

First Bpt in Dallas

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For Jesus  
Hart

CAN YOU RUN AWAY  
FROM GOD?

TEXT: Matthew 12:38-41;

Matthew 16:4;

Luke 11:29-30;

- Jesus - Mans' Dobi  
- Born 2 mi North of Nazareth  
- Contending of Hara - Aron - mid  
and Israel  
- Side of the g. Mary to South by  
a Jewish Right

INTRODUCTION:

TYPE of Chp

ILL: Many records of fish or whales  
swallowing men

~~one~~ one that I recently read

~~a~~ a man was swallowed

~~for three days~~

Parade Maggie - Aug 15 '81

~~he went crazy afterward!~~



run away....2

✍ Jesus picked out an incredible story to confirm it.

✍ Book of Jonah, four short chapters in the middle of the Bible.

✍ Covers the entire range of human experience:

✍ guilt, disobedience and sin - *Salvation*

*God Love - Mercy - Repentance - Revival*

✍ We have heard many stories and jokes about Jonah being swallowed by a whale

✍ but the Bible says:

✍ "The Lord prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah."

*"Great Sea Creature" / Not so much  
to punish him but to give him transport  
God told Nimrod and Babel to God*



run away....3

~~—~~ he was a custom built creature of the sea, prepared for a unique occasion.

~~—~~ The Book of Jonah is full of the supernatural.

~~—~~ a great fish

~~—~~ a gourd

~~—~~ a worm

~~—~~ an east wind

~~—~~ the repentance of an entire city

~~—~~ Remains an object of faith

~~—~~ not explanation.

~~—~~ I believe it because Jesus confirmed  
it.



run away...4

I. THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO JONAH:

~~so~~ so concerned about what was happening to the fish  
~~we forget~~ we forget what was happening to Jonah

~~Trying to~~ Trying to find the will of God  
~~he~~ he knew it  
~~God~~ God revealed it to him

~~more than~~ more than 2,000 times "the Word of the Lord came"  
*If We Know the Bible - we know God's Will -*

~~God~~ God speaks by nature, conscience, and His Word.



run away....5

- God's Word to Jonah was clear:

- "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me" (Jonah\_1:2).

- You were born for a purpose

- not to satisfy your own wants,  
appetites or lusts

- but to be a co-partner with  
God in redeeming the world.

- Jonah found his orders distasteful.

- There was no glamor in being a preacher of judgment



Nineveh - Built by Nimrod  
Larger than Babylon  
on Banks of Tigris River

1674

run away...6

~~Also~~, he did not want to spare the  
people of Nineveh

~~it~~ it was a city of about ~~a million people~~ *of 120,000 peple.*

~~120,000 children~~ ~ *Perhap Half a Million*

~~But~~ But these Assyrians were perhaps  
the wickedest and the most cruel  
people in the history of the world

~~it~~ it would be impossible for me  
to describe to you from this  
platform how terrible their  
wickedness was -- *God's Mercy Shuts!*

~~Jonah~~ Jonah wanted them destroyed.



run away....7

II. JONAH FLED FROM THE PRESENCE OF  
THE LORD:

~~-~~ Joppa

~~-~~ the Scripture says, "And he found  
a ship going down to Tarshish."

~~-~~ The way of disobedience and sin leads  
downward to guilt, loneliness,  
separation and hell.

~~-~~ Every step leads lower.

~~-~~ Every time you flee from the presence  
of God you're in trouble.



run away...8

ILL: Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden.

ILL: Samson, led to blindness,  
imprisonment and the mill.

ILL: David led to terrible guilt experience,  
death, and judgment on his family.

~~1.~~ Many of you are trying to flee from the Lord.

~~1.~~ ~~2.~~ We flee by travel.

~~3.~~ There is a restlessness today.

~~4.~~ Highways and airports are jammed.

*- Many are fleeing*



run away....9

2. ~~→~~ We flee into lust for things  
~~→~~ ~~people are buying~~  
~~→~~ compulsive shoppers just as  
there are compulsive drinkers.

