

Jonah 2:1-10 - A Broken Church

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 September 2015

Preacher: Guest: Alex Shipman

[0 : 00] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

Good morning to you all, Southwood Presbyterian Church. You all are doing well? Alabama won. You should be excited. Come on. I'd like to thank the session for this invitation. It's been since 2009, since I've preached here.

I was 100 pounds lighter. I mean, yeah, 100 pounds heavier since then. But it's a privilege to be back here worshiping here with Southwood Presbyterian Church. And thank you all for this invitation.

If you have your Bible, please open it to Jonah chapter 2. Jonah chapter 2. We'll be looking at verses 1 through 10. There is a lesson that the church in America can learn from politics in America.

Do you know what it is? It's this. The church's voice can become a clinging symbol. We can talk. We can make noise. We can entertain. We can make promises.

[1 : 24] We can create programs. But people can stop listening and start turning away. And her voice can become irrelevant quickly. We can start sounding like the adults on the Charlie Brown cartoon.

Wah, wah, wah, wah. A clinging symbol. And that's what the church's voice is slowly becoming within our culture. Now, the church, she speaks in many voices today.

Many voices. Do you know them? Any of them? But there is one voice that's most important out of them all. It is her prophetic voice.

The church's prophetic voice. In fact, this one voice is on the decline within the American church. In some part, she's basically dead.

When you look at the church in America, across all denominations, cultures as well, do you see a prophetic church with a prophetic voice, with a prophetic witness?

[2 : 32] America needs this type of church. A prophetic one. She needs it even though she doesn't believe it. Even though she hates it. Even though she may persecute it.

She needs this type of church. And so my question for you, Southwood Presbyterian Church, is what type of church do you want to be? What type of church are you? Do you want to be prophetic? In voice? In witness? And there is only one way that the church in our great country will ever become prophetic, and it's through brokenness.

She will have to be broken in order for that to happen. She needs to be broken. Just like the prophet Jonah needed to be broken. Because he had issues as well when it came to being a prophetic witness to the people that God called him to go witness to.

So if you have your Bible, please open it to Jonah chapter 2, beginning in verse 1. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, saying, I called out to the Lord out of my distress, and he answered me.

[3 : 42] Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the sea. And the flood surrounded me. All your waves and your billows passed over me.

Then I said, am I driven away from your sight? Yet, I should look at your holy temple. The waters crossed over me to take my life. The deep surrounded me.

Weaves wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountain. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever. Yet you brought my life up from the pit. Oh, Lord, my God.

When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to you into your holy temple. Those who paid regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love.

But I, with a voice of thanksgiving, with sacrifice to you what I vowed I would pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord. And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon dry land.

[4 : 42] This is God's holy word. Please pray with and for me. Father, as we come to your truth, we need your spirit. Preaching has no power apart from the moving of your spirit.

The man in the pulpit is just a man. That is all he is. That is all he's ever going to be. So, Holy Spirit, we need you to come. We need you to move in our hearts.

We need you to bring encouragement. We need you to bring conviction. If you don't move, lives are not changed. We're just going to go out and do what we do. Holy Spirit, come.

I pray for myself, my pride, and my need for man's approval, my need for attention. I pray that you move those things aside, and I would just disappear. You would take over and bring a word, Lord. Bring a word. You know everyone here. You know what they're dealing with. You know their families. You know the issues. So, minister to the people of God in the places where they truly live.

[5 : 53] Pray for all this in your son's name. Amen. Jonah chapter 10 is Jonah recounting the time in which he was broken.

It's him looking back over the time when the Lord broke him. It's a prayer. It's a psalm of reflection. It's him looking back at what happened to him. So, the obvious question is, what happened to Jonah?

What happened to him? Well, he was hurled into the sea by some pagan sailors towards the end of chapter 1. He was left in the water, floating all along.

And the sea took Jonah through a lot of things. A lot of horror things. And guess what? This is not a fairy tale. What happened with Jonah and the whale is true. It is not a fairy tale.

Not a Disney movie. It is truth. And the Coast Guard was not coming to save him. He was in the ocean alone. Unless the Lord supernaturally intervened into Jonah's situation, he was doomed.

