



The crime was reported on shows like America's Most Wanted, Unresolved Mysteries, because no one could figure out who committed the crime.

[ 6 : 22 ] Last year, May of last year, Conrad is diagnosed with lung cancer. And he's given only a few months to live.

A few days before he dies, he gathers his family by his bedside and tells them the secret of the bank robbery he'd held for over 50 years.

Needless to say, his family couldn't believe their ears. When they were interviewed by several news outlets, family members said, We are shocked!

He was a devoted family man and one of the nicest, most honorable people we've ever known. Close quote. Now, while probably not to that scale, I'm going to assume, most of us, all of us at some point have experienced something like that.

What I mean is this. We've learned things about other people we didn't know, and sometimes that new information is unsettling.

[ 7 : 32 ] It's bothersome to hear. Like, maybe you thought they were your friend, but then you discover that they were actually privately working against you. Maybe you thought you were making an honest deal with somebody, and it turned out just to be a scam.

Maybe you knew somebody only to be mild-mannered and always calm, and then one day they just lost it, and you'd never seen that side of them.

Maybe you thought they were a manly, tough man, and discovered that they like cats, or whatever it might be, right? And you're disappointed, as I would be, right?

Like, here's the point. All of us have experienced this in one way or another. That is, you've had a view of somebody, and that view turned to ashes.

And as unsettling as that can be personally, listen to me, Faith Family, tonight and those of you online, it is very unsettling spiritually. Come here, come here, come in close.

[ 8 : 39 ] As unsettling as that experience can be personally, it's even more unsettling spiritually. Let me explain. I've been in ministry 25 years, and a follower of Jesus longer than that.

And I have noticed that there are times in the Christian journey that we discover things about God we didn't know before. That there's more to God than we thought.

That He's not always who we think He is. And our initial experience with that new revelation can be very unsettling.

In fact, I've seen many, and even in my own life, go into what's known as a faith crisis. Because the God they thought they were worshiping turned out to be something different than they realized.

And that is deeply unsettling. You think you figured God out. You think you understand who He is. And then you come across a passage of Scripture. Then you come across a theological concept.

[ 9 : 46 ] Then you hear a sermon about God, and it reveals something about Him you didn't know. And for a few days, maybe for a few months, maybe even for a few years, your view of who you thought God was turns to ashes.

You don't need to raise your hand, but I wonder how many of you have experienced that through your own journey. Now let me be very, very clear in saying what I just said.

I'm not suggesting by any stretch of the imagination that there's anything wrong with God. Amen?

I'm not suggesting that He has done anything wrong. The problem is most certainly on our side.

And I was thinking about this as I was preparing this message. I thought I can think of at least three, maybe four, major faith crisis moments where what I thought or who I thought God was turned to ashes, and God built in me a more biblical right view of God.

And I'm not going to go through these in a long period of time, but I'll just say number one, I remember in college beginning to really understand the nature of God's sovereignty. And I had kind of had big view of West, small view of God, and that got reversed and became big view of God, small view of West.

[ 11 : 12 ] And needless to say, that was quite painful. Amen? And I began to see just how sovereign God truly is. Another one would be coming to understand the nature of God's love.

And we might at first be like, well, that doesn't seem all that difficult. But the love of God, when you really start to understand it, is scandalous. Do you remember in our Hosea series, several summers ago, how God knows how unfaithful his bride will be, and he chooses them anyways?

That's the story of Hosea. Like he knows how wayward his son is going to be, and he loves you anyways. His love isn't conditioned upon you not being a mess.

He actually loves you in your mess. And it just absolutely blew my mind as to how scandalous and radical the love of God is.

The third one would be, in my life, coming to understand the freedom of the gospel. I grew up with a mindset that if I do good things for God, he'll love me more. And so it was all transactional.

[ 12 : 24 ] Anybody relate to me tonight? I gotta do this, and I gotta do that, because I gotta keep happy, God happy, and I gotta impress him with all the stuff that I'm doing. And then I began to realize that in the gospel, you are not what you do.

Who you are is not what you do. But that God's love is based on the very person of Jesus being placed in me. And therefore, I cannot do anything to make him love me more or anything to make him love me less.

And I became free. Those were at least three in my life. I bet you have. And there have been smaller scale things I thought about God that turned out not to be true, and my view of God got bigger and bigger and bigger.

