

# Faith and Fear: The Revelation of God and Jonah | Jonah 1:7-10

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning everyone. My name is Patrick Daley and I have the privilege to serve here at Ontario Community Church. Today we're going to be going over in our Bibles. We're going to go over Jonah chapter 1 verses 7 through 10.

We're going to learn today about Jonah revealing himself to the sailors who he is and the God that he believes in. So if you'd like to, feel free to turn to your Bibles to page 920.

I'd like us to read it. Then we'll go ahead and pray and we'll get started. So it's going to be Jonah chapter 1 verse 7 through 10 and page 920 in your Pugh Bible.

So here we go verse 7. It's a little bit echo-y real quick. Okay, that's alright. Alright, verse 7 it says, and they said to one another, this is the sailors talking, Come, let us cast lots that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us.

So they cast lots and they fell on Jonah. Then they said to him, tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?

[ 1 : 32 ] And he said to them, I am a Hebrew and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.

Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, what is this that you have done? For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord because he had told them.

And let us pray. Father, we thank you for this time and this opportunity to come before you as we are in our current moment, our current circumstance, our current discur- current moment in time.

Regardless of what we have been through or what we are going through or what we will go through, we want to offer it all to you. You are the comforter of the week.

You give us strength. You give us new life. And you place us on a path towards you. As we go through these passages in your word, let us be curious to know who you are.

[ 2 : 45 ] Let us get to know and have that relationship with you. Let us grow with you and let us go into the world and make a difference in your holy name. Without you, Father God, we are nothing.

But because of you, we can live. Help us see the connectedness of Scripture. Help us be inspired by your word to draw closer to you. Help us to learn to speak to people who come to us.

Help us to learn so that we can teach others. May we never be afraid of your word, who you are, or the fact that you made us in your image. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.

You know, in our culture today, there is a word that has been used more often than I have heard when I was growing up. Perhaps you have heard this word more, more often. It is the word identity. It has been used more and more today. Identity is defined as who we are, what we are, and what we stand for.

[ 3 : 59 ] And I want to remind us that although culture may change, technology may change and people may change.

The word of God stays and remains constant. Let me repeat myself. Culture may change, but Christ is our firm foundation. It is the rock in which we build our lives on.

It is important for every single one of us to find out who we are. You know, when we're younger, we may have these questions of, who am I? What do I believe in? What do I live for?

And I think it's important that every single person asks this question. These are fundamental for every single person. We see that in Jonah, although he is running away from God, he's trying to flee to Tarshish.

We see that Jonah will have to speak to these sailors, letting them know of who he is and who he believes in. He will have to speak to them. And in the same manner, we too as Christians, we should never be afraid about sharing who we are in Christ.

[ 5 : 20 ] We should never be afraid about sharing the gospel or sharing our testimony to other people. We find that in the story of Jonah, we have been unpacking the wisdom, the insight, and the application for our very lives.

God called Jonah, remember? But what did Jonah do? He ran, right? He ran away from God's call. Jonah ran from God's presence and as a consequence, he was separated. He fled from the presence of the Lord.

For when we sin, we are separate. And what's happening is God is seeing to it that Jonah is being stopped from fleeing to Tarshish by the storm.

God brings forth the storm and yet Jonah was asleep. And remember last week we had the captain rebuke Jonah. But that leads us to this week. That leads us to where the sailors are casting lots to see if they can find out why in the world is this storm happening?

We need to know who is responsible for this storm. That leads us to where we are today. I'm titling this sermon, Faith and Fear, the Revelation of God and Jonah.

[ 6 : 38 ] And we come right into this part of the story where, right after the captain is telling Jonah to wake up and to call to his God. It says in verse 7, come, let us cast lots that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us.

So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. Casting lots is a very interesting wording that we...it's not really a word that we are familiar with today.

In biblical times, it was more common. Some of us may wonder, well, what does that mean to cast lots? Well, a modern day version would be kind of like flipping a coin or rolling a dice or drawing straws.

