

God's Responses

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[0 : 00] So let's find in our Bibles this morning the book of Jonah, one of the minor prophets back there in the Old Testament. Give me a second, find Jonah.

And whether you've ever read this book in your life, you probably have heard of Jonah and of his undertaking, his ordeal of a great fish in the New Testament called a whale.

So find Jonah. It's a very unique book for many reasons. And one of the reasons is because it's just such a unique story. Like literally there's never been anything like this ever take place.

I know your mind's thinking you saw the Discovery Channel. Somebody got swallowed by a whale. That's not what I'm talking about. It's a man that God called to preach. And he rebelled. He took off and said, no, I'm not going to do that.

And then God sent a whale after him. And in the end of the story, with one of the greatest revivals that the earth has ever seen, a city of great, great magnitude of people, they turn to God in repentance.

[1 : 07] And then at the end of this, I mean, Jonah's still the bad guy in the whole story. It's just a remarkable and very unique situation. He's got a bad attitude toward God's mercy on the people that he's called to preach to.

It's just a unique situation here. What we're going to do this morning is we're going to read through the entire book, but we'll do it chapter by chapter. And I'll show you and take you along as we do. I'll show you what I mean. And the beginning of the book is God instructing Jonah, calling him to go preach to Nineveh. It's a great city and there are wicked people.

And the Lord wants to have mercy on them rather than execute his wrath upon them. And so God calls his prophet Jonah to go preach to them. Now, that's as far as the original plan got because Jonah said no.

And he skips town. I mean, where are you going, Jonah? Why are you getting on a ship to Tarshish? Why are you taking off and running, the Bible says here, from the presence of the Lord?

[2 : 11] That's what he's trying to do is get away from God, get away from his will and from his calling. And, you know, good luck with that, Jonah. You're probably not going to make out the way you imagined, I'm sure.

But what we're going to see here is that when God has a will and he sets a plan in motion, he's acting upon his will, but it doesn't go according to his design.

This should take Calvinism and just wipe it away for a while because man interfered with God's plan. Man interfered.

And God is always ready, though, to adjust and to deviate to his plan. In other words, nothing catches the Lord by surprise.

No matter what it is or who it is or what choice any man makes, God always has an answer and God always has a response. He's not viewing his creation like it's in this fishbowl and he's just sitting outside of it, silently observing all of our failures and all of our sins.

[3 : 16] But, no, the Lord proactively sets some things in motion, but he also reactively intervenes and attends to his creation.

We typically focus on how we respond to God. But this morning, in each of these four short chapters, I want to discover ways that God responds to man.

And I want to see it this way. There's four separate situations. And in all four of these, we're going to learn some things from each one. So let's begin with chapter number one.

Please follow along. And I'll try to read through this quickly. So listen quickly and read in your own mind. Verse one. Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is 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 them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

[4 : 24] 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 mariners were afraid. They 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 came to him and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not.

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. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us.

What is thine occupation, and whence comest thou, and what is thy country, and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am in 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 fled from the presence of the Lord, because he told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us?

[5 : 37] For the sea wrought, 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 the land, but they could not, for the sea wrought, 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, has done as it pleased thee.

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

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. God called a man to go, arise, and go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it.

He called him to go, and to preach, but Jonah's response, was, I don't think so. I am not going to do what you want me to do. I have no interest in following through, on your instructions to me.

[6 : 48] Matter of fact, I'm out of here. You're not going to tell me where to go, and who to preach to. I don't agree with this, and so Jonah takes off, and he goes his own way.

And the first thing I want to show you, how God responds to man, is that God responds, to Jonah's rebellion. In verse number four, but the Lord.

Jonah takes off to Tarshish, he gets in a ship at Joppa, he says he pays the fare, he goes down to the ship, he tries to get himself nestled in there, and get nice and tucked away, it's a long journey, and I'm going to sleep the whole way there.

But the Lord. The Lord responds, to Jonah's rebellion. The Lord sent out a great wind, into the sea. It was so bad, the ship was like to be broken.