And you're like, are we ever gonna get to the text? Hush. Right? Because this is what happens in Jonah's life. Jonah, his view of God is going to turn to ashes.

And he is going to, we just read these verses, he is going to struggle deeply with who God is. And I'm just telling you tonight, and I hope that you're listening, if this doesn't happen at some point in your Christian journey, you're probably not seeking God enough.

[ 13 : 40 ] Because there is no way that we as finite people can understand all that is the infinite of God's character. And there are gonna be bumps along the way where like, I don't know that I could ever worship a God like that.

And that's God's way of taking the idols out of our life and bringing us to true worship to the sovereign God. Let's look at what happens in Jonah's life here over the next three hours.

Here we go. Let's go back to the beginning in chapter one, verse one. Chapter one, verse one, it says, Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amittai, saying, Rise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.

But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. And he went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid a fare, went on board, and he goes trying to flee from the presence of the Lord.

So here we go. Jonah has a God problem. Jonah has a problem with God. What happens here in the opening chapters is that Jonah receives something you and I would die for.

[ 14 : 52 ] You and I, many of you have prayed for this. He receives a direct call from God. God wants to use Jonah on God's mission.

That's pretty awesome. God, you might note this in your notes, God doesn't need Jonah for God's mission. But God calls Jonah to be a part of God's mission.

He wants to use Jonah for his purposes in the world. Something that I think most of us would love the opportunity. God, use me. God, take my life and make a difference for your glory in the world. Amen? But Jonah not only says no, he runs, you know this, in the opposite direction. He's supposed to go to Nineveh in these opening verses.

Instead, he goes long way opposite direction to Tarshish. Show of hands, how many of you spiritually have ever taken the long road? Oh, now I'm getting close.

[ 15 : 56 ] Yeah, some of you are like putting your hands out over here, right? Yeah, we can relate to this. Like, God calls us to go down a road that would be a lot shorter, and we take the long way around.

Now, the question is why? Why does Jonah run? Does he not feel equipped for the mission? Did he have a late night at the honky-tonk and wants to sleep in? Maybe his ex-girlfriend lives in Nineveh and doesn't want to run across her.

Maybe he's afraid of airplanes. What's the matter? A little tense about the flight? I mean, why would Jonah run? Why would he go in the opposite direction?

And maybe it's because Jonah is afraid. And, of course, he would have reason to be afraid. Listen to what the prophet Nahum says about Nineveh. This is Nahum 3.

I know you were driving to church saying, I hope he reads from Nahum tonight. This is chapter 3, verse 1. Woe to the bloody city. That's Assyria, Nineveh.

[ 16 : 53 ] Full of lies and plunder. The crack of the whip and the rumble of the wheel. Galloping horse and bounding chariot. Horsemen charging. Flashing sword and glittering spear.

Host of slain. Heaps of corpses. Dead bodies without end. They stumble over the bodies. This is not a place you go on vacation. Assyria, capital of Nineveh, is a brutal place.

Speaking just historically, Asher Bonapal, one of the leaders of Assyria, was known for when a prophet of another god or a prophet of another land would come into his own land, he would cut their lips off.

And you want me to go preach there? Tiglath Pileser, which is a name I know you enjoy. Name your first child Tiglath Pileser.

But what he would do is he was known for filleting. I know this is graphic, but I want you to understand the history here. He would fillet people alive, collect their skulls, and pile them up around the country.

[18:08] In fact, when they would capture a foreign city, he would take the leader of that city's head and wear it as a necklace. I know it's disgusting, but I'm trying to get you to feel the, hey, Jonah, I got a call for you.

Sweet God, where am I going? All right, what's my orders? Where's the plane ticket? And he looks at the plane ticket and it says, Nineveh? No thanks.

No thanks at all. But I would submit to you that while there are plenty of legitimate reasons for Jonah to run, they're actually a lot deeper than physical fear.

Notice this on the screen. The reason for Jonah's running was directly connected to the reason for God's sending. Let me say that again.

The reason for Jonah's running was directly related to the reason for God's sending. Look back at verse 1 and 2 again. The word of the Lord comes to Jonah. It says, Arise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.

[19:15] I don't have time to unpack this, but that reference goes back to Genesis 18 with another great city that committed a lot of great evil. Anybody remember what it is?