[6 : 57] And the Lord does come. The Lord does intervene. Jonah 1.17 highlights the Lord's intervention. It says, the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

So, when did the Lord send the fish? When did he send the fish? Have you ever asked yourself that question? Did he come as soon as Jonah was thrown overboard?

Or did some time pass? Did he float around in the ocean for a time? What do you think? He floated in the ocean for a time.

Floating around alone. So, there was a gap between God's appointment of the fish and Jonah being hurled into the sea. And it's in this middle part that Jonah was broken. It's in this middle part that he was broken.

And brokenness is not condemnation. It is not abuse. It is not abandonment. Brokenness brought Jonah to the end of himself. And it led him to repentance.

[8 : 03] And it does the same for you. It does the same for me. And it's going to do the same thing for the church in America. For she needs to be a broken church.

Now, the Lord appointed this fish to save Jonah after he was broken. After he called out for help. After he repented of his sin. The fish came and swallowed him up.

Then he stayed in this fish for three days. In the belly of the fish for three days. Reflecting.

Meditating. Praising God. He even offered up this prayer. In chapter 2.

Thanking God for saving him from his doom. He prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish. That's from a place of brokenness. Remember, this is prayer.

It's a one of thanksgiving. It's a one of gratefulness. It's a one of praise. It's a one of repentance.

The prayer recounted Jonah's time in the sea. It filled in the gap. And in this prayer, he approached God differently.

[9 : 00] And if you read chapter 1. You don't see a Jonah who approaches God in a way that's relational. But here in chapter 2, you have a different Jonah. He approached God in a relational way.

He calls out to him. He calls out to him. Yahweh Elohim. That's the first time that he calls out to the Lord that way.

In this book. Because before then, he wasn't broken. He wasn't broken. He had chances to call out to the Lord when he first rebelled.

But he didn't. He could have called out to the Lord when the storm raged upon the sea. But he didn't. He could have called out to the Lord when he was calling to sin. But he didn't. It wasn't until

he was hurled into the sea that he called out on Yahweh Elohim. Because the sea broke him. The sea broke him. The sea broke him. And here's the thing is you can acknowledge sin simply because you get caught in it.

[10:05] But acknowledgement is not repentance. Being convinced of sin is not repentance. You have to be broken into conviction. That leads to repentance.

That is what happened to Jonah. That is what's going to happen to us. Jonah prayed. I cried out to Yahweh. Out of my distress. And he answered me. Out of the belly of Shaul I cried.

And you heard my voice. You heard my voice. He's looking back over the time when she was broken. And he called out to Yahweh for help.

A call for mercy. It's a call for deliverance. A call of repentance. When was the last time you called out to Yahweh? Out of your distress. Out of brokenness.

When was the last time? Who do you run to? When it's all falling apart. He cried out of distress.

[11:05] Out of brokenness. Because he's a broken prophet now. Crying out in a voice of brokenness. Brokenness has a voice. It's calling out to Yahweh. I need you.

Help me. Because I can't do it. These words. It brings you into the emotional state of Jonah. He experienced personal affliction.

Real distress in the sea. Before he was hurled into the sea. He had no distress. He had no affliction. Even when the powerful storm raged upon the sea.

He was now afflicted. The pagan sailors were. They were scared. They thought they were going to die. Their life was in jeopardy. But now Jonah feels the same thing they felt.

As the sea raged upon him. As the waters raged upon him. You see. When he was on the ship. As the sea raged. Jonah was sleeping beneath the deck of the ship.

[12:08] Sleeping. That was not a sign of someone who was in distress. If you have a hurricane raging upon the sea. And you sleep. You're not in distress.

But now he is. Out of the belly of Sheol. I cried to Yahweh. Sheol is a place where people go before death. It's where they go at death. But nowhere.

At nowhere point of return. So it represented death. This is what Jonah is saying. I'm hopeless. I'm helpless now. I'm in Sheol. He's in despair.

I know what you're asking. What did Jonah do. To be lost at sea. What in the world did he do. What brought him to such despair.

I mean he's in the belly of a fish. Crying out loud. I don't know about you. But I've never been in the belly of a fish. But I'm pretty sure it's not pleasant. So what did he do.