The mariners are afraid. They're throwing overboard, the wares of the ship. They're doing everything, in their desperation, to save their own lives. It was God that sent, that great tempest, against that ship that day.

[7 : 50] He wasn't going after the mariners, he wasn't going after their wares. He wasn't even trying, to keep the ship, from going to Tarshish that day. He was going after Jonah. He was responding, to the rebellion, of his preacher.

He kept that storm on, he kept that wind blowing, until they got Jonah, out of the boat. In verse 15, they took up Jonah, cast him forth into the sea, and the sea ceased, from her raging.

Jonah rebelled, against the commandment, of the Lord. But God didn't sit by, idle and say, oh well, man I thought, he would have been a good guy, to go do that job for me. I thought he was the one. God didn't sit by, and just act like, oh man, he doesn't want to do, what I want him to do. No, the Lord reacted, to Jonah's rebellion. And he got involved.

He countered, by putting something on Jonah, putting some pressure on Jonah. Running from God, for Jonah, got dangerous. And it wasn't just affecting him, it was affecting these men, who we would

say, are just kind of innocent people, in the story.

[8 : 58] But it's costing them, greatly, throwing over the wares, into the sea. It's costing them, they are fearful, for their own lives. The ship is about to break, and they're all going to go down, with the ship, because of this man, Jonah's rebellion.

Because God is coming, after him. Jonah, was poison, on that boat. Being around Jonah, was dangerous, when he's rebelling, against God.

There was no surprise, to Jonah, what's happening. He knew exactly, what was going on. There was no mystery, as to why this storm, rose up. The men were, they didn't know, what was going on. They're crying out, to their gods for help. They want Jonah, to do the same. They're doing everything, they know to do. Jonah though, he knows exactly, what's happening.

There's no confusion, for him. He knew, why this was happening. And it's his rebellion, that is bringing on, this storm, in his life, and it's affecting others, as well.

[9 : 58] God is responding, to the rebellion, of Jonah. You know, and sometimes in life, if things aren't going, well with you, it may be, that God is simply, responding, to your own rebellion.

To your own refusal, to submit to his ways. For you're insistent, upon doing things, your way, and ignoring, the word, that came to you. And God won't, sit by idol, with his child.

And so, he sends a storm, into your life. Why? To get your attention, to wake you up, to turn you around, to get back, to what he called you, to be and to do. It may be, that God's responding, to your refusal, to fulfill his word.

The Lord, commands men, to do things. He instructs us, in the word of God. But he ultimately, allows you to choose. Will you, receive this instruction?

Or will you, refuse this instruction? It's up to man. God allows man, to do that. But eventually, whatever your choice is, God will respond.

[11 : 07] If you, reject his will, he will, likely he'll be patient. Likely for a stretch, he'll exercise, his long suffering.

But eventually, the Lord will respond, because God will be reckoned with. The Lord is far too holy.

He's far too just. He demands, his very nature demands, that the rebellion of man, be dealt with.

And God is right. God knows he's right. And everything he does, is right. When he responds, to the rebellion in your heart, and the pride in your life, he's right for doing it.

And when he calls a man, or sends the man, or he asks anybody, to do anything, ever, God knows he's right. And when you say, no God, I'll do it my way instead, he'll send a storm.

He'll respond, to your rebellion. Now, I know what I'm talking about, in this one. Because I've experienced, I relate to Jonah. And so, what I want to say is, I am thankful.

[12 : 17] It may sound like, it's harsh of the Lord, to do what he did. But no, it was in mercy, to do what he did. And I can stand here, and say, I am grateful, that my God responds, when I rebel against him.

That he comes after me, instead of leaving me, get to Tarshish. And end up in Tarshish, and never know how to leave Tarshish, because I messed up, and I don't know how to get back, to where I should be.

And so God, before I ever get to Tarshish, responds. In the mercy of God, he responds. If God didn't respond, the way he did, Jonah would have never gotten, the second chance.

