, you will find out that Nineveh was sitting in a valley.

And the only side of Nineveh that was raised onto a mountain was the east side. And so Jonah goes up and he sits down on the east side of the city and he gets him a little booth and he's sitting there drinking his lemonade and he's all mad at God for saving all the people. But there was nothing he could do because they were already saved.

And God wasn't going to take it away from them. Thank God. And so he was sitting there and he was all mad and he was all upset.

And so the Bible says he went up to the east side so he could see what was going on down below so he might see what would become of the city. You know what Jonah is doing in his heart? By the way, he was disobedient in chapter one. But I believe Jonah's heart was farther from God in chapter four than it was in chapter one, that he had a sorry, wicked, rebellious attitude.

And so here he is sitting in this booth and he looks down to see what would become of the city. You see, those people were saved and there wasn't anything Jonah could do about that. But you know what? Jonah still wanted to see the judgment of God fall.

He still wanted the wrath and the fiery fingertips of God to fall upon those people. He wanted to see what would become of the city. Okay, God, you saved them.

They repented. But I still want you to be sorry. Jonah had a problem.

You know what that problem was? It was a problem that many, not was, but is a problem that many fundamentally have. He was so angry at their sin. He could not see past their sins and see the need of them.

And so in hatred for their wickedness, it caused him to hate those who were being wicked. Let me explain to you this way. I don't believe there's a preacher in America that preaches on Sodom and Gomorrah more than I do.

I think it's wicked. I think it's vile. I don't think it's a lifestyle that you're born with.

I think it's something that you choose. And I think it's ungodly. But I'm going to tell you something.

I don't hate Sodomites. I hate their sin. I think abortion is wicked and vile and ungodly.

I think it's one of the things that the reason the judgment of God is on America. I don't care if you're a liberal. I don't care if you're a Republican.

I don't care if you're a Democrat. I'm a Baptist. I believe that because that's what the Bible says.

But I don't hate abortion doctors. I don't hate young ladies who get messed up and who go and have an abortion. I hate the sin.

I will say something. I do not hate crackheads. I hate the crack that made them that way.

I don't hate drunkards. But I hate liquor with a purple cap. I'm going to say something.

We're not careful. We can get to the place as Bible believers that we so hate sin that we cannot see past that sin into the meat of that sin. People filling our pews who we've crammed our standards down their throats.

And I'm going to tell you something about lost people. They don't need your standards. The last thing in this world lost people need is your standards as an independent advocate.

They need your saviors. And the standards will automatically come through the process of sanctification. I'm going to tell you, you get somebody saved.

You don't have to beg them to dress right. I promise you that. You get somebody saved by the grace of God.

You won't have to beg them to quit watching all rated, explicit, wicked, vile, ungodly, pornographic movies. You don't have to picture with them about that. And you get somebody saved by the grace of God.

You will not have to beg them to quit shacking up. Man, they'll be willing to get married on the spot. You get somebody saved by the grace of God.

Their life will change. But I will tell you something. If we're not careful, we can so hate the sin of the world that we hate the sinners of the world.

And that's not so. And Jonah did that. He said, you know what, God? I feel it.

Just let them all go to hell. I don't care anything about any of the people. And his heart was engrossed in bitterness, fire and jealousy.

Notice, please, as we bring the story to a close in verse number six. And the Lord God prepared a gourd, made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head to deliver him from his grief. But Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

The God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day and it smoked the gourd that it withered. It came to pass when the sun did arise. God prepared a vehement east wind and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah.

And he fainted and wished himself to die the second time. And he said, it is better for me to die than to live. Verse nine, and God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? He said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

If you had heard a word I said, please listen to verses 10 and 11. It sums up the entire book of Jonah. Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd for the which thou hast not labored.

Neither made us it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should not I fear none of that great city, where are more than six to a thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle. And the Holy Spirit of God stopped right there in mid sentence and gave us no more insight to this book.

Jonah chapter four and verse number 11. It's almost like the Holy Spirit of God gave that little question mark and just completely stopped and said nothing else. You know what? I believe from my study and observation of the word of God.

If I can say it reverently, I believe in Jonah chapter number four, verses 10 and 11. God laid himself out on the sovereign heavenly operating table and pulled out the scaffold of the word of God and cut out his flaming beating heart and said, Jonah, I want to show you what my heart beats. I want to show you what really makes me thrive and what my main goal and my main passion in life.

He said, Jonah, don't you get it? He said, I sent you to a group of people in chapter one that had no Bibles, had no schools, had no bus routes, had no churches, had no baptistry, had nothing whatsoever. I sent you to them to preach to us, saith the Lord. And you didn't go.

So I had to get your attention because those people were still lost. And you were the mouthpiece to whom I wanted to go. And by the way, God's mouth is your mouth.

God's hands are your hands. God's feet are your feet. He could do anything he wants to, but he has chosen to use foolish people like you and me.