[13:09] He's a prophet of Yahweh. A prophet of Yahweh is in the belly of a fish. Crying out. You see Jonah made some bad decisions along the way.

He made some choices that led him to the condition that he's in. And it all started when Yahweh called Jonah to go to Nineveh. He called Jonah to go to Nineveh.

Be a prophetic witness to the people of Nineveh. Call out against them. For their sin has come up before me. I want you to go to them. But Jonah didn't want to go. He didn't want to go to Nineveh.

He basically said, I'm not going. No. If you're a parent, you have small kids. You know how to rebel against you. No. I don't want to do it. I don't want it. This is Jonah. I'm not going to Nineveh.

He doesn't go. He turns his back on the Lord. I mean, he turns his back on him and heads to Tarshish. And the Lord lets him go.

[14:13] Have you noticed that about Jonah's life? The Lord lets him go. He doesn't run behind Jonah's coattail. Please, Jonah, don't go. Don't go, Jonah.

If you leave Jonah, my plans are going to fail. Jonah, don't go. The Lord doesn't beg. He commands, but he never begs. He lets Jonah go to Nineveh. He lets Jonah find the ship to go to Tarshish.

He lets him get into the water. And Jonah thinks he's going to get away. And then the Lord says, well, it's about time I show Jonah who's boss. The storm comes.

The storm comes. And that is how the Lord works even with us. He may let us go often in rebellion, but eventually he will intervene.

Eventually he will come. Eventually he will send a storm. And so the Lord intervenes into Jonah's rebellion. There was a storm that raised upon the sea.

[15:18] The storm caused great fear to fall upon the sailors. The storm prevented Jonah from going to Tarshish. He never made it there. He never made it. And eventually his rebellion was found

out and he was hurled into the sea.

The American church is Jonah. Traveling down the same path. Not wanting to go to Nineveh to be the prophetic witnesses that we are called to be.

There is only one group of people who can be prophetic witnesses of Jesus. And it's not the American government. It is the church. We are the only ones that can be prophetic witnesses of the gospel that saved us.

No one else can do that. No one else has that calling. And no one else will ever have that calling. It is our calling. Speaking with a prophetic voice.

Do we do it? Sometimes we have the Tarshish. Or our own version of Tarshish. Like Jonah, every church, every believer is called to be this prophetic witness. With a prophetic voice.

[16:30] Do you know once you come to saving faith in Jesus? Once Jesus pulls you out of your sin and redeems you. Brings you into the family of God. You are not God's child.

But you are also Jesus' witness here. You are his family. You are his sons and daughters. But you are also his prophetic witness. In American culture.

We are. We have to understand that great commission is a call for the church to be such witnesses. With a prophetic voice. But we're not.

Instead we speak in other voices. We tend to be prophetic witnesses to other things and to other people. And these other voices represent what I call the different versions of Christianity in America. You have consumer Christianity. Where I come to consume but never give. You have health and wealth Christianity. Where it's all about getting my crown now but not later.

[17:31] You have celebrity Christianity. We're familiar with that. Celebrity Christianity. Cultural Christianity. Materialistic Christianity. Individualistic Christianity. Individualistic Christianity. Political Christianity.

National Christianity. All these things go on and on and on and on. And the church is becoming more of a system of strategies and techniques and programs and property and marketing and entertainment.

Simply to get people in the pews. That's what the church is becoming. We are a first world church. And we are not a broken church. We're privileged. We're privileged. The church in America is privileged and a little high maintenance.

Ask some of your elders and pastors. This is true of every church regardless of the denomination, race, or culture. Southwood is that way. The village church is that way.

[18:35] Don't let our location fool you. My church is high maintenance and privileged too. Think about it for a moment. When we have the privilege of religious freedom in America.

Freedom of speech. We can gather here each week and don't have the fear of losing our life. I mean pastors even get a housing allowance. That's a tax benefit to being a pastor. Can you believe that?

I can't find that in scripture. But I have it. All pastors do. We have our radio stations. We have movies. We have conferences. We have seminaries. The list goes on and on.

We are privileged and we cannot deny it. And can we be real for one moment? That you can answer if you want to be real. Wow. We can be real for one moment.

Let's take off the mask for one moment. You see, I love being a Christian. But you know what I love more? I love being a Christian in America. And those are two different things.

