

RESISTING GOD'S CALL

Jonah 1-4

Introduction: If we believe God is who He says he is and if we believe God wants only the best for us, then why do we resist His call to service? Jonah knew exactly what God wanted yet he resisted. The same holds true for so many of us. God calls, we know what He wants and still we resist and refuse to obey.

I. JONAH HEARD GOD CALL HIM AND HE RAN (1-2)

1. God told Jonah to go to Nineveh.
2. Jonah ran away to Tarshish (Spain).
3. God sent a storm and in the end Jonah was thrown into the sea.
4. A great fish God sent swallowed Jonah and he was in great distress.
5. Jonah, in the belly of the great fish, prayed and agreed to go anywhere God wanted.
6. Jonah was spared and once on land again, he went to Nineveh. He finally obeyed God.

II. WHY ARE WE LIKE JONAH AND ALSO RESIST OBEYING GOD'S CALL? (1 - 2)

1. **We are afraid.** We don't want to be seen or we're not as good as we ought to be, we're incapable of the assignment, or we're not efficient, somebody could do better.
 - Jonah was afraid of success. He didn't want God to save Nineveh.
 - We want God to tell us everything, give us a detailed map before we take a step.
 - We just are not sure about what God is wanting, which shows a lack of trust in God.
 - Ever wonder how much you have missed because you didn't do what God wanted you to?
2. **Then there's old fashioned selfishness.** (3 - 4) Jonah preached then sat down outside the city.
 - God's will doesn't fit into our plans.
 - Jonah had his own ideas about Nineveh and he had rather see Nineveh perish than to live.
 - We resist obeying God because we don't want God controlling our lives. We're selfish!
 - We don't obey God because we are afraid of His plans. We want to things our way.
 - However, as Christians, we have committed ourselves to God's divine authority. Period!

III. HOW DO WE RESIST OBEYING GOD'S CALL?

1. **We argue with God.**
 - We can debate with God better than politicians do at a political debate.
2. **We substitute God's plan with our own.**
 - Sometimes we don't argue and don't exactly say "no."
 - Saul made a substitution when he didn't obey God and destroy totally the Amalakites and

all their animals.

- We think that if we work hard enough, run fast enough, do all kinds of projects for God, God will finally leave us alone and let us do our own thing.
- Take a look at yourself - are you walking in obedience to God this very moment? Or have you brought in your "substitute?"
- You will never please God until you follow His instructions **to the letter!**
- Partial obedience is still disobedience.

3. We deny God's call altogether.

- We ask the advice of others, what would you do if you were me?
- God is not dealing with them..He's dealing with YOU. It's not their place to advise and they don't begin to know what is going on between you and God in the first place.
- If God calls you for something, fall to your knees! What God will give you on your knees is far safer than what you'd get standing up!

4. We simply run away from God.

- Jonah ran away.
- Jonah's conscience wouldn't let him rest. He was miserable.
- We also run away. We change churches or stop going altogether.
- Do you have any feelings of guilt? Have you been disobedient to God's call? Has your conscience been crying "disobedient!" "Disobedient!?"

CONCLUSION:

1. What does it cost you to disobey God's call in your life?
 - Peace! A disobedient Christian cannot have peace with God.
 - Lost joy. There is no joy when a Christian is out of fellowship with God.
 - Regret. The disobedient, unrepentant Christian knows that there will be a day of accounting.
2. What has it already cost you not to be obedient to God's call?
3. Forgiveness can come but all those things God wanted you to do but you refused to obey, will be lost forever.
4. Christian, don't be another Jonah!
5. Ever wonder what the Church would be like if **every** Christian was obedient to God's call?