

Reluctant Prophet, Relentless God
Week 5: Lasting Lessons from Nineveh
Matthew 12:38-41

Introduction:

- A. The story of Jonah ends with a cliffhanger. Nothing is said about how Jonah responded to God's question.
- B. It would be 750-800 years later before more would be said about Jonah and the people of Nineveh.
- C. In talking about Nineveh to the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus revealed some important things we need to remember.

Judgment is Coming - "The men of Nineveh will rise up **at the judgment.**"

- A. Jonah was sent to preach about the judgment coming to the people of Nineveh (Jonah 3:4).
- B. Jesus preached a message about judgment coming (Mt. 12:36, 41).
- C. God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world (Acts 17:30-31; Heb. 9:27).

All People Are Accountable to God - "The **men of Nineveh** will rise up at the judgment."

- A. God send Jonah to preach to Nineveh because "*their evil has come up before me*" (Jonah 1:2).
- B. Nineveh did not worship the Lord, but they were still accountable to Him.
- C. Some people believe because they are not a Christian they will not have to answer to God (Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10).

People Can and Need to Repent – "For **they repented** at the preaching of Jonah."

- A. The people of Nineveh listened and responded to Jonah's message (Jonah. 3:10).
- B. When God's Word falls on honest hearts, it's amazing what can happen (Matt. 13:8, 23; Acts 2:42-47).
- C. We need to be receptive to the message of Christ and repent of our sins (Lk. 13:3, 5).

People Have No Excuse - "The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, **something greater than Jonah** is here.

- A. The people of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, a mere man.
- B. Nineveh repented without any promise of God relenting of the promised disaster (Jonah 3:9).
- C. Ignorance is no excuse when it comes to repenting of our sins (Acts 3:17-19; 17:30; Mt. 4:17).

Conclusion:

- A. Although Jonah was a reluctant prophet, He served a relentless God who delights in grace and mercy.
- B. God used Jonah to preach His message and an entire city responded by repenting of their evil.
- C. What will you and I do with the teachings of Jesus? Will we respond to them in repentance?