

“His Correction Proves His Love”

(The Proving Of God’s Love Part 4)

Heb. 12:5-11 / Jonah’s Attitude Adjustment = Jonah 2:1-10

This is a story that teaches how God proves His love for Jonah. No city or people were less deserving of God’s favor than the people of Nineveh, Assyria’s capitol. God wanted to save the city of NINEVEH. But, Jonah hated the Assyrians and wanted God to send vengeance not mercy!

This story is a story of correction that is bathed in mercy and grace. “Chastening” = *to teach; educate or to correct – implying disciplinary correction*. The Bible makes it crystal clear that God trains and corrects each and every person who becomes His child.

“*Chastening is child training.*” It’s God training us in His ways and correcting us when we’re not behaving. Chastening = 2 sided coin: It’s discipline = teaching a kid what’s wrong about something, that brings about a right understanding. It’s corrective action = the events that straighten us up; when we are wrong.

All along, Jonah was in the corrective care and love of God. God was showing and proving His merciful love! Let’s see how Jonah experience God’s Corrective Love...

I. V. 1 – The Place of Correction: Where Jonah Prayed

A. In A Fish’s Belly – “Out of the fish’s belly” Notice: God did not use a Shark – he would have eaten him alive. God chose a Whale = Jesus said in **Matthew 12:40** “*For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly;*”

1. A Whale will surface for air – Jonah needed air. A Whale is pretty big – Jonah needed protection
2. What living marine mammal is going to mess with a Whale? Like a 2-ton Bear...he sleeps anywhere he wants to!
 - a. Hey, let’s hear it for the whale. Put yourselves in his poor shoes for a minute! Swimming around the Mediterranean Sea, doing his normal thing...chasing baitfish, coming up for air, cruising his turf. Then, he spies a tasty-looking wiggle-worm and gulps it down...but this ain’t no ordinary snack! He ends up with a bellyful of “bitter-preacher.” Talk about indigestion! That whale went for 3 days and nights with a bellyache. Picture him, **V.3** = thrashing/ skimming the surface; **V.5** = scooping up some seaweeds for an antacid; **V.6** = speed-diving to the bottom; and finally the Lord told him **V.10** = to puke up this unwanted cargo onto the beach!

B. V. 2 – In The Presence Of God – “...and He heard me...” **Jeremiah 3:22** “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God.”

Two great lessons here:

1. God hears us anywhere – Even in great suffering we can go to God in prayer. Spurgeon said, “*Prayer can reach the ear of God from the depths of the sea.*”
2. It is far better to pray in normal surroundings... than to wait until we are in abnormal surroundings.

II. V. 2 – The Purpose of Correction: Why Jonah Prayed “...I cried by reason (because) of my affliction...” or suffering.

A. Jonah had been “dodging” his prayer life. He’d been too busy to pray – he had been a busy boy...

1. Fleeing from God’s Will
2. Neglecting his spiritual responsibilities – he was the Prophet of God to the heathen
3. Sleeping during the storm... so God sent a little loving, squeezing, “turn-the-heat-up” kind of chastening. Jonah didn’t care about praying until he got into trouble!

B. We find reasons to “dodge” praying, too – until we find ourselves in trouble

1. Teen = when we are dumped by a dating friend, major test is coming, desperate need of a job
2. Spouse = attorney calls, divorce papers are filed; or a doctor has used the C word
3. Parent = child is sick, injured, turns and goes against God and them
4. Finances = checkbook is empty, lose our job

III. V.7 – The Plan of Correction: To get Jonah to come to the end of himself

A. V. 7 – God Had Gotten His Undivided Attention:

1. No more running, no more spiritual deafness!
2. Like the prodigal son – God used some pigs to get his attention. **Luke 15:17** “And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!”

B. V. 8 – God Had Gotten Rid Of His Undivided Heart:

1. Jonah was tired of the idols in his life – Jonah was ready for a change of heart “*They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.*”
2. Observe Lying vanities = Those that give their heart to anything other than God’s Will, or permit themselves to be influenced with foolish ways.
3. Forsake their own mercy = to turn away the opportunity for the scourging to go away. Our loving God is the source of all mercy.

C. V. 9 – God Had Gotten His Undivided Loyalty:

1. “*I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving*” = **Repentance**, worship, and gratitude!
2. “*I will pay that I vowed*” = **Resolve**: going out to obey God’s plan for him
3. “*Salvation is of the Lord*” = **Revival**: sharing the Gospel to all that he meets!

Hebrews 12:11 “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”