But the idea behind it was this idea of investigating and figuring out, hey, where is God directing us here? In your notes, you'll see some verses on casting lots.

And I found that we're not going to go through all of these verses, but they are in your notes for your reference. Casting lots was a way for God's people and even for others to try to figure out how to make a decision.

[ 7 : 51 ] So we find in the slide, casting lots is finding God's will in a situation or, not of, or leaving it to chance.

So sometimes you'd have people, they're like rolling the dice or flipping the coin, trying to see is this God's will for a decision. It was also used for chance, trying to see like, how should we make a decision?

There's not really, like I said, there's not really a modern day way that we would do that, but that was back then. We find that as the sailors were casting lots, it fell on Jonah, which means that through the investigation, through them trying to figure out what's going on and who is responsible, it pointed towards Jonah.

And all this means is they came to that conclusion that Jonah is responsible for the storm. The sailors had not dealt with the storm this bad where they feared for their lives.

Certainly if you have professional sailors who are constantly going from Jopah to Tarshish or different other cities in the Mediterranean Sea, they probably ran into storms before.

[ 8 : 59 ] But this storm was different where they were crying out to their gods and yet nothing was happening. So they asked Jonah to call to his God and they're still in that scene where they're trying to figure out when the world's going on.

And that leads us to verse 8 where it tells us, then they said to him, tell us on who account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation Jonah? Where do you come from?

What is your country? And of what people are you? This is when the sailors are questioning Jonah. Let me ask you a question. If a storm is going on in your life and you come to the conclusion that maybe there's someone responsible for it, wouldn't you ask the same kind of questions?

You might ask, hey, what did you do? That's what these sailors are asking. What did you do Jonah? This is a big storm going on. I need to know exactly what's going on.

So I can relate and we can relate to these sailors. So they have concluded that Jonah is responsible to the storm. So Jonah is questioned and Jonah must answer.

[10:06] Jonah needs to give an account to the sailors. And this is a great reminder of what we need to do. If you're not a Christian, you are encouraged to come to know the Lord, to come to know who Jesus Christ is.

If you are a Christian, you are encouraged to grow in faith, to grow in Christ. So remember that that's not in your notes. That's just for you here.

If you're not a Christian, know the Lord Jesus Christ. Know who he is. Have that relationship. And if you are a Christian, we never stop learning. We never stop growing in Christ.

We find that the more we study and read scripture, the more we learn from it. You can read Jonah 10 times. You can read the Gospel of Matthew 100 times.

And you still take away different things because God speaks to us through the Word of God. As we grow in our faith, Christians, we need to be able to know our faith in such a way that we can explain it to other people.

[11:19] In simple terms. Let me repeat that. We are to be encouraged to know our faith so that we can speak to it to others.

Just as how Jonah needs to give an account to the sailors, so too will there be situations in our walk with the Lord where we have circumstances.

We have situations where we need to speak to someone who may not know what we believe in. They may not know the Lord. How many of you have met someone before who doesn't know the Lord and you had that opportunity?

Did you speak to them? You don't have to raise your hand. But by all means here, you only you know those stories. You know those times when you met someone and you had the opportunity.

So certainly be able to know your faith in such a way to where you can explain it to people. The people that we meet on a day to day basis, we have no idea what they're going through.

[12:21] We have no idea their story. We have no idea if they know the Lord. We cannot assume that everybody that we interact with knows the Lord. You simply cannot assume that. And don't let this be discouraging, but rather let this be encouraging.

That with every interaction that you have with people in the grocery store, people at the coffee shop or people at the restaurant or your own family, it is an opportunity for you to share in your faith by word, by action, right?

By doing. Now granted, we're not saved by works. No. But because we are saved, we do good in the world. And this reminds me of a verse.

I want us to turn this is not in your notes, but let's go ahead and turn to page 12.1205. 1200 and five. I want to share this with you.

