



THE RELENTLESS LOVE OF GOD



FROM
LOUIS
HEART
TO
YOURS

Regardless of whether people are believers or unbelievers, everyone knows the story of Jonah. Some refer to it as a story about a fish, but in reality, this book is all about the relentless love of God.

Dear Friends,

I believe God wants to use this narrative to shift our hearts for the greater purposes of restoration and recovery. It is vital to allow God to refocus us regarding His heart for the lost and what He wants to do in the world in this challenging season.

Right from the beginning, in the book of Genesis, we read how God set the nation of Israel apart to be a peculiar covenant people. A people that He loved and cared for; a people of promise and blessing which would never remain with them but would flow through them as God's people. What a privilege it is to know that we are in covenant with Almighty God, who cares for and loves us but also to know that His intention was always that His blessing would never stop with us but would flow through us.

We see in the book of Jonah that God's people had lost their focus. They became self-focused and self-centered and forgot that God had called them to be a blessing to other nations.

When God called Jonah, the Bible says that he ran from the presence of God and ran in the opposite direction to what God intended for His life.

In my preparation, I realized that Jonah is not some pagan but a prophet called by God and that whether I like it or not, there are some of Jonah's attributes in me too. I also realized that Nineveh is not just some old testament city but that there is some of "Nineveh" right here where I live. God is not here to restore and recover us just for our own sake but also for the benefit of others.

There is a call on our lives to fulfill the purposes of God, to advance His Kingdom and to see lives being changed as His ministers of reconciliation.

I want to highlight four points in the story -

- **The call of God**
- **The all-inclusive love of God**
- **The persistent grace of God**
- **The phenomenal mercy of God**

THE CALL OF GOD:

There are several reasons why we might run from God’s call on our lives; these include rebellion, self-righteousness, lack of trust, fear, or lack of vision. Sometimes we resist the call of God or where God wants to take us because we fear what might happen to us. We resist going to our “Nineveh” because it’s so confrontational and represents everything we despise in the world. God wants us to be a blessing to others but wants to deal with the fear factor in our lives. We need to know that we will never be satisfied or happy until we say YES to the call of God in our lives.

THE ALL-INCLUSIVE LOVE OF GOD:

We need to understand that God loves ALL people. His love is not just for us but for the whole world. God allows us to go through situations of discomfort and delay to refocus us, causing us to re-evaluate what life is all about, and that is about loving and serving people in a Kingdom context.

THE PERSISTENT GRACE OF GOD:

God is not just persistent in His grace towards Jonah but also to those traveling with him and to the people of Nineveh. As Jonah finds himself in a place of difficulty and uncertainty, instead of asking God what He is saying, he falls asleep in the stern of the ship, away from the problem and challenges onboard. Sleep can represent ignorance, being oblivious of what is happening around us, or it can speak of being ill-informed, which causes us to disengage from what is happening around us. As the church today, we cannot afford to be “asleep” – be ignorant, oblivious or run from our involvement with what is happening in the world today. God wants to assure us that even when we've missed it, He loves us and the world enough to pursue us until we fulfill His Kingdom purpose. We can rest assured that despite our lack of faithfulness, God’s grace will never fail us.

THE PHENOMENAL MERCY OF GOD:

Even when we make mistakes, sin, rebel or run away from God, He is always faithful to forgive us and reassign us to our Kingdom mission. God demonstrated His mercy despite Jonah’s initial unwillingness to go, by saving their lives, and sparing Nineveh from destruction.

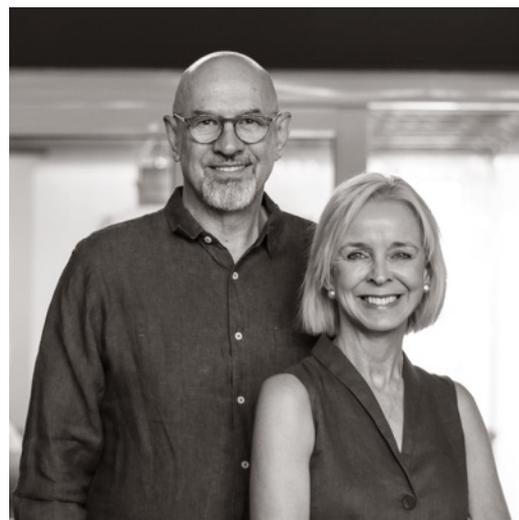
What can we learn from Jonah’s life? We need to ask ourselves if there is an unwillingness to respond to the call of God when it cuts across our preferences and comfort zone?

- When we align with the call of God on our lives, He reveals His heart for our lives, families and community.
- When we align with His mind, He reveals His strategy and gives us insight into what He has planned.
- When we submit to and obey Father’s voice, we experience radical results in His Kingdom.

May God refocus us in this season to reconsider what He is calling us to, so we can extend His grace and relentless love by bringing hope to a hurting world.

Much Love

Louis & Edna



LOUIS & EDNA
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HELPING TO HEAL A WORLD IN MOURNING

When Jesus outlined His manifesto for His Kingdom, in what we refer to as the Sermon on the Mount, he outlined qualities a Kingdom person would need: Poor in spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaker and persecuted for righteousness sake. These were preceded with the word Blessed (Makarios).

No time in this clip to explain the Greek word Makarios, except to say that there is no word in English to translate it. It takes sentences as you will see if you read Matthew 5: 3-10 in the Amplified Bible. It is a positional place where we can dwell where everything we would ever need is already provided. The Greeks called the Island of Cyprus "Makarios" because they believed if you lived there you would never need to leave its shores for anything. Among these qualities was the awareness that mourning would be a part of life and we could do this from a Makarios place.

For us that place is the Fathers Heart. I was in a meeting recently where around 200, mainly leaders, had gathered. During the ministry time people were asked to stand if they had lost an immediate family member to death in the last 2 years; approximately half the people stood. I have seen similar scenes many times in the last few weeks as I have been asked to minister afresh on the Father's heart. So much sadness, so much grief, so many tears but yet so much healing and hope as people find their Makarios place afresh in the Fathers heart. Because in this place Jesus said, "We shall be comforted".

Remember Jesus said, "Blessed (Makarios) are they who mourn". The Bible also says we should weep with one another and Jesus himself said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to heal the broken hearted". The world and all creation are hurting and grieving waiting for the Makarios Sons of the Kingdom!

Let us commit ourselves to be the person Jesus wants us to be, praying and believing to bring comfort and healing to those who mourn.

Tony & Marilyn



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