

COMMISSIONED Prt 2

Jonah 1:1 And the Word of Jehovah came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their evil has come up before Me. 3 But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of Jehovah. And he went down to Joppa. And he found a ship going to Tarshish. And he gave its fare, and went down into it, in order to go with them to Tarshish, away from the sight of Jehovah.

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. 25 He who loves his life shall lose it. And he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. 26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also My servant shall be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. 27 And My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause I came to this hour.

If you are joining us for the first time, you find us doing part 2 of a series titled **COMMISSIONED**.

Without going into too much detail, last week we learnt 5 important aspects regarding the great commission:

1. The commission is God's idea

2. Every Bible believer has been commissioned

3. The commission is urgent

4. The commission has a destination

5. The commission is about life and death

- This morning, I want to talk to you on the subject matter **A GENERATION ON THE RUN**.
- We have two situations in the 2 portions of scriptures we read this morning, having the same context.
- On one hand, we have the word of the Lord that came to Jonah, asking him to go to the great city of Nineveh and warn it against the pending judgement from the Lord.
- On the other hand, we have the Lord Jesus having been sent down to earth to die for the sinners of the world, a world that was under judgement from the Lord.
- Same set of circumstances but different responses – lets look at the responses a little bit closely:

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Jonah 1:3 But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of Jehovah. And he went down to Joppa.

John 12: 27 And My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause I came to this hour.

- Today, you and I are on a cross road, we are at a place where we need to respond and make a decision regarding what God has called us to do.
- Jonah and the Lord Jesus faced a telling moment in which an entire generation's future was in their hands.
- Unless we have a revelation of the weight of the responsibility we have on our shoulders, we are likely not to give much thought on the implications of our choices.
- Let's start with Jonah – Jonah is a picture of our generation today. Just like Jonah, today we have a generation that is on the run. Many people are on the run currently, either in pursuit of the next better thing or running away from the God of heaven.
- Instead of going to Nineveh, Jonah chose to run for his dear life.
- Jonah did not appreciate the gravity of the matter and as a result he chose to run away from God's call over his life.
- Just think with me for a moment regarding Jonah's response to God's call – why did Jonah run away, did he think he could really run away from the maker of the heavens and the earth.
- If we can understand what caused Jonah to run away, it can help us to understand why we have a generation on the run today.
- Jonah was uncomfortable with being in a place that reminds him of God's call on his life – he surely didn't think he could escape from God but thought he could be in a place where God could leave alone.
 - Many people are uncomfortable with the truth such that they avoid anything that reminds them of what God is asking of them.
 - Many believers run away from Godly company, from prayer, from a discipleship set up.
 - Many believers know what they should do but simply choose not to do it – a generation on the run.

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- Just like Jonah, many people do not trust themselves in the presence of the Lord – when God calls them into private prayer, they would rather immerse themselves in business.
- Jonah rose immediately, not to obey God but to disobey Him – when He calls you to quit a habit, you force yourself to further indulge, when He calls you to give to the church, you find a better need to meet in your life.
- Jonah was afraid of rejection – he knew that Nineveh was hostile to the things of God. He knew that Nineveh lacked nothing and by implication, they felt that they didn't need any saving.
- Jonah was overcome by ignorance and a lack of confidence
 - One of the major hindrances in sharing the good news of the gospel is that we don't know how to do it and in so doing we have no confidence.
 - But Jonah, who told you that you need to be a theologian to tell someone about Jesus.
 - A simple matter of telling people about a savior has been complicated. It is as easy as telling people the self help remedies of treating COVID. I saw many people becoming experts in self help remedies and it was surprising how open people were to receiving the help. What was the reason? People did not want to die and did not want their loved ones to die prematurely.
- Jonah was absorbed in creating a holy huddle for the Jews
 - This was in Old Testament times and it was never heard of, for God to reach out to a non-Jewish people like He did for Nineveh.
 - Jonah was too much into his people and was not comfortable with pagans coming to the light.
 - Many believers are into their small church set up; they are into their holy huddle such that they cannot see themselves growing beyond the five of them.
 - Jonah had prejudices against the people of Nineveh and this is a picture of many believers, who find it difficult to minister to people who look different from them.
- The big question is this; how do you get this generation to stop running and take its place in history. How did Jesus embrace His call?
- The answer is found in this small phrase
- *John 12: 27 And My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause I came to this hour.*

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- As opposed to Jonah, when the crunch time came, Jesus reckoned that life was bigger than His personal comfort, His personal preference, His personal wants and ambitions.
- His soul was troubled, He was stressed to the point of His sweat dropping like blood, the death on the cross was the worst that was designed for the worst of criminals.
- Jesus was aware that He was going to be rejected by His own but He was aware that there was no other option to bring this to the end.
- He had a choice to call a thousand legions but He knew it was for this reason that He came.
Matthew 26: 52 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him. "For all who draw the sword will die by the sword. 53 Are you not aware that I can call on My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"
- You and I have a choice to live our lives like Jonah did of being on the run or to live it like Jesus did of saying "*But for this cause I came to this hour*".
- How was Jesus able to obey the Father?
- Jesus understood the times - *John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.*
 - You only have a moment to fulfill what God has called you to do – time and opportunity happens to all. It is time that we redeem the time, for the days are evil.
 - You do not have all the time in the world to fulfill your calling here on earth – this is the time, if not now when and if not you then who?
 - In another place, Jesus said
John 9: 4 While it is daytime, we must do the works of Him who sent Me. Night is coming, when no one can work.
- Jesus understood that a great harvest requires personal sacrifices - *John 12: 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.*
 - As long as Jesus was alive, the harvest was not going to come about – the salvation of many required that He sacrificed Himself.
 - The kingdom of God is built of shoulders of martyrs – people who are prepared to die to self, people who lay down their lives for the good of the many.
- Jesus was doing it for the audience of one (the Father) – *John 12:26 If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.*
 - Jesus promised His disciples of the Father's honour because that was what drove Him to sacrifice His own life.

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- No one can dishonor what God has honored – the honor of God over your life will attract all other honor.
- Honor has to do with glory - *John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.*
- In another place Jesus asked the Father to honor Him with the honor He had before *John 17: 4 I have glorified You on earth by accomplishing the work You gave Me to do. 5And now, Father, glorify Me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world existed.*