

**Jonah: The Depths of God's Grace**  
Fall Bible Study 2025  
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**Jonah 3:1-10**  
Session Four

"Grace is as large in renewing us as sin was in defacing." – Stephen Charnock

## Introduction

### 1. Revival

#### a. Signs of a True Revival (Jonathan Edwards, and others)

- **Exaltation of Christ:** A true revival always glorifies Jesus rather than human leaders, emotions, or experiences. People are called to trust him and obey. A false revival places the focus on preachers and personal emotions.
- **Increased Conviction of Sin:** A true revival brings a deep awareness of sin, not merely sorrow for consequences. Thomas Shepard notes that revival begins when people "see themselves as vile" before a holy God. A false revival only leads to personal shame.
- **Transformation of Life:** A true revival always produces lasting moral and spiritual change, an increase in obedience, humility, and renewed devotion. A false revival only amounts to temporary excitement.
- **Love for Scripture and Sound Doctrine:** A true revival always produces a hunger and thirst for Scripture, which leads to a deeper understanding of God's truth. A false revival finds excitement based on unbiblical teaching.
- **Growth in Love for Others:** A true revival leads to brotherly love, unity, and forgiveness, where people are reconciled. A false revival creates more pride, division, and hostility.
- **Expansion of the Kingdom of God:** A true revival leads God's people to take the gospel to others who are lost. A false revival is totally personal, not seeking to help others follow Jesus.

## The Availability of God's Grace (3:1-2)

### 1. A Second Chance

*"Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." (3:1-2)*

- a. **Grace:** God was determined to send Jonah to Nineveh, to preach a message of repentance to the most wicked people on earth. So after Jonah disobeys and suffers, God restores him by his grace, and now gives him a second chance to accomplish His will.
2. **Application:** Because we are living under God's grace through our faith in Christ, God is always willing to give us another chance. He is always willing to forgive us and place us on the right path. This doesn't mean that we won't have to face the consequences of our sins, but it means that God is willing to restore us through His grace.
  - a. **Hebrews 4:16** - *"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*

### The Path to God's Grace (3:3-9)

#### 1. Approaching the City

- a. **Jonah 3:3-4** – *"So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days journey in breadth.*
  - **Travel:** After Jonah heard from the Lord again, he repented from his previous sin and went straight to Nineveh.
  - **Wickedness:** Like many large cities, Nineveh was exceedingly wicked and sinful, and would certainly come under the wrath and judgment of God. However, in one of the greatest miracles in the Bible, God's grace came upon Nineveh and the whole city repented of its sins.

#### 2. Elements Needed for an Outpouring of Grace

##### a. We must be Exposed to the Word of God

*"And [Jonah] called out, 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!'" (3:4b)*

- **Word:** God's Word came to Nineveh through Jonah's preaching. Jonah's mission was to warn the city of God's judgment. This revival didn't begin with Jonah using gimmicks or special events; change was initiated through the preaching of the Word.
- **Application:** Scripture teaches that if we want to experience God's grace, we must first examine our lives according to the Word of God.

**Heb. 4:12-13** - *"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."*

**Rom. 10:17** - *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."*

#### b. We Must Receive the Truth with Humility

*"And the people of Ninevah believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 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, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God." (3:5-8a)*

- **Belief:** As the people heard the Word of God, they believed what God was telling them through Jonah. They believed God to the point that they needed to act.
- **Fast:** In ancient times, "fasting" was a symbol for affliction in the soul or for intense mourning of the heart. Likewise, "sackcloth" was a coarse cloth made of goat's hair, and was the customary dress of the poor and those who were mourning. These people were expressing grief, humility, and sorrow over their sin.
- **Proclamation:** The king was so convinced by God's Word that he made everyone follow him in humility.

#### c. We must Respond with Repentance and Commit to a New Way of Life

*"Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish" (3:8b-9)*

- **Repentance:** The king knew that feeling bad about sin and disobedience wasn't enough to satisfy God. The Lord requires committing to a new way of life, a life that is dead to sin and obedient to him. The king called everyone to turn (repent) from their evil and violence, and trust that God would save them from destruction.
- **Application:** Feeling shame or regret is not a full response for our sins. The only solution is to confess our sins to God, turn away from them in repentance, and commit to a new way of life in Christ.

## The Results of God's Grace

### 1. Forgiveness

*"When God saw what they did, how they turned away from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it." (3:10)*

a. **Relented:** Just as Jonah proclaimed through God's Word, the Lord took away the punishment that the people deserved. It's interesting that God didn't do this because of their works, because there is no evidence of sacrifices or other forms of appeasement. God did it totally because of His grace, which is rooted in the person and work of Christ. God made a promise all the way back in the Garden of Eden that He was going to send a Savior that would crush the head of the serpent, and would reverse the curse of sin and death against man. Based on what Christ would later do, God would have grace and mercy upon those in Nineveh and the rest of the world if they would believe.

- **Romans 10:13** - *"For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved!"*
- **1 John 1:8-9** - *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
- **Psalm 103:11-12** - *"For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us."*

b. **Point:** Receiving the grace of God always results in forgiveness, transformation, and spiritual blessings.