

**Sermon Discussion Questions & Follow-up Notes**  
**Aug 18, 2024**  
**Rev. Dr. Andrew Keuer**

Sermon Text: Jonah chapter 2 / Title: “Creative Deliverance”

Sunday AM Happenings

**Oh, Jonah!**

What did you enjoy in the kids’ Jonah performance?

Core Observations of the Text & Discussion Questions

**The Prophet Jonah**

\*Cracked Windshields – Have you ever had a crack in your windshield? How is a repaired windshield a fitting metaphor for the book of Jonah and for our own lives?

The book of Jonah causes us to ask three huge questions of our lives:

First, have I acknowledged the biggest ‘crack’ in my windshield – namely, my deep need for God?

- The sailors heading to Tarshish cried out to Jonah’s God, sacrificed to Him, and made vows (see ch 1).
- The nation of Nineveh had one final chance to repent, and they did!
- For them, it was expressed by fasting and wearing the clothing of death (see ch 3).
- What did it take for Jonah to have a repentant heart before God? See online the “Christ of the Abyss” statue!
- How does God respond to repentance in this book?

Second, what is involved in being a messenger of God?

- We assume that being a messenger and prophet of God involves things like:
  - 1) confidently carrying and delivering God’s Word – but Jonah is anything but confident!
  - 2) passionately appealing to people to come to God – but Jonah only speaks judgment!
  - 3) predicting the future – but Jonah’s prediction in chapter 3 doesn’t come to pass!

-Against these assumptions, we see in Jonah that being a messenger of God involves being imperfect and yet healed by God’s grace. When we share our story of healing, God works through us.

Third, what problems is God solving in the world?

- We remember together the marvelous painting of Jonah by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel.
- Michelangelo depicts two images behind Jonah:

1) A Tree – The tree was a symbol of the Assyrian empire. (See idea of “World Tree” in many ancient mythologies.) Jonah had his little tree – his way of wanting the world to run, according to his own opinions and perspectives. But God invited Jonah to be a bird in His true tree – the Kingdom of God.

2) A Whale – The whale was a symbol of the Assyrian god. In using this whale, Jonah learns that God is using all systems and powers of this world to redeem and save.