Sodom and Gomorrah. But here's the difference, and I need you to lean in here. The difference is God with Sodom and Gomorrah called his prophets out.

Here, God is calling his prophet in. Meaning, at the very beginning of this book, you see the reason why God calls his prophets out with Sodom and Gomorrah is because he's going to destroy that city.

The reason why he's calling his prophet in is because God is going to show mercy to this one. And Jonah knows it.

Jonah knows that God's plan is not the destruction of Nineveh. It's their salvation. To which you say, so and big deal? I mean, don't we want the salvation of others?

[20:22] We think we do. You and I think we want the salvation of all people. The problem we have is the word all. And Jonah has that problem as well.

You see, here's what you need to understand. I just said it earlier. Nineveh is the capital of Assyria. It's the capital of the Assyrian Empire. And those of you that know your Bible history, you know that it's the Syrian Empire that captured the northern kingdom Israel and took them captive and in doing so took their land, raped their women, mistreated their children, and killed their soldiers.

In other words, God wants Jonah to go to the very people Israel hates. Israel despises Ninevites. They have been brutal to them.

They have harmed them and hurt them in significant ways. And God wants Jonah, a Jew, to go to Nineveh and not only warn them, but God through Jonah might save them.

And that is the last thing this prophet wants to be a part of. And I'm not trying to be graphic for the sake of being graphic, but Jonah gives God the spiritual middle finger and says, I want nothing to do with you and your call on my life.

[21:50] I will not go to Nineveh. By the way, don't ever say that to God. All right, Jonah.

You're going to go the long way? You want to go the hard way? There we go. But to bring you into this, think about it. Think about your neighbor harming your child. And then God tells you, I want you to go to your neighbor and tell them about Jesus.

The heck I will. I mean, I'll go to my neighbor, but it would be with the wrath of God, not the mercy of God. Amen? And that's how Jonah feels.

People say, notice this on the screen, Jonah ran because the only thing he hates more than Ninevites is a God that would show mercy to Ninevites. He has a God problem.

People say, well, Jonah ran because he's a racist. No, Jonah ran because he can't stomach radical grace. And you see it more clearly when you come to chapter 4, that Jonah, listen to me, listen to me.

[ 23 : 00 ] Jonah has a God problem. His view of God and who God is is not reconciling, and he's mad. He is upset.

In fact, look at what he says again in chapter 4, verse 1. But it, we'll talk about that in a moment, Jonah displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. And he prayed to the Lord and said, Lord, can't you just feel the anger in Jonah?

Oh, God, this, this is what I said to you when I was yet in my country. This is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish. For I knew that you were a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and relenting from disaster.

You see, here's Jonah's perspective of God. Now, the it of verse 1 is the repentance of Nineveh. You can read that in chapter 3.

Jonah ends up going to Nineveh. Was there ever a doubt? Listen, if God wants you to go somewhere, and he's called you to go somewhere, guess what? You're going there. Okay?

[ 24 : 06 ] You can take the hard road or the easy road, but that's where you're going. And Jonah's going to get on a ship, and God's going to send a storm, and he's going to be thrown overboard, and he's going to be swallowed by a great fish.

And in that great fish, he's going to learn what in chapter 2? Oh, yes, salvation belongs to the Lord. Namely, God can do whatever he wants to do when it comes to salvation. I don't get a vote.

And once he realizes, chapter 2, that salvation belongs to the Lord and not Jonah, what happens? He's spit back out on dry land, and guess what he's given? A second chance.

He goes to Nineveh, calls out to Nineveh, tells him, you got 40 days, and Nineveh's going to be overthrown, and guess what? They don't wait until the 39th day.

On day one, Nineveh repents. And there is this massive and incredible revival in this pagan, evil, wicked city.

[ 25 : 09 ] And in chapter 4, Jonah can't stand it. And you would think that Jonah would rejoice at this revival.

Amen? Wouldn't you think he'd be thrilled? I mean, wouldn't you, if you hit the home run in the bottom of the ninth? Your company's the fastest growing in the Twin Cities. God single-handedly used you to reach your college campus.

