MAN OVERBOARD! – Part 4

Jonah Series 2006 September 27

Review (Chapters 1&2)

- God told Jonah to prophesy against Nineveh
- Jonah went in the opposite direction
 - o Jonah's disobedience is typical of ours (Isa 53:6; Rom 3:23)
- God sentenced Jonah to death cast overboard into a raging sea
 - o the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23)
- Jonah cries out to God who spares him from death
 - God is both just and merciful (Eph 2:4)
- Jonah acknowledges God as his Saviour and vows to serve Him
 - o discipline produces righteousness in those who have been trained by it (Heb 12:11)

The Great Revival (Chapter 3)

- God commands Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach His word (1,2)
- Jonah obeys (3)
- Jonah tells the Ninevites that God will destroy their city in 40 days (4)
- the Ninevites and their king miraculously believe the message (5-9)
 - o they humble themselves (fasted, wore sackcloth, sat in ashes)
 - o they cry out to God for mercy
 - o they turn from their evil and violence
- God shows them mercy He does not destroy the city (10)

Notes

- although the Ninevites of Jonah's time repented and were spared, the next generations of Ninevites were even more wicked
 - Nahum prophesied against them and God destroyed Nineveh at the hands of the Babylonians in 612 BC
- note similarities in God's dealings with both Jonah and Nineveh
 - o both were guilty of sin and rebellion against God
 - o both were put under a death sentence by God
 - o by cried out to God in the face of imminent death
 - o both had a "change of heart"
 - o both received mercy from God and were spared from death

Discussion Questions

1. In speaking to the church at Corinth, Paul stated (on behalf of himself and Timothy), "...death is working in us, but life in you" (2 Cor 4:12). What did he mean? How does this principle apply to Jonah and the Ninevites? How does it apply to you and others?

2. Does God "change His mind"? Why did God spare the Ninevites from the destruction He threatened them with? Is this an isolated incident (with respect to God's behaviour), or do we see this pattern of His behaviour elsewhere in history?