

**Series:** Jonah: Into the Depths of God's Heart and Ours

**Sermon:** Repentance

**Scripture:** Jonah 3

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### **Jonah 3 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." <sup>3</sup> So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth <sup>4</sup> Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" <sup>5</sup> And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

<sup>6</sup> The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. <sup>7</sup> And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, <sup>8</sup> but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. <sup>9</sup> Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish."

<sup>10</sup> When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

"Repentance -- change of mind -- involves a turning with contrition from sin to God; the repentant sinner is in the proper condition to accept the divine forgiveness."

- F.F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, London: Tyndale, 1952, p. 57.

"Faith is that which, knowing the Lord's will, goes and does it...instead of asking yourself whether you believe or not, ask yourself whether you have this day done one thing because he said, Do it, or once abstained because he said, Do not do it."

- George McDonald, Unspoken Sermons, quoted in Timothy Larsen's George McDonald in the Age of Miracles

The problem comes in three primary ways:

1. We don't believe we're truly sinful.
2. We don't think certain people are within the reach of repentance.
3. We don't repent because we don't trust God.

If you want to understand your own behavior, you must understand that all sin against God is grounded in a refusal to believe that God is more dedicated to our good, and more aware of what that is, than we are. We distrust God because we assume he is not truly for us, that if we give him complete control we will be miserable. Adam and Eve did not say, “Let’s be evil. Let’s ruin our own live and everyone else’s too!” Rather they thought, “We just want to be happy. But his commands don’t look like they will give us the things that we need to thrive. We will have to take things into our own hands—we can’t trust him.”

- Tim Keller, *The Prodigal Prophet: Jonah and the Mystery of God's Mercy*, p. 137–38.

Two Applications:

1. We must learn the difference between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ repentance and walk in true repentance.
2. Walking in true repentance is not a \_\_\_\_\_ but a \_\_\_\_\_.

Matthew 12:41 (ESV)

*The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.*