3. ~~→~~ Flee into obsession with sex  
-- it is both a fad and a passion

4. ~~→~~ We flee into mysticism and occultism

ILL: Saul went to the 'witch of Endor'  
instead of God.

5. ~~→~~ We escape into pleasure  
~~→~~ "She that liveth in pleasure is  
dead while she liveth" (1\_Timothy\_5:6).



run away...10

-- But the Bible says

-- "How shall we escape if we neglect  
so great a salvation?" (Hebrews\_2:3).

-- What direction are you taking?

ILL: Man walking through Western North  
Carolina.

-- Reached signpost

-- one direction pointed to a smooth  
level road

-- but the road pointing to <sup>When he was going</sup> ~~Asheville~~  
was rough and steep.

-- Had a happy thought

-- climbed the signpost

-- changed the markers

-- he never got to <sup>his destination</sup> ~~Asheville~~.



1674  
run away....11

— Many of you are trying to change the markers on the roads of life.

— You want the easy, level, pleasant road

— but it does not lead to God.

ILL: Two roads of life. *.. Broad and Narrow*

*Enter ye in at the Strait gate - for Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to Destruction. And many there be that go thereof - Because Strait is the gate and Narrow is the Way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matt. 7:13-14*

— Tarshish was a great resort

— and Jonah thought he would enjoy himself there more than in Nineveh.



III. JONAH PAID THE FARE THEREOF:

-- "The wages of sin is death."

-- "The way of the transgressor is hard."

-- A series of tragedies came to  
the ship and its crew.

-- God sent a great wind.

-- Sailors afraid.

-- They began to pray to their gods  
and lighten the ship.



run away....13

~~—~~ They wanted to save Jonah

~~--~~ they rowed hard

~~--~~ (showed more tolerance and love  
than many Christians do.)

~~—~~ Your sin and disobedience not only  
affect your life, but the lives of  
others.

ILL: "If I want to take <sup>drugs</sup> ~~heroin~~,  
that's my business."

~~--~~ What about parents?

~~--~~ People you steal from?

~~--~~ Children unborn?



run away...14

ILL: A great medical scientist said  
sometime ago:

— "My intensive research is  
convincing me that marijuana  
will produce extensive brain  
damage when used over a period  
of time.

— He predicts that within 10 years  
the majority of hospitals in  
America are likely to be filled  
with marijuana users suffering  
from damaged brains.

ILL: Some authorities say that as little  
as one experience with marijuana can  
leave psychotic disorders.



run away....15

ILL: Talking to a man in a position  
to know

~~--~~ he said that cancer develops  
8 times faster in a marijuana  
smoker than it does a smoker  
of cigarettes.

ILL: Jane Fonda

~~-- "People think I am way out.  
They are wrong. I used to be  
pro-marijuana, but I am against  
it now. It pacifies people,  
keeps them out of the action."~~



run away....16

ILL: "If I want sex, it's my own  
business."

-- What about the girl you  
get pregnant?

-- The child she bears?

-- The guilt in your heart?

-- Jonah said, "I'll go where I want  
to go, and do what I want to do."

-- That was his right

-- just as long as he was willing to  
pay the consequences.



run away...17

#### IV. JONAH WENT TO SLEEP ON THE BOAT:

-- Sin is like a sedative.

-- Jonah was sleeping the sleep of disobedience.

ILL: Talked to a man sometime ago

*Love in* -- ~~had left his wife~~ *He DePaul has*  
 -- ~~married his secretary~~ *Wife by David*

-- he said, "I feel perfectly at peace about it."

-- This is a false peace

-- it is the peace of disobedience

-- the peace of being away from God

-- It will soon end.



run away....18

- First sin is fun

-- then it is boring

-- then it makes you insensitive.

- There was a time when you were  
sensitive to the Word of God.

-- It pricked your conscience

-- it brought tears to your eyes

-- it made you uncomfortable.