It's in 1 Peter. Some of you will know this. If you're if you're not using the Pew Bible, it's first first Peter 3:15. And I find this just so very interesting.

[13:34] So very good. First Peter chapter 3 verse 15. And it says in here in your hearts, honor Christ, the Lord as holy, always being prepared to what?

To make a defense to anyone who asks you. For the reason for the hope that is in you yet do it with anger and hostility.

No, it doesn't say that. It says do it with quickness and haste. No, with gentleness and respect.

Now granted, we are reminded we must be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks us for the reason for this hope that is in us and do it with gentleness and respect. First Peter mentions that we should be ready to explain to anyone who asks us questions about our faith.

And we should be able to articulate it. Yes. In first Peter, it's saying that he's taught for Peter is talking about the situation where someone is challenging your faith and questioning you.

[14:48] So that's a very specific situation where you're giving a defense for it. But when we look back in Jonah, here is a situation where Jonah has to speak to the sailors because he did wrong.

So in any situation, we have the opportunity to share our faith with others. And whether you're facing these storms by design or storms by default, we must be able to speak to or defend or answer someone's questions.

What happens when a college student comes up and says, how do you know Jesus Christ is Lord? Can you show me in the Bible?

Or, hey, I read in the Bible about judgment.

Can you help me? That's an opportunity for you to speak to someone. Someone may have a question and say, hey, who is King Nebuchadnezzar?

[ 15 : 53 ] That's a very specific question. But they may be learning something. Maybe they watched a YouTube video or maybe they're having a discussion with classmates or even as adults.

Even when we, as we grow older, we may still have questions. And certainly, may we always be open to have that conversation. People will know that we are Christians by loving them and standing firm on the truth of the Word of God.

There are two types of storms. As we learned last week, there are storms that just happen just because God set into motion Mother Nature.

Fires and earthquakes and all sorts of storms just happen. And other times there are storms that are caused well by our own faults, just as in the case of Jonah.

Jonah had received the rebuking from the captain. Jonah had received the storm in the first place by God seeing to it that he's hurling a storm to stop him. And now he's being questioned by the sailors.

[ 17 : 00 ] So it's like a triple whammy right there. So Jonah responds in the next verse, if we go back to our verse on page 920.

What does Jonah say? Let's go, let's read this together. What does Jonah say? How does he respond to him? I don't know.

Did he say that? No. No, he goes, let's go to that verse. It's in verse 9. He said to them, I am a Hebrew and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.

It's an interesting response. Jonah reveals at this moment that he is a Hebrew. This is Jonah's identity, right?

I am a Hebrew and that he fears the Lord. We can put this on the screen. Let's go to the next slide here. Jonah responds by saying number one, who he is as in who Jonah is.

[ 18 : 11 ] So who is Jonah? I am a Hebrew. He's also saying who he believes in, the Lord. Then he's saying who capital he, right?

Who God is. The God of heaven. And what does God do? He is the creator. So Jonah is telling the sailors about who he is and who God's who God is.

This is the part where we learn about the revelation of Jonah and God. Jonah's identity is that he is a Hebrew and that he worships the Lord.

And that makes me think of us. We go to the next slide. Our identity is in Christ.

We are Christian. We are Christians. We follow Christ. I have reference verses for you.

[ 19 : 22 ] We're not necessarily going over that. But I bring these verses up. It's the simple fact that for the Christian and hopefully all of us know the Lord. If you don't, I encourage you.

Make that decision for Christ. When we become Christian, we have a new identity in Jesus Christ. I am reminded of second Corinthians chapter five verse 17 that says if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old, the old identity has passed away and behold, the new one has come. My friends, when we think about the word identity, let us think of Christ.

Let us think of who we are, that we are Christian and we belong to God. We are his.

The identity is not in what we do. I'm sure there's a lot of people that their entire identity is being a volleyball player or in being a lawyer or in being a teacher.

