

A Modern Revival?

Keith Simon | Jonah 3

Sermon Discussion Participant's Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To experience revival by repenting.

Icebreaker: What has celebrating St. Patrick's Day looked like for you?

Discussion:

St. Patrick's Day has become a day to celebrate Irish culture, wear the color green, eat corned beef and cabbage, and drink Shamrock shakes and green beer. But, the historical Patrick was kidnapped and enslaved by the Irish people, escaped, then returned to preach Christ to the Irish people, the people who enslaved him. Revival happened in the country. Jonah was called to preach to a violent and cruel people in Nineveh. After fleeing, God does not allow him to run away, but miraculously brings him back from a supernatural storm, from drowning, from being in the belly of a fish. In this chapter, we hear of an incredible revival.

Read:

[Jonah 3:1-3a](#)

¹Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ²"Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." ³Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh.

1. Jonah is finally going to Nineveh. How would you describe what Jonah's repentance has been like?

Read:

[Jonah 3:3b-4](#)

³...Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. ⁴Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

2. What is implied by the fact that God sent a prophet to the Ninevites to proclaim that judgment is coming?

3. What would make it hard for the Ninevites to repent? What makes it hard for us?

Read:

[Jonah 3:5-10](#)

⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. ⁶ The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, ⁸ but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. ⁹ Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish." ¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

4. How would you describe the Ninevites repentance?

Read:

[Matthew 12:39-41](#)

³⁹ He (Jesus) answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here."

5. Notice how Jesus uses the account of the Ninevites' repentance to rebuke those who were refusing to repent at Jesus' teaching unless he did more to prove himself. How does this challenge us to respond to Jesus' teaching?

Read:

[Luke 3:8](#)

John the Baptist speaking after people have expressed repentance...

THE **crossing** **small groups**

⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

6. What does it look like for us to produce fruit in keeping with repentance?
7. If the Ninevites repented as a community, is there a way we can help each other to repent?

Sharing and Prayer:

Have a time of silent confession, then close by having different people prayerfully read a stanza of this prayer of repentance from Valley of Vision:

I need to repent of my repentance;
I need my tears to be washed;
I have no robe to bring to cover my sins,
no loom to weave my own righteousness;

I am always standing clothed in filthy garments,
and by grace am always receiving change of
raiment,
for thou dost always justify the ungodly;

I am always going into the far country,
and always returning home as a prodigal,
always saying, Father, forgive me,
and thou art always bringing forth
the best robe.

Every morning let me wear it,
every evening return in it,
go out to the day's work in it,
be married in it,
be wound in death in it,
stand before the great white throne in it,
enter heaven in it shining as the sun.

THE **crossing** **small groups**

Grant me never to lose sight of
the exceeding sinfulness of sin,
the exceeding righteousness of salvation,
the exceeding glory of Christ,
the exceeding beauty of holiness,
the exceeding wonder of grace.

Amen.