He'd still be running, from God today. When you run from God, you find yourself in a place, and you find yourself, you find yourself, wrapped up in sin. And sin doesn't let go, easily.

It's hard to leave Tarshish, once you get there. It may sound harsh of the Lord, it may sound violent, but like I said, no, his response to Jonah, was actually, with much mercy.

[13 : 24] But understand that for now. God responded, to Jonah's rebellion. There's something else, God responded to. Would you find chapter number two? Find chapter number two.

Because God responded, here now, to Jonah's request. In verse one, then Jonah prayed unto the Lord, his God, out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried, by reason of mine affliction, unto the Lord.

And he heard me. Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hast cast me into the deep. In the midst of the seas, and the floods come past me about.

All thy billows, and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight. Isn't that what Jonah was trying to do? Flee from the presence of the Lord? And it turns out that, that's not what he wanted at all.

Turns out, getting away from God is a bad place to be. And then verse four, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple. The waters come past me about, even to the soul. The depth closed me round about.

[14:29] The weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains. The earth with their bars was about me forever. Yet thou hast, yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption.

O Lord, my God, when my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving. I will pay that, that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord. And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

God responded to Jonah's request. He said in verse seven, my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. He prayed unto the Lord.

Verse two says, he heard me. He cried out to God by reason of his affliction. Would anybody on the boat ever have imagined that the only way to appease this God is to throw him overboard into the sea?

[15:39] This God of Jonah, the God that created heaven and earth, wants him dead. And we don't want to kill him. It's blood. We don't want his blood on our hands. They prayed. They offered sacrifices that God wouldn't hold them guilty for throwing him overboard and killing him.

Would they ever believe that this God would ever hear the cry of Jonah from the other side? And yet he did.

Would anybody find God obligated to hear any word from this rebellious soul that's finally getting what he deserves? Why should God hear him? And why should God help him?

And yet God, not man, but God, heard his cry and responded. In verse 10, the Lord spake unto the fish. And now Jonah's revived and now Jonah's on dry land.

He's in a far better place than where his rebellion took him because God responds to requests. God responds to the prayers of the needy, to the cry of the afflicted.

[16:45] When a contrite man cries out to God, the Lord responds. Now I'm not promising you that the Lord will grant every ask that you have, that he'll answer every prayer, every desire of your heart, but he does respond what the humble call upon him.

You can read in the Psalms how king, before he was king, how David was greatly oppressed and running for his life and he penned out in a poetic form his heart and his thoughts and his fears and his distresses and he cried out to the Lord describing the persecution of his enemies.

And without fail, he followed it up by the Lord hurt me. The Lord delivered me. This poor man cried and the Lord hurt him and delivered him from all his fears. And David cried out to God for help and then he boasted how the Lord responded to his cry.

James says, If any man lack wisdom, let him ask. Let him ask. Request. Let him ask of God. He says later, Ye have not because ye ask not.

It was the Lord Jesus that said famously, Ask and ye shall receive. But a man that is too proud to cry out to God for help, a woman that is too proud to cry out to God for help is a man or a woman that is too proud.

[18:12] If you can't get on your knees, if you can't acknowledge that I need help, there is something dirty and filthy inside of you that's going to destroy you.

Do you understand? The Bible says, In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

Why should man request anything of God? Why should we ask God for help? Why should we cry to him in our afflictions and with our problems? I can only think of one real good reason that trumps the other 12.

Because he's God. The reason I say it like that is because that's the setup here. He's the creator. We're the creation. He's almighty.

You're not. He's all-knowing. We're not. When you need help, where else are you going to go? Who else are you going to reach for and cry to?

[19:12] The setup is for you to turn toward heaven and call upon his name to reach out to him. Why won't men bow their knees to their maker?

What is wrong with people? Why will they call on the government? Why will they Google it? Why do they turn everywhere else but to get on their face and seek the help from God?