[ 20 : 35 ] For others, it might be their identity is in their personality. I'm an extrovert or I'm an introvert, right? It's just like what was said earlier.

It's not having a personality. That's the issue. It's that when that personality is consuming you. I think of people who are doing or smoking cigarettes, for example.

Who's doing the smoking, the cigarette or you? What I mean by that is are you smoking the cigarette or is the cigarette smoking you? For some people who are addicted to that, it may be the cigarette smoking you rather than you smoking the cigarette.

So with that, we tend at times to make things our identity. Let's not make things our God. Let's make Christ at the center of our lives.

As Christians, we have to understand that we are made in the image of God. I'm reminded of Galatians chapter 2 verse 20 that refers to the fact that it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

[ 21 : 47 ] When we become a Christian, we have Christ in us. We are saved by grace through faith so that we can do good. Again, we are not saved by works.

Instead, we are saved for works. You understand the difference? If we're saved by works, I can tell you there's a lot of scripture that speaks against that.

That's incorrect. What is correct is we are saved by Jesus Christ by believing in him. By making that decision to have that relationship so that we can do good in the world.

That is the difference. Our identity is not in the things of this world, but it is in Christ. Jesus Christ loves us.

He gave himself for us and died on the cross so that we can live. And the fact that we have new life in Christ should encourage us to go out into the world and spread the good news of the gospel to others.

[ 22 : 53 ] Telling people, sharing with people, being a light that is the light is from Christ. It shines through us for others to see.

We can exhibit love and firmness. I'm always going to preach this, my friends, is let's be loving, but let's stand firm. It is the balance between both of those.

You can be all loving, but not firm. You can also be firm, but not loving. What happens is if you don't have that balance, you gravitate towards one or the other.

It's a balance between love and standing firm on the word of God. The price of sin was paid on the cross and we are as first Peter chapter two, verse nine says we are called out of darkness into his marvelous.

What light is marvelous light? Our identity is not in what we do. It's not in what we like or dislike. It's in Jesus Christ and we are children of God.

[ 24 : 02 ] As mentioned in John chapter one, verse 12, we are created in Jesus Christ to do good. We are saved by Jesus Christ so that we can do good in the world.

First there's salvation. Then there's doing works. Then there's doing good things. Get your priorities straight. Some people only do good and they don't worry about salvation. I encourage you come to know the Lord and come to grow in the Lord.

And I want to further note that scripture mentions that whosoever believes shall not perish. You don't have to be perfect to turn to Christ.

You do not. You must believe in order to be saved and in receiving and accepting this free gift of salvation from Christ.

Your life will never be the same. We find that our identity, that our lives are rooted in Christ, the solid rock, the firm foundation.

[ 25 : 09 ] I think of proverbs and how it says trust in the Lord, right? And lean not on your own understanding because the leaning is like how we lean on the wall instead of focusing on God is the firm foundation.

How do you build your life? How do you live your life? Do you live for the next fix? Do you live for the next high?

Do you live for materialism? Having your fifth or fiftieth house? What do you live for?

This is a question we should be reminded of and we should be able to answer to by saying I am a Christian. If you're struggling with who you are, if you're struggling with your identity, by all means I encourage you to come to Christ who is the way, the truth and the life, God will give you clarity in this confusing fog of a world that we live in, in this culture.

Our culture is confusing, isn't it? So confusing. And I hate saying this, but it's certainly getting more confusing as time goes on.

[ 26 : 30 ] We need clarity in our lives. Don't you love it when life is just simple? Don't you love it when, hey, I'm a new creation in God.

I believe in Jesus Christ. He loves me. He died on the cross for me. Simple, not complicated as the world makes it simple.

If you're struggling with what you believe in, come to Christ. There is so much wisdom and insight, truth, knowledge, the story of salvation.

I've been saying these past few weeks, interwovenness, connectedness from one verse to the next.

