

Jonah's -Second Chance (Jonah 3:1)

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I. Introduction

A. No passage in the- Bible illustrates so perfectly and tenderly the way God deals with his people.

1. The text says the Lord came to Jonah " a second time"
2. God always comes the second time. John Newton in a line in one of his hymns put it this way; A second look He gave which
said, I freely all forgive.
3. Our God is the God of the- second look- He doesn't hold grudges.

B. I suspect after Jonah was vomited out on the shore he felt that his place of usefulness was over.

1. He probably felt that God was done with him.
2. It is a painful matter when we realize we have grieved the Lord and that we have brought disgrace on His name.
3. That's why the apostle Paul could say "I keep my body under subjection lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor 9:27)

C. Would God ever use him again? He had defied God and run in the opposite direction to God's choosing.

1. God did not ever have to use him again. God would have been justified in never having returned to Jonah.
2. There is nothing more painful than once having been used of God then having the feeling because of some sin God is finished with you.
3. Keep in mind God is not obligated to come the second time.
4. Jonah knew that - but the God of all grace did come- again the second time.

D. It should give us all comfort to know that the very best of God's servants have sinned and made foolish choices but that God gave them a second chance.

1. Look at Abraham trying to pass off his wife as his sister.
2. But God came to Abraham a second time.

3. What about Jacob the man who deceived and lied to his own father.
4. There is David and Peter and a host of others who failed the Lord and yet were given another opportunity.
5. God in grace gave each of these men a second chance even though He was not obligated to do so.

II. God always Comes The Second Time!

A. When did He come the first time? We all should know that.

1. He came the first time to man in the garden of Eden when He gave both a promise and a prohibition. (Gen 2:16-17)
2. After man's fall God came the second time with the promise of the coming of Jesus. (Gen 3:15)
3. Yes, the Lord came a second time - He always comes a second time.

B. Do you feel a sense of failure, possibly even the fact that God is done with you?

1. Aren't you glad He comes a second time. Samson is such a graphic illustration of this principle.
2. Don't give up my friend - don't quit, don't even trust your emotions for they may whisper that God has deserted you.
3. But just like Samson the second chance can produce a greater victory, a greater harvest than even our initial call.

III. What About It Being God's "Second Best"

A. We have all interpreted that phrase a second time as being God's second best.

- I. We sometimes feel if we had only obeyed the Lord fully the first time we would be in the perfect will of God.
2. Preachers sometimes have preached sermons on missing God's best. It's as if God's perfect will is frustrated for my life.
3. But my friend, we have all missed that because God's first best was in the garden of Eden. Since the fall everything we do and have experienced is God's second best.
4. The best then is His second best and that is good enough, for that is all we can ever have.

B. This leads me to the most comforting thought of all in this connection.

1. When God comes the second time, it's always on time and it is the right time.
2. You may feel guilty that you wasted so much time.
3. You may be depressed that you could have sinned so mightily against the Lord.
4. You may wonder why God didn't come sooner.
5. Remember what Mary said at the tomb of Lazarus - Lord if you had been here my brother wouldn't have died.
6. But my friend when He did come it was soon enough.

IV. The God of the Second Look

A. Remember Newton's hymn - A second look He gave which said, I freely all forgive.

1. Away then with doubting and depression!
2. Let's quit murmuring about the past. Let's quit worrying about wasted years.
3. We can all think of wasted years and opportunities.
4. God doesn't want us striving over spilt milk. We can't retrieve it, we must go on.

B. Someone may ask - How can I be sure He has come to me again?

1. Do you believe that God is King and that He is Sovereign.
2. Do you agree that His way is right and that you want to follow in that way? If so my friend, He has come to you a second time.
3. Yes, even though you have been rebellious and disobedient.
4. What about His second best? Remember even though it is second it is still His best.
5. His best is always good enough. Paul says all things work together for good to those who love God.
6. His good is good enough and the second time is soon enough.

C. He is coming to you this morning with another opportunity to make good.

1. Seize it now! Don't waste any more time.
2. Today is the day of salvation - now is the accepted time