Is it pride inside of your heart? Is that why you won't humble yourself? You don't want to admit you need help. Is that what it is? You don't want other people to pray for you so you won't raise your hand and offer a request.

Or maybe you don't want to get an answer that God might have for you. You think God's wrong? You think he doesn't have your best interest in heart?

Why would you not get on your face? God responds to requests. God responded to Jonah's rebellion. His response was such that it brought him to a place that he would cry out to God.

[20 : 23] I told you it was his mercy. It's a beautiful thing. It's hard. It hurts. But oh, it's a gracious, wonderful thing that God would bring us to a place to grant us repentance.

To where we'd be so low that we'd be looking up. We were brought down to the bottoms of the mountains. And there's no place else to look but up. And in mercy, God brings us to a place to cry out to him out of our afflictions.

It's the mercy of God. And Jonah's rebellion led him to that place where God responded then to his request.

God responds to the request of his children because he is your God. He is your... He set it up that way. What parent in here doesn't desire their children to come to them and to lay out the problems and to seek their advice and counsel and direction and to actually desire to follow it?

How often are you frustrated with your kids when they refuse to follow your instruction? When they say, no, I'm going to figure this out on my own and you know what's going to happen.

[21 : 35] This is how God views us. He knows how this is going to turn out. He calls us in everything to let our requests be made known, to have an open line of communication, to lay it all on the line and speak to him your open heart.

God will respond to your request. This is how God responds. Now let's look into the third chapter. Here's a third situation and a third way we see God respond to man.

Verse number one says, The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time saying, Arise, go to Nineveh that great city and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days journey and Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey and he cried and said, Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

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.

[22 : 46] For the word came unto the king of Nineveh and he arose from his throne and he laid his robe from him and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes and he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his noble saying, Let neither man nor beast herd nor flock taste anything let them not feed nor drink water but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God yea let them turn every one from his evil way and from the violence that is in their hands who can tell if God will turn and repent and turn away from his fierce anger that we perish not and God saw their works that they turned from their evil way and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them and he did it not well this was God's will from the beginning when he saw their wickedness when he saw how great it was he didn't want to destroy them and so he said

I want to send them warning I picked Jonah to go cry against it to preach the preaching that I bid thee and we see here that God responded to Nineveh's repentance he gave them an opportunity to repent and he desired the whole time to spare that great city the whole time this violent wicked heathen city he did not want to do what he did to Sodom and Gomorrah but the cry came up and I've got to deal with this and so the first way I want to deal is I want to send them a chance to repent and if they'll repent then I'll repent of the evil that I thought to do against them the difference between Nineveh and Sodom and Gomorrah is that these people repented Sodom and Gomorrah they mocked the Lord said to Abraham if you can find and he started with 50 and came way down to 10 and said if you can find 10

I'll spare the city he was interested in sparing the city but they wouldn't repent they mocked him his own son-in-laws mocked him sons-in-law mocked for a lot the people fasted don't eat or drink anything the animals fasted they mourned their condition before God the Bible says that they cried in verse 8 cry mightily unto God cry mightily have you ever in your life seen a city cry mightily unto

God have you ever seen the politician the mayor or anything of that city step off of their place and bend their knee publicly and declare the entire city follow them and mourning and fasting their sin and crying out to God for mercy can you even picture what this scene was before
God almighty I can't I have nothing to compare this to I've never even seen a local church cry mightily unto God in this kind of way it's incredible to think what response this people had their repentance was great they were guilty they couldn't change that it's already been done but what they could do now is humble themselves their wickedness first got God's attention but their repentance their repentance got God to respond because God responds to repentance he saw their works it reminds me of John saying bring forth fruits meat for repentance he wanted them to work works that displayed and showed that they had changed that they had turned from their way and that they were seeking to be right with the Lord God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance and when a guilty man or a woman or child humbles their heart before God when they cry out of their guilt and who they are and they plead for mercy I'm not talking about how man responds to your humbling and to your seeking forgiveness I'm not talking about how your church folks respond or how your family responds I'm talking about how God responds there's something inside of the Lord it's an attribute that dwells in him that it gets stirred up it's called mercy he has mercy the Bible says I desired mercy he said he says I delight in mercy and when God I feel like I don't want to misrepresent this but it's almost like he can't resist when some guilty filthy man or woman or child humbles themselves cries out to God in a contrite spirit that mercy like it just overtakes the vengeance overtakes the anger it overtakes the wrath a repentant heart stirs up the mercy of God within it and it's almost as if he can't help himself because he finds great pleasure in showing mercy