This helps on your faith journey, seeing that, huh, it's not one book.

It's many books into one. It's a library of books, but yet they're all connected somehow. It's not like reading Lord of the Rings where it's just three books and they're all connected.

[ 27 : 36 ] I mean, Lord of the Rings is fine. There's a lot of other books, right? But here there's that connectedness in there. There's something to it. I wonder what that something is.

Maybe it's the fact that God had something to do with the book. If you're struggling, I encourage you to come to know the Lord. And if you know the Lord, I encourage you to grow in the Lord.

Maybe you feel that emptiness. Maybe you feel that separation or that void. Maybe you need to get your life right with the Lord. Come back, return to him.

May you grow in Christ. God provides us for all. He gives us all that we need. He gives us salvation. And because of salvation, I got to tell you, I feel secure. I feel secure knowing that I worship the true God. There's that sense of security and there's that sense of safety that God will protect us wherever we go in life.

[ 28 : 41 ] And Jonah reveals to us a framework on how we can speak to not just the sailors, but our neighbor. You know, when I think of our neighbor, one of these days I'll really speak on this.

I want you to think of an empty chair. Consider this chair over here. Say it's empty, right? No one's sitting in that chair. Who is going to sit in the chair?

Who is your neighbor? You can imagine many people sitting in a chair. It might be someone tall, someone short, male or female, older, young, black or white, Japanese.

We don't know. But the idea is the empty chair. And it makes you think, who is your neighbor?

Jonah gives us a framework. And I'd like to share with you Jonah's faith proclamation. And it says, I am a Hebrew and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.

[ 29 : 50 ] And the question may come up. Okay, Patrick, you just talked about a chair for a second there. What does that have to do with me loving my neighbor? Well, Jonah gives us a framework for how we can share our faith with others.

Let's go to that next slide. This would be a Christian adaptation to Jonah's proclamation. I know that's fancy, but basically it's, how would a modern day Christian say what Jonah's saying to the sailors?

It says, I am a Christian. And I follow Jesus Christ, the savior of the world, the savior of humanity, who offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice on the cross.

You see the similarity there? Jonah is speaking to the sailors about who he is and what he believes in. And in the same way, when we speak to our neighbor, the empty chair, we don't know who our neighbor is.

It could be anyone. We can say something as simple as I'm a Christian. I follow Jesus Christ. I believe he's the way, the truth and the life. That's it.

[ 30 : 59 ] I mean, I know this, you could even condense this even shorter, but it should be an encouragement to us that wherever we go, may we share with what we believe in. Let us never be afraid of being a Christian and let us be prepared to speak to those who ask questions.

And to even those who don't ask questions, how we live our life, how are we being, what does our everyday look like?

What would Jesus do? I'm reminded of those old school little bracelets. Do you guys remember those? What would Jesus do? You know, that impacted me as I was growing up.

And I still think about that today. What would Jesus do in this situation? How would you respond? Sometimes it may not be words. Sometimes it may be actions by helping our neighbor.

How do we love our neighbor? How do we share our faith with others? Jonah reveals who he is. He reveals the God that he believes in.

[ 32 : 06 ] And in verse 10, it says here that the men were exceedingly afraid. They weren't just afraid. They were exceedingly. They were greatly afraid. And they said to him, what is this you have done?

For the men knew that he was freeing from the presence of the Lord because he had told them. And I find it very interesting. If you look in your Bibles on that page 920 here, you read it like it's a question.

What is this you have done and has an exclamation point? When you read the Hebrew, it can be interpreted as a question or a statement. So it could be they're like, what have you done? Like we don't know.

Or what have you done? It could be either of those. But in any case, they were confused, right? They were like, you did this. It could be an accusation or it could be a question because in any case, Jonah is going to speak to them.

That word sticks out to me though. You know, what's interesting is that it says they were exceedingly afraid, right? And it says in there, that is the fear of the Lord.

