The Most Successful Prophet Ever
Lesson 4, Jonah's Success
March 18, 2018

Background

There's a saying in the military: ROAD, which stands for Retired On Active Duty. This refers to the folks who are so close to retirement that they are just going through the motions, biding their time until they are eligible to collect their pension.

Jonah seemed to be just going through the motions as he entered Nineveh. His heart was not in it, so his sermon was just five words in Hebrew. Yet his message produced a positive response from the greatest to the least of those living in Nineveh.

Have you ever had an experience where you reluctantly participated in something, yet God blessed your involvement? How did that affect your attitude towards the experience?

Read Jonah 3, Jonah's Success in Nineveh

1. In 3:2 God again calls Jonah to preach to Nineveh. Why do you think he obeyed this time?

2. Jonah's message is received favorably by the people of the city (verse 5). When does it become obvious to you that Jonah's success is complete?

3. What do you think is the significance of wearing sackcloth?

4. How might Jonah's experience on the ship have foretold his success in Nineveh? For a hint compare 3:9 to 1:16.

5. How was God gracious to the people of Nineveh?

6. How was God gracious to Jonah as he preached to Nineveh?

7. Look back at 2:8. What does that tell you about Jonah's attitude toward the people of Nineveh, and his attitude toward the task God has given him?

8. The original Hebrew says in verse 3 that Nineveh was a great city "to God". Discuss how this statement possibly explains God's interest in sending Jonah to preach to them.

Conclusion

Often our attitude influences our actions. We have a negative viewpoint of a person or group, so we stay away. The opposite is also sometimes true. We force ourselves to do something we think will be unpleasant, and in the end our attitude changes. Share experiences you have had in each of these two cases.