

TAKING PREACHING SERIOUSLY

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.”

Jonah 3:4, 5

Jonah was, to say the least, a very reluctant preacher. He was not in favor of taking the Gospel to Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrians. In the belly of the whale, Jonah changed his mind about the will of God and then took God’s message to the great city. After hearing the preaching of Jonah, the people of Nineveh “believed God, and proclaimed a fast.” They took seriously the message from the man of God.

What a testimony of the power of the Word of God! The preacher, although he finally agreed to go to Nineveh, still disagreed with God about showing mercy to the people of Nineveh. These people were enemies to God’s people, and Jonah certainly did not want to see them blessed. However, despite the struggles the prophet was going through, God’s Word was powerful to the hearts of the hearers. We should never underestimate the life-changing power of the Word of God.

There is also something to be said about the way the people responded to the preaching of God’s Word. These pagan people of Nineveh believed God and repented. They had no Christian background or training and were accustomed to worshipping a plurality of gods, rather than the true and living God. In spite of this, they did not

question nor debate about the message; they received the truth and responded properly to it. How different this is from the way we sometimes see the Word of God treated. Even professing believers spend great energy trying to disprove some portion of Scripture rather than simply believing what the Bible says.

If we are going to see God's power at work in genuine revival, we must get serious about obeying the Word of God. Jonah's experience reminds us of the vital role of preaching in God's design to bring about change in the hearts of individuals, and even to influence cities. It is through the preaching of truth that God communicates with those He is reaching out to. May we always hold in high regard the preaching of the Word of God. And when the truth is presented to us from the pages of Scripture, like the citizens of Nineveh, let us believe God.

Let's Pray

Dear heavenly father, thank you for your word today. I pray that this devotional has blessed the person reading this and that the Holy Spirit will continue to speak to his or her heart. I ask this in Jesus name. Amen