[19:34] I love being a Christian in America. You know why I love it? Because I can go to Starbucks and get a latte and work on my sermon. I'm good. It's comfortable. It's easy.

It doesn't cost me anything. At all. And I enjoy the privileges. No. I worship them.

They are an idol. They are an idol for me. What about you? Do you worship them? I think you do. We all do.

The American church worships and loves the privileges we get from being in the United States. And the functional confession of faith for the American church is this.

We love and believe in Jesus in America. Our country. Tis of thee. Sweet land of liberty. That's our functional confession of faith. We love Jesus in America.

[20:32] Because it's easy. It's comfortable. But here's the reality. A privileged church would never be a prophetic church. Because she does not know how to suffer.

She does not know how to suffer. A privileged church would never be a prophetic church. The Lord is going to have to throw us into the sea of brokenness for that to happen.

And it's going to happen. It is happening. And the brokenness isn't combination. The brokenness isn't abandonment. The brokenness is not abuse. The brokenness is going to pull you to the throne of grace where you repent of our idol worship of American culture and our privileges for being American believers.

Broken church calls out to the Lord like Jonah. A broken church knows its neediness. Its weakness. A privileged church doesn't.

A broken church knows there will be times and seasons when we will experience affliction and distress. A privileged church hides for such things. A privileged church flees from her prophetic responsibilities because it will cost you something.

[21 : 51] It will cost you something. It will cost you something. The call will always interrupt your life. One of my favorite authors says the cross that saves us also slays us.

Know that. It saves you, but it's going to slay everything about you too. That's the part of the cross we don't like. Because that cross demands everything.

All I have belongs to Jesus. Not just my heart, but even my stuff. Even my time. Even my resources. So the Lord intervenes in our fleeing from the call just like he did for Jonah.

And Jonah learned this the hard way. And verse 3 shows us that. It shows us Jonah's reflecting over his personal distress. As he looked back over his brokenness, Jonah saw something that he didn't see when he was going through the brokenness.

He saw Yahweh's hand over it. And this is what we usually do. When you come out of brokenness, it's only then when you see God's hand in it. It's hard to see his hand when you're going through it.

[23 : 03] So just understand that when you're thrown into the sea of brokenness, you're going to feel like he's not there. But he's there. It's just hard to see it. He's there.

And Jonah acknowledged it. He says, you, Yahweh, cast and hurl me into the deep, into the heart of the sea. Do you notice what he's saying there? The sailors actually threw him overboard.

He told him to. But now he's saying, Yahweh, you did it. You hurled me into the sea. It was your hand. The human element wasn't the only element involved.

The divine element had a role as well in Jonah's brokenness. And the sea that he was hurled into was not still waters.

Trust me, this is not Psalm 23. Jonah was not experiencing Psalm 23. The waters were not calm.

The waters were not still. He said, the flood surrounded me.

[24 : 05] The current and tide confound me. It bounded him. He was enclosed by water. No life jacket. No lifeboat. This is Old Testament time. The flood that surrounded him was not by accident.

It wasn't my chance. It wasn't bad karma. It was the sovereign hand of Yahweh. Look at what he said. All your waves and your billows passed over me.

The waves and billows were crushing down upon him, pulling him underwater. And it was Yahweh's hand doing it. This is what he's saying. Your ways, Yahweh, rushed over me.

Your billows, Yahweh, crushed down upon me. He was being broken. Broken into repentance.

Luther said, Jonah felt in his conscience that the sea with its waves and billows was a servant of God and of his wrath to punish sin.

This is Luther's words. Those waves and billows was discipline. They were discipline. Psalm 119 says, Before I was afflicted, I went astray.

[25 : 15] Jonah went astray when he fled from the call to be a prophetic witness to Nineveh. When he fled from the presence of the Lord and everything has finally called up with him. Jonah finally felt the weight of his sin.

That the wages of sin is death. He says in verse 4, I'm being driven away from your sight, Lord.

That's what he felt like. In verse 1, he fled from the Lord.

He didn't care that he fled. He didn't care that he was away from the Lord's sight. But now in brokenness, now that his circumstances are hard, now that he's experiencing distress, he feels like the Lord is driving him away.