I mean, if Jonah lived in America, he'd write a book, he'd make millions, and he'd spend his days signing autographs on his evangelism tour. But instead, upon seeing Nineveh repent, here's Jonah. He is fuming mad. He is so upset with God. How dare you do this? Why is he mad?

Three reasons. Number one, because God, according to Jonah, was unfair to Nineveh. Don't you know, God, that Nineveh doesn't deserve grace? They deserve wrath.

[ 26 : 10 ] He doesn't have any room, hang with me, faith family, he doesn't have any room in his theology for God being merciful to Ninevites. I mean, God, give them what they deserve, not grace and mercy.

It reminded me of a story, Henry Jarek, who is an American chaplain in Germany. His ministry was to serve death row criminals who had committed crimes in the Holocaust.

And on October the 16th, 1946, he walked with another man to that man's death. And when the noose was placed around his neck and he was asked for final words, here's what the man said, quote, I place all my confidence in the Lamb who made atonement for my sins.

May God have mercy on my soul. That man was Jehoiakim von Ribbentrop, Hitler's foreign minister.

You see, because of that chaplain's ministry, a man like that who had committed all those crimes found the mercy of God.

[ 27 : 33 ] But the story doesn't end there. When Jarek returned back to America, he was hated.

They hated him because he served Nazis. People did not have any room in their theology for saved Nazis.

Jonah believes that God has been unfair to Nineveh. They did not deserve mercy, God.

Here's the second thing, is that God was unfair to Jonah. God was unfair to Jonah. Look at verse two again. And he prayed to the Lord and said, O Lord, is this not what I said when I was yet in my country?

That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish. In other words, God, you knew this is what I didn't want to be a part of in the first place. The entire reason I ran back in chapter one is because I didn't want to be a part of the very thing you just did.

[ 28 : 44 ] So not only do you show Nineveh grace, but you don't even give me the very thing you knew I wanted, which was to not be a part of this whole thing.

Don't you see how unfair you are to me, God? I mean, you knew I didn't want this and you did it anyways. You knew I didn't want to be a part of it. So let me ask you a question.

And I know some of you have been there. God, is this how you repay your obedient profits? I did what you wanted me to do. And what I get repaid with is the very thing I didn't want to happen.

God, you're unfair to Nineveh. You're unfair to me. But it's actually even deeper than that. This gets to his perspective of God.

Look at thirdly, that God is unfair to God. Keep reading verse two. I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and relenting from disaster.

[ 29 : 48 ] What is Jonah implying? Are you with me? Jonah is saying, this is the kind of God I knew you to be and it's not the kind of God I think you should be.

You have a problem, God, with yourself. You're not being the kind of God you ought to be. I know you're merciful. You should have been wrathful. I know you're slow to anger.

I would have preferred your anger be immediate. I know you're abounding in steadfast love. I think your love should have run out a long time ago. You're not acting how I think God should act.

Have you been there? Jonah has a problem with his view of God.

And in this moment, his view of God turns to ashes. I cannot tell you, and I've given you a few examples, the times I've been there where it's like, God, if this is who you are, I don't know how I could ever worship you.

[ 30 : 58 ] And you realize that when you make statements like that, the problem is not with God, the problem is with you. Because the moment you start giving God conditions about your worship, you are in dangerous, dangerous territory.

I won't worship you, the creator of all things, if you don't form to the view I think you should be, repent of such arrogance before God.

You don't get to set terms on your worship. You worship regardless, because he's worthy, whether you like his revelation of himself or not.

I may get to preaching. Who do you think you are, Jonah? Who do you think you are, Wes? That you dictate the terms of who God gets to be.

And here are some signs that your view of God has turned to ashes. I'll just give them to you very quickly, that we see just from the text with Jonah. And so if you've ever had these emotions or these experiences with God, it may very well be that your view of him is turning to ashes.

[ 32 : 14 ] And that's a good thing, because in that God's going to build it up even bigger. The first is anger. Anger. You see that in the text where Jonah is exceedingly angry with God.

Have any of you, again, you don't have to say it out loud, but have you ever been angry with God? Have you ever had this kind of conversation with God, where you just couldn't believe you were going through what you were going through?

Second is not just anger, but despair. Did you notice the phrase here? It's in verse 3. It's better for me to die than to live. You see what's going on.

Jonah is saying, I would rather die than live knowing this is who you are. God, if this is who you're going to be, just go ahead and kill me.