And how foolish we are not to let him use us. And so he said, Jonah, you ran. I had to get your attention because you were still in discouragement, distress.

But finally, you got your heart right with God, had an old fashioned heaven sent heart center, holy ghost revival meeting right there in the belly of that kid. And you got right and went out and you preached. All of those hundreds of thousands of people got saved and heaven was rejoicing and I was rejoicing.

And the king and all the people of Nineveh were rejoicing. And you were patient. You were upset and mad.

Tucked in your stomach, a big baby, getting all upset, growling in bitterness back to the God of heaven, wishing and desiring for me to still destroy these people. And he said, but you know what your problem is, Jonah? He said, I gave you a little gourd. Changed your attitude a little bit.

Keep that nice east wind off your head a little bit now and just kind of help you out and put you in a little booth there. And he said, you went to sleep one night and I caused a worm to come and eat up that gourd. And he said, when you woke up the next day, he said, you were fit and fine.

He said, you know what your problem is, Jonah? He said, you have had more love, more concern, and more compassion for a vegetable, if you will. For a no good for nothing gourd, you didn't have any reason to make it gourd. You had no reason to make it nice.

He said, you had nothing to do with the life or the death of that gourd. He said, you've had love and compassion on a single little gourd and you take your little bitty, tiny, insignificant miniscule fish in my face and you get mad at me for having love and concern and compassion for over 175,000 people that did not even know their left hand from their right and they were so seriously ignorant. And he said, Jonah, your priorities are all messed up.

We said, oh, brother Locke, Jonah must have been a wicked man. Oh, brother Locke, sometimes we're all a little bit wicked ourselves. Because we care more about our checking accounts, more about our savings accounts.

We care more about the things that we've got, the things that we've got to do and our schedules and our itinerary than we do the multitudes and millions of souls who are going place to place. And from Genesis chapter number three and verse number six, since the fall of man, God has had one heart. He's been on a quest for the souls of humanity, my dear brother.

And in Jonah chapter number one, he sought for a man and the man that would stand in the gap, as Ezekiel chapter 22 and verse 30 says, he found that man, but that man ran and he had to get his attention. And he brought him back and Jonah was upset when they got saved, but God was rejoicing. And he said, Jonah, you have been having love and concern and compassion over a vegetable and you dare get mad at me for doing what I do best, saving people by the glory of Christ.

I give this illustration, I'll draw four chapters together, we'll be through and go home. Two or three years ago, I was preaching at the Fairmont Baptist Church of Fairmont, Minnesota. I've been there on several occasions.

Good Lord willing, I'll be back in November. Pastor David Eckblad is a good friend of mine. He's asked me to come and hold a nine-day revival meeting, Sunday through Sunday, stay over for the following Monday because it was Memorial Day and he wanted me to preach the sermon on America.

So I did. Well, Friday night I preached and I preached probably one of the simplest sermons I've ever preached on hell. Just preached on the terrors and I think it was the torments and things like that.

Just some tea that is preached. Three or four simple little points on hell. Only preached it, you know, a couple of times.

Well, about, I don't know, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten minutes into my sermon, a couple walked in the back door. They had a little child that went downstairs in my wife's children's revival hour. And she had a little baby in her arms.

And if my memory serves me correct, I believe that the little baby was adopted. And they had two older boys who were in, I think, their mid-twenties. One was in California, one was in New York.

They were at two different secular universities, two opposite spectrums, two opposite ends, diametrically opposed to one another. Well, they came, you know, most people show up a little bit later in a Baptist church. They'll sit down to the back or towards the middle.

But they walked right up the middle aisle, all the way down to about the second or third few there, I believe it was the second few to my left and just popped right down. That didn't bother me. They didn't serve anybody.

I think everybody kind of expected them to be late. Pastor told me they were going to be late. They're over-the-road truckers.

They homeschool and train their children on the road, their younger children, so they can keep them together. And he said they'll be late. They came Friday night, Saturday night, all day Sunday, all day Monday.

And I'm not seeing them since. And don't know if they still go to the church. I'll find out in November.

But I was there a couple of years ago, and I was preaching that night on Hale. And there was a young lady there, 17 years old. Her name was Jamie.

She brought about 15 or 16 teenagers for three or four nights of the meeting. And I think every single teenager she brought made a profession of faith. I mean, they were down that aisle.

They were on that altar. I mean, they were getting right with God. People were getting saved.

And it was really, it was a great, great meeting. And I suppose on Sunday morning, Fairmont Baptist Church maybe probably runs, I don't know, 75, 85 people respectively, somewhere in there. Well, that night we had a few churches and some people that had heard me in another church before.

They were there. We probably had maybe 130, 135 people there that night, something like that. And so I was preaching on Hale.