And sometimes brokenness can feel that way. But our feelings are not reality. They are not reality. When you've been broken by the Lord.

The term that, the Hebrew verb that is used here is the same one that's used in Genesis 3.24. What happened in Genesis 3.24? Adam and Eve was driven out of the garden by the Lord.

[26 : 17] That is what Jonah feels like. The Lord is driving me out of his presence. In my brokenness. In my suffering. But he's not. The brokenness is meant to lead you to repentance.

To lead you back to him. Verses 5 and 7. He said, The waters closed in over me to take my life. The deep surrounded me. The weeds wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountain.

I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever. The message translation says, The ocean gripped me by the throat. I love that. The ocean gripped me by the throat.

The ocean had man hands. That's for you Seinfeld fans. Around Jonah's neck. Holding him down. He was drowning. All these, this word picture that Jonah is giving you is a picture of a man who's drowning.

In a watery grave. Hardest day afloat. He was battling for his life. The weeds wrapped around his head. He was at the foot of the mountain.

[27 : 23] Going down and down and down to a place that he cannot flee from. When you think about what Jonah went through. Do you think he deserved it?

Was it unloving by Yahweh to throw Jonah into the sea of brokenness? Was Yahweh unjust? Is this un-Christian?

Was it anti-gospel? Look at what's happened to Jonah. Again, this actually happened to him. Was it unloving by Yahweh to do this to him?

The church in America doesn't value the prophetic books. Because we're a New Testament church. See, we only value them as long as they point to Christ.

Which it does. They all do. That's very important. That's very important. But we don't value or take serious the prophetic warnings in the prophetic books. The prophetic challenging.

[28 : 28] The prophetic rebukings. We think, well, that's just for Israel. Those warnings and those prophetic things are just for them. But no, it's for us as well. Because the church is the New Israel.

They apply to us as well. All of God's word apply to us. Even the parts of the word we don't want to hear. Even the parts of the word that is hard to hear. Let me ask you a question.

Whose sin caused the storm to rage upon the sea? You can answer. Whose sin? I can't hear you. Jonah's sin. It wasn't the pagans. It wasn't their sin. Those pagan sailors, they were helping Jonah out.

And I'm pretty sure in hindsight, they would say, Brother, you're going to have fun. You're going to have another ship. They didn't know they were going to be sailing dirty where a bearless prophet would need the deck of the ship. They didn't know that.

[29 : 31] They were just helping him out. And because of him, they get caught up in a storm that was caused by Jonah. James Boyce says, old pastor at 10th Presbyterian Church, says, the disobedience of one of God's servants always involves others in peril, even innocent people.

We must not smug at the point and lowly blame the settlers. So remember, the trouble that came upon them have come because of Jonah. This means that in some situations, at least, problems come to the world because of God's judgment on his own children.

How much of it is our fault because we are not pervaded witnesses?

How much? I often see signs on churches that say, repent America or God's going to judge you.

America's already been judged. Those who are unbelievers have already been judged. Already been judged because they don't know Jesus. But for the church, the church in America, that's what we should be concerned about.

[31 : 06] What direction are we going? What direction are we heading? I hope you realize we're headed the same, down the same path of the church in England.

It's making the same mistakes, heading down the same, heading down the same steps. Because the church there is dead and we're slowly heading there. That's where we're headed.

We're years behind them, but that's where the church is headed. There are storms raging. Racial storms, cultural storms, political storms, and many others.

And where is the church? Are we beneath the deck of the ship sleeping? Peacefully, as if our hands are clean. Our prophetic voice needs to be waken up.

It is a sleeping giant, and it needs to be awakened. And Yahweh is going to wake us up. And He's going to break us to do it. I know this sermon is hard to hear.

[32 : 10] It was hard to write. And you might not ever want me to come back because of it. But it's okay. It's a word that God gave me, and I'm going to preach it. And I preach the church at the village church as well.

And see, there's a reason that a, there's a reason we have to be broken out by privilege. There's a reason that a privileged church would never be a prophetic church. It is because underneath the

privilege, there's something else that's underneath, and it's entitlement.

That's what's underneath our privilege. Because when you start taking away the privileges, entitlement comes out. We start thinking we are owed and deserve certain rights.