Because I can't imagine living another day worshipping a God who would be merciful to Ninevites. This is real stuff.

[ 33 : 19 ] Are you all with me tonight? I mean, Jonah is in a place of spiritual despair because his idolatry is being exposed, which leads to the third one, and that is idolatry, is that you'd rather have a different God than the one true and living God.

You'd rather have a God that's wrathful rather than a God of grace when it's in relationship to whatever Ninevite you have in your life.

And then God shows them mercy, and you have to realize that the same God who is merciful to you can be merciful to whoever he wants to be. And so it exposes our idols, and it gets us to the worship of the one true and living God.

As I close here, which is a 30-minute warning, okay? I thought about, like, over the years of pastoring and my own walk with the Lord, like, what?

And there's no way I have time to go through the full list, but I just... Some people will say, you know, Wes, you often teach through tension. Like, I love to just kind of create tension in the room and not solve it.

[ 34 : 35 ] And I do that purposefully. You know, sometimes in my teaching, I've said, I'm not trying to tell you what to think. I'm just trying to make you think and not give you the answer, but just let you leave uncomfortable.

I love that. Like, I hope you leave tonight. Like, I hated that sermon. Like, that probably means you needed the sermon. Okay? And so what I'm going to do is I'm just going to give you a few quick things as I close of some of the things biblically that push us to this point of saying, like, Jonah, God, is this really how you are?

Because if this is really how you are, what am I going to do? Except, except the revelation of how you have revealed yourself and worship.

The problem is not with God. The problem is with me. So here they are, number one. The sovereign choice of God. The sovereign choice of God. And by this, I am not even getting into predestination. Okay?

I want some level of job security. Right? But it is everywhere in the Bible. Predestination is everywhere in the Bible. Everybody believes in predestination. It's just a matter of what you believe about it. But here's, I'm going to actually take on something that all of us have to agree on.

[ 35 : 51 ] Namely, that in the Old Testament, God sovereignly chooses Israel to be his covenant people. There's no way you could deny that biblically. It is obvious that in the Old Testament, God sovereignly chooses Israel, which means what?

He doesn't choose Egypt. He doesn't choose Babylon. So how fair is that if you're an Egyptian? I mean, almost nobody has any problem with the fact that God chose Israel unless you're Egyptian. And if you're Egyptian, you're on the other side of the story. Drowning in the sea instead of being redeemed through it.

Why? Because God chose a people through Abraham. Listen to Romans 9. I do hope you'll come back next week. I'm risking that, but here we go.

For this is what the promise said, about this time next year I will return and Sarah shall have a son. And not only so, but also Rebecca conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac.

[ 37 : 01 ] Though they were not yet born and had done nothing good or bad, in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works, but because of him who calls, she was told the older will serve the younger.

As it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. What shall we then say? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means.

For he says to Moses, I'll have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I'll have compassion on whom I have compassion. So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who has mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, for this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. Thank you, Apostle Paul, for that theological headache.

[ 38 : 03 ] And honestly, it was things like that in college for me that it was like, if that's the God of the Bible, I can't worship him. To which God said, I get to reveal who I am, not you.

And if you choose not to worship me, you're only harming yourself, because you were created to worship me. Second, the judgment of God.

The judgment of God, which we see both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, where God brings judgment upon people. Here's one. Are you still with? Nobody's walking. Hey, can we lock the doors for just a moment?

Okay. All right. I'm doing this intentionally. I'm doing this intentionally, because I think the text would call us to these kinds of things. So here's 1 Samuel 15.

1 Samuel 15, verse 2. Thus says the Lord of hosts, I have noted that Amalek, what he did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came out of Egypt.

[ 39 : 04 ] Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.

In other words, God is ordering the destruction of an entire nation. Of course, if you know the story, Saul is actually disobedient because he doesn't do all that God had called him to do.

Or you come to the New Testament in Matthew 13. Jesus says this, the Son of Man will send His angels and they will gather out of His kingdom all causes of sin and all lawbreakers and throw them into a fiery furnace in that place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Be honest. There are some people that can't stomach the idea of God's judgment and wrath. And so when you come to parts of the Bible like that, you're like, I just can't worship a God like that. Well, you don't get to dictate the terms of God's character. Jonah. And you can be exceedingly angry all you want, but the problem is with you.