[28 : 21] I want to show you a case I can't help but to turn to this one look at 2nd Chronicles chapter 33 this is like such an extreme case so it's very good to point this out it makes the case very clear 2nd Chronicles 33 one of the best kings Israel ever had was Hezekiah and I know that at the end of his life he made some mistakes but he had a son that was raised in a home where his father did some things in the land that had never been done before him or after him and Manasseh got to see some amazing things in righteousness in the land when his father reigned as king but it didn't take with him he didn't want to live that way he didn't want to take the throne and reign that way and he did some horrible horrible things and I don't even have time to read it all but I'll just read you one verse here 33 in verse 2 it says he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord like unto the abominations of the heathen whom the

Lord had cast out before the children of Israel where did he get the knowledge of all of this stuff that he's starting to practice and bring into the land and permit and make popular it's hard to me I don't even want to read the list but it's terrible stuff that he's doing in the land verse number 9 says Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err and to do worse than the heathen whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel the Lord spake to Manasseh and to his people but they would not hearken could you imagine that a king sitting on the throne of David would do worse than the heathen it's unheard of for him to give himself so vitally to such wickedness is there any hope for this man he's a king on a throne he should quickly be deported he should be quickly cut down and a righteous king raised up in his place like Josiah but before that verse 11 says wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria which took Manasseh among the thorns and brought him with fetters and carried him to Babylon amen that's what he deserves and when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers and prayed unto him he was entreated of him there's his rebellion there's his request and God responds to his repentance as well he heard his supplication he brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom what in the world why would God be so patient so merciful to a I know why because in his affliction and getting what he deserved he turned toward heaven humbled his heart admitted his wrong doing and begged God for mercy and I don't understand that if you did that to me I wouldn't understand showing you mercy for how bad you were how horrible I think you've got to serve your sentence that's how I would feel justice you deserve it you need to do it you're never going to learn if I just let you go but God says I think inside of him he sees that king crying in this heathen prison and inside of God that mercy is stirring up he's crying unto me look how he's humbled himself look how he's praying unto me his God calling me by my name he's my son he's a son of David in the line he is my son and the Lord hears that cry and he answers his prayer he responds to repentance church God responds to

repentance inside of your heart you may have this notion that that you've done too much you've gone too far you've done it for the the upteenth time and you've asked for forgiveness I'm telling you you don't understand the nature of God you understand the nature of man you're putting a notion of man upon God and it's wrong you don't understand God's mercy you don't understand how vast it is how it's new every morning you come to him tomorrow morning with repentance he's got mercy he'll respond to your repentant heart there's one more thing come back to Jonah in chapter number four Jonah chapter four let's read now this chapter this fourth situation where we see God responding once again to man in verse one it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was very angry and he prayed unto the Lord and said

[34 : 00] I pray thee O Lord was not this my saying when I was yet in my country therefore I fled before unto 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 take I beseech thee my life from me for it is better for me to die than to live then the Lord said then said the Lord do thou well to be angry I want to pause here we'll get to the rest in a moment Jonah's displeased at God's decision Jonah's very angry what is wrong with this man Jonah says take my life from me I rather die than to see you be merciful to these people I don't understand this man