Things were going well. I mean, it just felt like the Lord was really moving, really speaking to hearts. So I said, hey, about eyes closed, about to bow their heads and close their eyes.

And we had the pianist and the organist, Trump, with him having a sing in the Robertson Fort with me that week. And my wife's downstairs with the kids. You can kind of hear the little resounding echo of the kids down there just singing away.

Pastor's standing there. His wife's in the back. Got some deacons and people that are ready to work with the teenagers and the other people that come forward.

And so we're getting ready to go right into the invitation. And they were playing. Their heads were bowed.

Their eyes were closed. And I was just fixing to get out of my mouth, stand to your feet. I mean, I was just fixing to get it out of my mouth.

And this lady sitting on the second row to my left, pick that little baby up. She kind of popped open the arms of her husband, laid her Bible down. And she got up and she walked out.

Now, I've had people come to the altar while I was preaching, before I preached, long after I was done preaching, stayed long after the service, and sometimes right when I gave the invitation. So I just figured this woman is stepping out to come to the altar basically before anybody else, because I was pretty much in the gist of giving the invitation. So she gets up, but she was not well now on her way to the altar.

As a matter of fact, she was well now on her way to the floor, right in the middle of that baggage carrier. And she went right out into the middle aisle and fell down on her knees. I'm going to tell you something right now.

Down south, we're a little bit more emotional and amen-y than they are in Minnesota. OK, that's just the way it is. They're great people.

They love God just as much as we do. They do things just a little bit differently in their church. They don't say amen near as much, and that's just the way that they are.

So when this woman stepped out and she hit her knees, she threw her hands up in the air. And I'm going to tell you how carnal I am tonight. The first thought in my mind was, oh boy, here goes one of those tongue-flapping dogs barking, jump around like a fish out of water people.

I thought she was going to have a Pentecostal fit right there on the floor. I thought to myself, some of these deacons better get their helmets on and tackle this woman and drag her out of the building. She was fixing to scare me to death.

I knew she was going to run all over that place. I knew she was going to fall on that floor and just start foaming at the mouth. And I was scared absolutely to death.

But although I was surprised at what she did, I was relieved at what she did as well because she didn't have a Pentecostal fit. I'll tell you what she did do. She set that place on fire.

She's on her knees and she threw both her hands up in the air. And I'm telling you, that woman died. It looked like a road map.

I mean, her face was more red than the carpet that you're standing on and the keys are sitting right there. I'm telling you, blood red. She threw her hands up in the air and I'll never, if God gives me a hundred years to live, I'll never forget what that woman said.

By God's grace, I'll never want to forget what that woman said because it keeps me on my toes sometimes. In front of 130, 135 some odd people in that building. Her husband right there and her children downstairs, she threw her hands up in the air.

I'm telling you, she had no microphone. She had no PA, no amplification system and buddy, she didn't need one. Both hands stretched up in the air right before the invitation was ever given.

She said, brother Greg, brother Greg, pray for my boys, they're going to hell, brother Greg, they're going to hell. Pray for my boys, they're going to hell. Now I'm telling you, it was everything I could do in that church not to come unglued.

Not to mythic, glad someone's going to help this lady. I mean, she peeled that woman off the floor. I'm telling you, she halfway carried, halfway walked and halfway drove that lady to the back of the auditorium.

I'm telling you, she's a weeping and squalling like a baby like you've never seen. They took her to this little room in the back and I mean, she sat her down in that chair, she put her arm around her, she gave her a handkerchief or a little napkin, whatever it was that woman was blowing her nose and wiping her eyes and wiping her sweat and she opened up that Bible and she was reading the Bible verses and we had an invitation that night. It must have lasted 25, 30 minutes.

I mean, people being saved, people getting right with God. I'm telling you, it ain't been a failure, buddy. I mean, things got fixed.

You could have cut it with a damn butter knife. I mean, God came down. People started getting right.

People started getting saved. I mean, you could hear amen coming through the building and I'm telling you, that woman set that place on fire. I went out to the service.

I was selling some tapes and shaking some hands. She walked by me, shook my hand, looked me square dab in the face and said, just pray for my boys. Just pray for my boys.

And I'm going to tell you something. There's nights, especially when I preach on the book of Jonah, especially when I preach on soul winning or knocking on doors or leading people to Christ. There's nights, ladies and gentlemen, I'm pulling my head in my tailor and I can't get that woman's face out of my mind.

I can't get that woman screaming out of my ears. I'll never forget. That was the first time in this preacher's ministry.

I believe I got a real good going. Brother Greg, brother Greg, you gotta tell them, brother Greg, they're going to hell. They're going to hell.

You gotta tell them. And I'm going to be real open, real honest and real candid with you tonight. If indeed that is God's heartbeat.

If indeed God would will to pass that heartbeat on to his children. Why is it that many of us do not sense his heartbeat? Because most of us in this room aren't close enough to the heart of God to feel it.

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