[ 33 : 11 ] It's the same word when you find in Proverbs 1 7 that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. How interesting that the sailors, once they found out who Jonah was and the God that he believes in, they started to respect.

They started to be afraid of God's power and might. Not the fear that, oh, I'm afraid. But they began getting the fear of the Lord at that moment.

Because when Jonah spoke to the sailors in that time of crisis, they began getting it. They began realizing who God is, how powerful he is.

When we read the fear of the Lord, that's what it is. It's having that awe and that sense of wonder for who God is. Even though Jonah ran away from God, God still used Jonah to reveal himself to the sailors.

These sailors, they didn't know who God was. It was through Jonah speaking to the sailors that they began to understand who God is.

[ 34 : 19 ] And that is an encouragement for us to be able to speak to others. Even though we sin, and even though we run away from God or we try to hide from God, we try to escape reality at times.

Our lives still matter to God. In fact, no matter what wrong you do, for the most part, you have the opportunity to turn your life around.

I have this final slide in here. The fear of the Lord means reverence and recognition. You have respect for God's power, his authority, his sovereignty, his holiness, who he is, to be in that awe and wonder.

And also recognizing that we have our own limitations. Uh-oh. What about those self-help people that say we have an unlimited life and we can do whatever we want?

Uh-oh. We have limitations, don't we? I'd like to be a basketball player, but I'm not seven foot tall. Now I have to learn either to jump high or to grow.

[ 35 : 32 ] Which one is it probably going to be I have to do? Assuming that I can get that. It's probably going to learn to jump high really quick, right? The reality is there are limitations. And when we have that fear of the Lord, it is recognizing our limitations.

We need to seek first to the kingdom of God. We need to believe in God first and foremost. You do not need to be perfect to come to the Lord.

When we think of the fear of the Lord, we think of this is part of belief. This is part of believing who Jesus Christ is that we are in awe and wonder of who Jesus Christ is by performing many miracles, by being born in the manger, walking on water, healing the sick, raising people from the dead. He himself being raised from the dead is a miracle. We need to come to the Lord through faith, through believing in him.

Like the thief on the cross. It's he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. What a beautiful way to say it.

[ 36 : 46 ] Remember me that at the moment the thief was going to die. He said, Jesus, remember me. And in the same way like these sailors are beginning to get it.

And here's a little preview. They get it. In fact, they eventually come to the Lord. They get converted despite Jonah's disobedience.

They still come to the Lord. Because here's the thing. God will use you even if you disobey Him. So the fact that Jonah's running off and thinking you can get away.

God still found a way that His will to the sailors would happen. Let's get our life right with God from wherever we are. Whether you're running away from God, may you turn things around and come back to the way, the truth and the life.

Come back to the light out of the darkness. May we come to know the truth about Jesus Christ, the salvation, the free gift for all who believe that we may not perish but have eternal life.

[ 37 : 54 ] May we come to know that new life and our identity exists in Christ. Our lives will never be the same once we decide to come to Christ, return to Christ and grow in Christ.

Let's pray. May the God who controls all of creation be with us as we leave this place. May the God of healing and restoration restore each and every one of us to know you, to grow with you and to go with you wherever you lead us.

May we know our neighbor. May we know that when we stray away you call us back to you. May you bring us back with grace. May we learn that our actions have consequences.

May we, like the sailors, come to a sense of awe and wonder and reverence for you. Your power and your might are great. May we trust in your plan for our lives.

May we learn to love like you, just like you have loved us. May we learn from the wisdom found in your word. May we learn that to fear, to have the fear of the Lord, that it is the beginning of wisdom. [ 39 : 15 ] Let us go forward knowing that you are a good God. You are the living and the true God. And your love is everlasting to everlasting. It's never ending. You are constant and your grace is sufficient.

May we go in peace today. May we love and serve you. And may your blessings be with us now and always. And we all say in Jesus' name, amen.