

## RELATING TO A HOLY YET LOVING GOD

2/28/10

How can you and I relate to a holy God?

How can we relate to a God who hates what we do and how we live?

Make no mistake about it, God hates sin.

**Proverbs 6:16-19** There are six things which *the LORD hates*, Yes, seven which *are an abomination to Him*:<sup>17</sup> Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood,<sup>18</sup> A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil,<sup>19</sup> A false witness *who* utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.

**Proverbs 8:13** . . . Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, *I hate*.

**Zechariah 8:17** 'Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all *these are what I hate*,' declares the LORD."

**Malachi 2:16** "For *I hate divorce*," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," . . .

How do you and I as sinners relate to a God who hates the things that we have done?

How can we relate to a God who hates sin when we are sinners?

The Bible teaches that God is both a God of wrath and a God of mercy - A God of judgment and a God of compassion.

**1 Samuel 2:8** "He raises the poor from the dust, He lifts the needy from the ash heap . . .

**Psalms 12:5** "Because of the devastation of the afflicted, because of the groaning of the needy, Now I will arise," says the LORD; "I will set him in the safety for which he longs."

**Psalms 35:10** . . . "LORD, who is like You, Who delivers the afflicted from him who is too strong for him, And the afflicted and the needy from him who robs him?"

In Jonah we see both the power of God and the compassion of God.

In Jonah we see the holiness of God and the heart of God come together.

## 1. God hates and judges sin. Jonah 1

**1-2** Jonah was instructed by God to go Ninveveh, the capitol of the Assyrian Empire and proclaim God's coming judgment against that wicked nation.

Nineveh was located near what is now the area of Mosul, Iraq.

It is 500 miles northeast of Israel (About 220 miles north of Bagdad)

It had walls 100 feet high and wide enough for 3 chariots abreast

Nineveh had 1500 towers 200 feet high

It was 8 miles around the inner walls and 60 miles around surrounding suburbs

Assyria was one of the most cruel and brutal empires of all time.

Compared to the Nazi's or Khmer Rouge of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

**3** Jonah chose to rebel against God and go 2000 miles west across the Mediterranean Sea to Tarshish (southern Spain)

**4-17** God judges Jonah's sin.

**9, 14-16** Even though Jonah says that he fears God, the unsaved sailors show more reverence for God than Jonah does.

These pagan sailors had more compassion on Jonah than Jonah had for the people of Nineveh

**17** Fish Stories- Notebook

## 2. God relents when His people repent. Jonah 2

**1-6** Jonah's repentance begins with a cry for help

**7-9** Jonah's repentance is seen in a change of heart.

Jonah's repentance includes a change of attitude and behavior toward God.

**10** Our God is a God of judgment, but He is also a God who graciously relents when people genuinely repent.

**Proverbs 28:13** He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.

**1 John 1:9**

**3. God is serious about getting His message to lost people.  
Jonah 3**

**1-3** God again instructs Jonah to go to Nineveh.

**4** But notice that Jonah doesn't water the message down in order to get results.

The message is not about health, wealth, and happiness.

It's not about finding personal fulfillment and success in life.

It is about sin and judgment and ultimately heaven and hell.

**5-9** The people of Nineveh genuinely repented

**5a** They believed

**5b-8a** They humbled themselves before God

**8b** They prayed

**8c** They turned from their evil ways

**9** They recognized their need for God's mercy.

**10** When people repent God relents

God specializes in second chances for those who are genuinely repentant.

The sailors, Jonah, and the wicked Ninevites were all spared when they came to God in genuine repentance.

God is a God of second chances.

**Jeremiah 18:7** "At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy *it*; <sup>8</sup> if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.

Because God is a God of second chances, you and I have hope.

4. God is sovereign over His creation. 4:1-8 cf 1:4, 7, 17; 2:10

God is sovereign over the events in your life.

5. God is a God of compassion. Jonah 4:9-11

God cares about the wicked and unsaved.

God cared about the sailors, the Ninevites, and Jonah.

God cares about you.

God is still reaching out to you forgiven in spite of your past.

No matter how low you have gone you can still cry out to God.

**4:11** is the climax of the entire book.

**Isaiah 57:15** For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell *on* a high and holy place, And *also* with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.

6. We, like Jonah, are commissioned to lovingly reach a doomed people.

**Romans 10:14-15** How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a

preacher? <sup>15</sup> How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"

7. We, like Jonah, carry a message of both judgment and love.

a. We must communicate a message of God's judgment to a condemned people.

People are destined for God's judgment unless they are warned and willing to repent and receive Christ.

b. But we also carry a message of God's love and forgiveness.

**John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

God's righteousness and love come together in Jesus.

**John 3:18** "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**John 3:36** "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

### Responsive Reading:

**Psalm 85:2-10** You forgave the iniquity of Your people; You covered all their sin. Selah.

<sup>3</sup> You withdrew all Your fury; You turned away from Your burning anger.

<sup>4</sup> Restore us, O God of our salvation, And cause Your indignation toward us to cease.

<sup>5</sup> Will You be angry with us forever? Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

<sup>6</sup> Will You not Yourself revive us again, That Your people may rejoice in You?

<sup>7</sup> Show us Your lovingkindness, O LORD, And grant us Your salvation.

<sup>8</sup> I will hear what God the LORD will say; For He will speak peace to His people, to His godly ones; But let them not turn back to folly.

<sup>9</sup> Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land.

<sup>10</sup> Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.