We are entitled to religious freedom. I'm entitled to my housing allowance. I'm entitled to my nonprofit status. Where is that in the Word of God? We get those things because we are in America.

And those things can be taken away, and God will still love us if they go away. Does it mean He doesn't love you? It means He may be breaking you. It means He may be taking things away to wake us up.

[33 : 17] We don't see it. The enemy deceives us with our privileges, makes us weak and not prophetic. Because when we take, because a privileged church becomes entitled, because when you lose the entitled privileges, you start fighting to hold on to them.

You don't want to lose them. You don't want to lose them. A privileged church exists for one purpose, and it's not Great Commission.

It's self-preservation. We don't want to exist just for self-preservation. Holding on to what was and fighting to keep what we may lose.

I love my religious freedom. I love my housing allowance. I love going to Starbucks and all that stuff. But those things can be taken away, and Jesus will still love me. He will still love me.

And He may take them away. We have to remember, the inception of Christianity was not a privilege.

[34 : 29] It was not an entitlement or self-preservation. It wasn't top-down. It was bottom-up. Was Jesus born into privilege? Was Jesus entitled?

Did Jesus exist for self-preservation? Jesus was born into poverty. He was broken. He was persecuted. And He died a criminal's death.

But we want what He never had. We want the American culture to accept us. Do you realize that if Jesus was alive today, He would not be accepted. He would be crucified.

But still, and many of us would be said, crucify Him. Because we're privileged, we don't see our sin that way. But this is us.

We're them. We have to have these things taken away. Jesus was died. He suffered.

[35 : 26] He was buried. But He was resurrected in power as well. And He can do the same for us. Once we're broken. Psalm 23 says, That's the Lord's hand on Jonah.

That's the Lord's hand on us. To bring us to repentance. We have a national day of prayer for the church.

We don't have a national day of repentance. Why? Because we're privileged. We don't see ourselves that way. We don't have anything to repent of. But we do. This is the church corporately. Not just one individual church. I'm talking about every church, every denomination in our country needs to have a day of repentance. When we say, You know what? That's on us. And we acknowledge it. And we repent of it.

That's when things will change. When the church lives out of brokenness and not privilege. But do we believe it? But do we believe it?

[36 : 41] Jonah reflected on his repentance in verse 7. He says, When my life was fainting away, when I was losing my life, I remembered Yahweh and my prayer came to you in your holy temple.

He still had hope in his sea of brokenness. And so can you. You can still have hope because Yahweh is still your hope. He was standing face in the death. He was standing death in the face. And he says, I'm still going to hope in Yahweh. I still believe. I'm going to look upon your holy hill again. That you're not going to abandon me into this sea of brokenness. You're going to come and rescue me. And he did.

He remembered that Yahweh is a God ready to forgive. Do you believe that? He believed Yahweh was gracious and merciful and slow to anger and abounded in steadfast love.

Do you believe that? In your brokenness. It's easy to say that in privilege. But when you're in your brokenness, when you're in the sea of brokenness, do you still believe it? Will you believe it?

[37 : 43] Jonah repented. He surrendered to the Lord. Surrendered to the call. He says in verse 2, I call out to the Lord out of my distress and you answered me.

And the Lord came. He sent the fish when Jonah repented of his sin. And he will send the same for you. He wants you to repent.

That's what he wants. That's what he wants you to do. Psalm 49, 15 says, But the Lord ransomed my soul from the power of Sheol. He will receive me. And he did that for Jonah.

He rescued Jonah. He rescued Jonah. Jonah says, I went down to the land whose bars are closed behind me forever. Yet you brought up my life from the pit.

Can I get an amen? I hear something. I mean, come on. Some amens. He stared death in the face and God came. This was not Jonah being improved.

[38 : 43] It was Jonah being resurrected. It was an improvement. It was resurrection. His covenant keeping God finally came to him and brought his life up from the pit.

And God would do the same for each and every one of you. God would do the same for the American church. Our hope is still but nothing less. For Jesus' blood and his righteousness. Even in brokenness. Even in the sea of brokenness. And after he prayed. After he thanked God. The fish vomited him up onto the land.