I don't understand what's going on in his mind he's acting like a spoiled child that didn't get his way disapproving of God's decision to have mercy and pardon and so God responds to Jonah he responds to Jonah's resentment his resentment over a choice that God made a righteous choice from a righteous and holy creator Jonah didn't agree with it he didn't think it was fair he didn't think it was right and he sat back and said this isn't right I don't agree with this and he's displeased and very angry and the Lord says are you right to be angry over this and Jonah in this next path he doubles down and says absolutely I'm right in verse number five let's read this God responds with an object lesson here to cause him to consider his foolish attitude verse five so

Jonah went out of the city and he sat on the east side of the city and there made him a booth and sat under it in the! shadow till he might see what would become of the city and the Lord God prepared a gourd and he made it grow up over Jonah that it might be a shadow over his head to deliver him from his grief so Jonah was exceeding glad for the gourd a moment he's very angry and displeased but now Jonah is exceeding glad but God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day and it smote the gourd that it withered and it came to pass when the sun did rise that God prepared a vehement east wind and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah that he fainted and wished in himself to die and said it is better for me to die than to live God said unto Jonah do thou! well to be angry for the gourd and he said I do gourd for the which thou has not labored neither madest it grow which came up in a night and perished in a night and should not I spare Nineveh that great city wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left and also much cattle wild this book ends it's closed it's silent Jonah can't even record the way it winds down from that point forward God gave Jonah something to bring him great joy something to cause him relief and he was rejoicing in having that gourd shadow his head God gave him something that made him exceeding glad and then

God took it away he took it away from him and Jonah's bitterness and his anger came right back and the Lord says I gave that to you I took it away it wasn't your righteousness that earned you the shade of that gourd it wasn't the righteousness that you've shown in any of this that has brought you that pleasure it was me that gave you that you did nothing to deserve it so what right do you have to be angry if I take it away the situation that God is exposing is that Jonah doesn't like the way he handled Nineveh he doesn't agree that God's right for sparing them so does that make Jonah right for desiring God to make them all perish their sins if we could consider this with this gore that

[39 : 10] God gave him something God took it away in the words of the apostle Paul what hast thou that thou didst not receive now if thou didst receive it why didst thou glorious thou hast not received it or in Jonah's case why are you angry about something that you didn't deserve in the first place what right do you have did you give those souls life did you give them breath is it because of you that they have their being have you made it rain to fall upon them have you fed them with the corn and wine of the earth what right do you have to desire that they perish in their sin that their innocent children and all of their cattle be wiped out to borrow from a parable of Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 20 the

Lord said is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own is thine eye evil because I am good so God responds to Jonah to Jonah resentment and God exposes that inside Jonah's heart deep rooted is a sin of self righteousness a sin of pride Jonah looks down upon the others that don't live like he lives he doesn't consider that they too were made after the similitude of God that from God's view all flesh is grass and Jonah looks down and despises those wicked Ninevites I don't want to preach to them I don't want you to offer them mercy and pardon they're filthy but after reading this story I asked the question how is Jonah any better than they are when the word of God came to Jonah he rebelled to the face of

God when the word of God came to Nineveh they got on their face and repented how is Jonah any better who deserves the punishment of God you know what can happen in this world is you can be surrounded by sin you can be surrounded by filth and sodomy and you can get in your heart and say that you're better because you're saved and you don't think they should have the right you think God should damn their souls in the beat cast them into the lake of fire where they belong they've angered God they've cursed God they've rebelled against God you can look at people in your workplace and be bitter against them and say they got the promotion and I got let go how is that fair when I'm a Christian when I read my Bible how is it fair you can harbor bitterness toward brethren you can harbor bitterness toward the way God treats the heathen better than his own children in your mind you think why

God why I'm trying to do right they're not I come to church every Sunday I'm faithful I tithe I give I devote myself to you they don't even come half the time and look how good they're doing and inside of you self righteousness pride bitterness a filthy sin envy who can stand before envy God sees it inside of you he sees what's inside of them and he sees what's inside of you and that same bitterness of Jonah that same resentment can take root inside of your heart quick when things don't go well for you when God seems to care for others and they don't deserve it but you feel like you do you begin to wish they get what they deserve it's sin church it's sin you know what will help you is just remember what you deserve you remember before