[ 40 : 18 ] Not God. Third, the radical grace of God. This is not one you might guess, but it is absolutely true. In fact, it's Jonah's problem.

Jonah's issue is not the wrath of God. Oh, no. He'd vote for the wrath of God. What, God? You're going to destroy Nineveh? Yes! You're the best God ever!

Because that's precisely what I think they deserve. His issue is not the wrath of God. His issue is the radical grace of God. And by the way, it was also the reason why the Pharisees hated Jesus. How can you eat with tax collectors and prostitutes? who does that? These are Gentiles.

You can't associate with people of that kind of evil or wickedness or disgusting. No. And yet, what does the grace of God do?

[ 41 : 19 ] it pushes us across the line to say, how can you love like that? How can you be gracious like that? Or how about this?

That salvation is by faith alone and not anything that you do. Nothing. Zero. You cannot contribute jack squat to your salvation. Salvation is by God's grace alone.

Amen? And for those of you that are real moral people, you're like, yeah, but, I mean, you know, when I fed my starving children, that counted for something, right?

No. Because my love for you is not based on what you do. It's based on what my son did for you.

And there's the Pharisee in all of us that will amen that, but we're like, yeah, but what I do still really counts for something.

No. No. One more. The exclusivity of Jesus. The exclusivity of Jesus.

[ 42 : 28 ] Namely, that there is no other way to God but through Jesus Christ. Yeah, but what about the Jews? Yeah, but what about the Muslims? Yeah, but what about all the other religious groups?

Here's what Jesus says, John 14, 6. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me. Acts 4, 11.

Acts 4, 11. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

it is Jesus only. There is no other way. I just have a real hard time with the fact that there's a God that is revealed.

There's only one way. Why can't there be more ways? You don't get to set conditions on who God is. Are you getting the point tonight?

[ 43 : 36 ] I could go on with many, many other examples. And I am trying to make this tense. I want you to be, this was a little bit of a risky sermon in this series. And my point tonight is to say that like Jonah, at points through your Christian journey, your view of God is going to turn to ashes.

And what I want to encourage you with is that in that moment, let God do His work in you. Jonah, let Him build up a view, right view of God that is far bigger and greater and more glorious and biblical than the one you had before.

Amen? Our view of God turning to ashes is a gift of God's grace because it keeps us from being an idolater. It keeps us from fashioning our own God to fit our own feelings so that we end up like the Apostle Paul by saying, who has known the mind of the Lord and who can be a counselor to Him? He is the potter and I am the clay and all I must do is worship. So be honest, faith family. It can be very unsettling to learn something about someone you didn't know.

to have always related to somebody in a certain way only to discover that there's a different side to them. And many times through your Christian journey that's the experience that you will have with God but it is for your good.

[ 45 : 20 ] It is for your good. And you say how do you know? Listen. Because you're not the only one that's ever gone through that.

When the Son of God who is in relationship to the Father for all eternity, a relationship marked by perfect love and unity.

Are you listening? When the Son of God took on flesh and came into our story to save us from our sins, it would mean he would have to experience a side of the Father he never experienced before. He would now face the Father's just wrath. for he made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God.

And if you think it is unsettling to experience a side of God you've never known before, imagine how unsettling the cross. But the good news of the gospel is whatever became ashes on Friday was made new on Sunday.

[ 46 : 54 ] And all God's people said, amen. Pray with me. God, thank you for heavy sermons like this one that are intended to push us in our faith.

there are times as we walk with you that you will reveal things about yourself in your word that absolutely brings us to our knees.

We don't know what to do with it. Our view of you turns to ashes just like with Jonah and he struggled deeply with that and I get it.

God, you know the times I've been there and struggled deeply with who you are. And I know that there are people here tonight that have had that same struggle. Tonight's point is to encourage us to not be like Jonah and shut it down, but let you do the work in our heart you intend to do so that our worship becomes greater, our understanding of you becomes fuller, that our walk with you becomes more intimate as we know you more.

It is a beautiful thing when our view of you turns to ashes because you meet us there and you do something new. Maybe tonight this sermon will cause some of our views of you turn to ashes and that you would meet us in this place and do a new work.

[ 48 : 37 ] in Christ's name I pray. Amen. Amen.