Jonah's hope is the hope of the American church as well. Even in the sea of brokenness. The ones that we're currently in and the ones that may come. He would still be our hope. If we lose all the privileges that we have as American believers.

We are still blessed. We are still blessed. God still loves us. God will still provide for us. Our hope will not fail.

[39 : 49] Still in Jesus. If we lose it all. He is still our God. Still faithful. The God who breaks us also resurrects us.

You gotta know that. Our theology has to be more than just words on a page. He is sovereign over your life. And that means something. Even in brokenness.

So we can repent of our worship. Of our privileges. When that sea of brokenness come do you know what's gonna rise out of the ashes of our brokenness?

In America. It's gonna be a truly prophetic church. A truly prophetic church. One that is broken. One that ministers on the margins of life not from fame and celebrity.

One that embraces the sojourner status. That my true home lies over there. And my crown lies on the other side. Not in this life. A church whose flag is the cross not the red, white, and blue.

[40 : 57] A church who stands in relationships with other people for the sake of justice. A prophetic church who speaks when it needs to speak and silent when it needs to be silent.

A prophetic church that strives for reconciliation with all people. Racial reconciliation, political reconciliation, economical reconciliation, that God has called us to reconcile with one another.

That's a prophetic church where Jesus is truly the center of it all. Because if he's the center of it all, then I can walk and be in relationship with anybody because of the cross.

Because if the cross isn't powerful enough to blame black people and white people and Asian people together, ain't nothing ever gonna do it. Nothing's ever gonna do it.

A prophetic church loves and benefits broken, messy people. We're all messy. We're all broken.

[42 : 01] You're broken. You just hide it. But a prophetic church embraces it. A prophetic church loves people more than property and programs.

That's a prophetic church. A prophetic church repents and owns her sin. That's a prophetic church. A prophetic church preaches the word and lives the word.

A prophetic church takes the gospel to broken places, to their neighbors, to their neighborhoods, to their sports teams. A prophetic church is a prophetic witness of Jesus.

The Republican Party is not that witness. The Democratic Party is not that witness. You are. If you don't do it, God will raise up somebody who will. But he gives you the honor to be his prophetic witness.

It's an honor to do that. To say, I'll represent Christ to a dying and broken world. And I have a message that no one else has that can deliver them from their brokenness, their spiritual brokenness, and that is the gospel.

[43 : 07] And you are the only ones that can take that. This community, this community, this Carl Jones area, is your community to be prophetic witnesses to Jesus.

But will you do it? Because there are a lot of dying people in this area of town, not just over in Lincolnville, it's right here on Carl Jones. Will you be their witness for Christ?

Will you be that prophetic voice for them? Will you be salt and light for them? Out of brokenness. Not privilege.

Out of brokenness. So Southwood, brothers and sisters, hope you still love me.

I love you. What type of church do you want to be? Elders, your deacons, what type of church do you want to be? But more than that for you guys, what type of pastor do you want to be here when he gets here?

[44 : 10] A privileged one or a broken one? Pray for brokenness for the future leader of this church. Pray for him. Pray for his family. Pray for your elders.

Pray for your deacons. Let us pray. Father God, I thank you that even though you throw us into the sea of brokenness, you don't abandon us there.

You never leave us as orphans. You never leave us to fight alone, but you are sovereign over us, Lord. Sovereign over us.

That you will bring us out. You will bring us to repentance. And out of that fire, out of the brokenness, Lord, is to be more prophetic believers in the places that you called us to be. So my prayer for my brothers and sisters of Southwood Presbyterian Church that, Lord, you will remind them of your faithfulness to them in their own brokenness.

Even right now, Lord, as a congregation, if they continue to look for a pastor, I pray for this man that he will be one, Lord, who is broken, who loves you.

[45 : 23] I pray for his family, Lord, that you'll watch over them. I pray you give wisdom to the search committee, Lord, as well. You, Lord, are a faithful God.

And you will be faithful to this little body of Christ here. I pray you draw them closer together in unity.

I pray they will keep short accounts with one another. I pray that they will love one another, value one another, Lord, and that you, Lord, will use this church to be salt and light to this community.

I pray for all these things in your son's wonderful name. Amen. For more information, visit us online at southwood.org.