God one thing this is what I deserve to pay for my sins in the lake of fire and the only thing I have to cling to and to hold up before you is the righteousness of Jesus Christ that gave his perfect soul to forgive my sins and if you stay near the cross and under the shadow of the cross you can come to God and those things won't affect you like they would otherwise remembering what you deserve be grateful that God has been so merciful in your life and don't let that resentment start to get inside of you this morning we we usually when we come together and preach the word of God we usually focus on your response to the word of God and yet this morning I'm trying to show you we can learn from God's response to mankind he's not observing his creation he's active he's engaged he's aware of everyone in here and everything going on in your heart in your mind in your life in your world in your family in your job he's aware he's involved and in this story we learn from these four short chapters that

[44 : 41] God responds to man's rebellion he responds! to your rebellion in mercy thank God that he does because we're a rebellious people we're stiff necked and hard hearted and God comes to nudge us oh it was a great storm no it was just a nudge to get you back to where you belong God responds to our requests he takes to a place low so that we'll look up best if we just look up from the beginning but nevertheless the Lord is looking for a humble heart a contrite spirit and he loves to hear that request and when that request comes he responds!

the Lord responds to repentance he responds! and he always has and he always will God seeks to see repentance in a man that humility and that contrite spirit again God cannot turn away from and he also responds to resentment when man doesn't think God is fair when man doesn't think God is right the Lord has an answer for that too you know what you deserve how about I give you what you deserve oh you shut your mouth then wouldn't you what if I dangled you over the pit of hell and showed you how close you were you shut up God you're right you're right you're right you'd back off of thinking he ever did you wrong one time in your life if you could see the flames of hell today that resentment would fly you'd fall on your face and so God responds to our resentment he's right church he's right he's right he's always right he can't do wrong he's and believe this and understand this but I don't understand then get on your face maybe he won't even give you the light maybe you don't deserve it that song we sing we'll understand it all by and by farther along maybe he won't show you how he's orchestrating maybe he won't show you how all things work together for good just now but he's right don't let resentment get inside of you it'll hurt you you'll think you deserve

more than you do you'll think you're righteous and he's wrong

God forbid God forbid so thank you Lord for some light from this story it's a weird story it's such a unique and incredible outlandish thing but in it we learn that God responds he didn't just decree something and wind it up and let it go you know all the way he's responding and he has an answer for everything and we can trust him father this morning thank you for this lessons here in Jonah thank you for us seeing your hand your hand guiding working helping answering teaching thank you for hearing our cry thank you for coming after us when we resist you thank you for responding to the choices we make whether it's good or bad

Lord you're a good God if anybody in this room is wrong it's us father please heal wounds inside of hearts please give mercy to those that are repenting please give courage and strength to those that need that request please give wisdom to us where we lack it give humility so we can bend our knee and learn to call and depend upon you thank you for second chances thank you for mercy and kindness and God may we never whether we understand or not may we never charge you with folly may that root of bitterness not spring up within us and when it does show it to us and rebuke us for it thank you for your son Jesus Christ thank you for the sacrifice he made for our sins for being holy and accepting us sinners upon his merit this morning while your heads are bowed and you're still in the attitude of prayer before

God I didn't try to touch on anything that I know about in your life but perhaps the Lord did touch on something that you know about that he knows about in your life a place where you've been rebelling against him and running from him calling you is he nudging you is he sending some storms your way is he messing with you a little bit to get you to come back to him would you come back to him would you humble yourself because God's responding to your rebellion has it been a while since you let your requests be made known unto God since you humbled yourself before him since you drew nigh to God so he would draw nigh to you and give you some answers and give you the help you need in all these areas this morning God will respond he will respond in some cases you don't need to make him force his hand in other cases he's just waiting for you to repent or for you to humble yourself if you need to do something do business with the

[50 : 33] Lord today's a good time to do it what's the number you're playing 240 0