- Now you can turn away without any  
feeling.



run away...19

~~→~~ Jonah's sin affected an entire ship

~~→~~ "...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Exodus\_20:5).

~~→~~ "None of us liveth to himself"  
(Romans\_14:7).

ILL: Famous Bishop

~~→~~ at first his denials were not  
very extreme

~~→~~ later, the Virgin Birth

~~→~~ later, the authority of Scripture

~~→~~ these wrong steps soon led to  
others



run away....20

- ~~—~~ his own liberal church was embarrassed
- ~~—~~ this led to personal tragedies
- ~~—~~ drinking problem
- ~~—~~ joined Alcoholics Anonymous
- ~~—~~ three marriages
- ~~—~~ one son committed suicide
- ~~—~~ drifted into the occult
- ~~—~~ finally left the church
- ~~—~~ died in the Middle East

~~—~~ We must learn to say with David:

- ~~—~~ "Search me, O God, and know my heart:  
try me, and know my thoughts: And see  
if there be any wicked way in me, and  
lead me in the way everlasting"  
(Psalms 139:23,24).



V. AND THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME UNTO  
JONAH THE SECOND TIME:

~~---~~ Do you remember when God began to  
speak to you first?

~~---~~ "Backward, / oh backward,  
Oh time in its flight  
/ And make me a child again  
Just for tonight."

~~---~~ Not many times does God give a  
man a second chance.

ILL: Thief on the cross took his  
one moment.



run away.....22

-- God said

-- "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it, the preaching that I have already told you."

-- Jonah had graduated from "fish university."

ILL: Could have written a bestseller entitled JAWS

-- or, THE INSIDE STORY

-- Nineveh was three days journey  
-- but Jonah made it in one.



run away....23

## VI. THE PEOPLE OF NINEVEH BELIEVED

GOD: Took whole day to walk thru the great city

~~---~~ Greatest revival in history

~~---~~ Jonah's obedience brought salvation  
to an entire city

~~---~~ Even the animals repented

*Van Noy*  
ILL: Wish ~~my~~ dogs would repent!

3:5 *Thy belief - Her word ~~is~~ where we get Anan*  
*To Be firm or sure*

~~---~~ When you begin to live for Christ

~~---~~ the effect will be tremendous not  
only in your own life, but the  
lives of others.



run away....24

ILL: John Wesley's conversion changed  
the direction of the nation.

-- Nineveh

-- labelled for destruction

-- was saved.

-- A man who was marked for judgment  
was used of the Lord.

-- A man's obedience caused God to  
"repent of the evil"

-- God's mind is made up about you.

-- He says, "He that being often reprov-  
ed hardeneth his heart, shall suddenly  
be destroyed, and that without remedy"  
(Proverbs 29:1).



~~--~~ But if you change your mind and  
repent, God will change His mind  
about you.

~~--~~ That is grace and mercy and love.

~~--~~ God is giving you another chance  
tonight.

ILL: Corrie ten Boom

~~--~~ promised God at Ravensbruck  
(and to Betsie, her sister)  
~~--~~ that she would go everywhere  
telling the love of God if  
she was ever released



- Released because of a clerical error
- she was startled when God told her to go to Germany to tell the love of God.

- Psychiatrists now agree that every illness has two diagnoses:

- the scientific, which deals with the physical

- and the spiritual, which deals with the meaning of the disease

- The main cause of neurotic disease is spiritual.



run away...27

ILL: St. Augustine

-- Young radical called a "Manichee"

-- brilliant, famous,

an orator and debater.

-- His mother wept and prayed for him.

-- Mistress.

-- Blasphemous, depraved.

-- Sitting in the garden heard a  
voice:

-- "Take and read."

-- Thought it was a child of a neighbor.

-- Saw a Bible, opened it at random,  
and was converted.



run away...28

~~--~~ Sometime later met mistress on  
the street and didn't speak to her.

~~--~~ "It is I"

~~--~~ he replied

~~--~~ "Yes, but it is no longer I."

~~--~~ old things pass away

BG/sw

8/10/81