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**DAILY  
BIBLE  
STUDY**



CEDARCREEKCHURCH

# Nineveh Will Be Destroyed! – Nah, I’m Good

August 22, 2022

In the third week of our *Nah, I’m Good* series, we find Jonah obeying God’s original command. Maybe it’s just me, but doesn’t he remind you of when someone (your kids, spouse, coworkers, etc.) finally does what you’ve been asking them to do for the past ... minutes, hours, days, weeks!?

## **Jonah 3:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> *This time Jonah obeyed the Lord’s command and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to see it all. <sup>4</sup> On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: “Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!”*

What an inspiring message! No mention of what may have caused this announcement. No mention of who is responsible for it. No mention of what might be done to prevent it from happening. Jonah doesn’t demonstrate one shred of compassion—just an attitude, like, “OK, I’ve done it. Now are you happy?”

But God can use even that!

## **Jonah 3:5**

*The people of Nineveh believed God’s message, and from the greatest to the least, they declared a fast and put on burlap to show their sorrow.*

How did they even know it was from God? How did they know which god it was from? I don’t know, but they did. From the greatest to the least, God’s message traveled throughout that entire city. This is the thing I love about God’s economy. He takes even the slightest, most reluctant effort and blows it up big enough to accomplish his purpose! Even when the recipients are people we don’t like or care if we ever see in heaven.

## **Jonah 3:6, 7, 9**

<sup>6</sup> *When the king of Nineveh heard what Jonah was saying, he stepped down from his throne and took off his royal robes. He dressed himself in burlap and sat on a heap of ashes. <sup>7</sup> Then the king and his nobles sent this decree throughout the city:*

<sup>9</sup> *“Who can tell? Perhaps even yet God will change his mind and hold back his fierce anger from destroying us.”*

Why did the king and the inhabitants of the city of Nineveh trust Jonah’s message? Why did they call out to God in sackcloth and ashes? Only because God in his mercy and sovereignty desired that they be saved.

## **2 Peter 3:9**

*The Lord isn’t really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.*

This gives me such confidence when I share the gospel with someone! I can’t mess it up! If God in his mercy has called this person to himself, I just have to say what God gives me to say. He is responsible for the outcome! But I, like Jonah, have to show up and be obedient to what God has asked me to do. I have to trust that God has orchestrated the circumstances and set the stage so he can use whatever I show up with! I have to trust that God is going to use me in this turnaround!

### **Questions:**

Have you ever shared your faith with someone? Do you know how? Do you have someone you could practice on?

### **Next Steps:**

If you wrote out your “belly in the beast” story from last week, practice it on your friends. Check out [“What is the Romans Road to Salvation”](#) from [gotquestions.org](#). Write out the referenced scriptures. Memorize them and/or flag them in your Bible. Start praying that God gives you an opportunity to share your story and your faith!

## **21 Days of Prayer**

### **Day 15 Focus - To reflect God’s heart ([Luke 15:7](#))**

*God, your heart and love for us is made evident through your actions. You love us so much that you didn’t let us go when we went astray. Instead, you pursued us. You sent your Son, Jesus, to rescue us. Today, we ask that you grow our love for others and grow our passion for pursuing those who are lost. Open our eyes*

*to the opportunities we have to share with the people you have placed in our lives. Amen.*

### **Today's Parent Prayer**

*This post was written by Lauri White, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*

# Turnaround – Nah, I’m Good

August 23, 2022

Last week, I wrote a devotional about second chances and how Jonah realized, while he was in the belly of the fish, that God rescued him *on purpose for a purpose*. That same truth applies to you and me, but what are second chances in life, and how do we get them?

Second chances are opportunities for us to look at the mistakes and things in our lives we regret and turn them around for better results. What a great concept!

The times in my life when I accepted an opportunity to turn things around to achieve better results felt great. But other times I was given an opportunity for a second chance, and I basically said, “Nah, I’m good.” I regret those times—because I missed out on a potentially rewarding occasion in my life.

What is the key difference between the two results? In one word, **Trust**.

As Lead Pastor Ben Snyder explained last weekend in the bottom line: **Every turnaround starts with trust**. Think about that in light of your own experiences. I believe you will find that every successful second chance was because you trusted the result would be better. You trusted that what you were doing the second time was the right way.

For example, when I get the opportunity to hit a mulligan in golf, I trust my second shot is going to be better. (Let me interject here—this is one area where trust doesn’t always create a turnaround for me.) Jesus reminds us our faith doesn’t have to be big.

## **Matthew 17:20**

*“You don’t have enough faith,” Jesus told them. “I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.”*

When we trust God, even the tiniest amount of faith is enough to open the door for him and the opportunity for a turnaround that can lead to something big.

Jonah finally took advantage of God's second chance. He had enough faith to trust God (even if just a little bit) and chose to obey his command.

### **Jonah 3:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> *This time Jonah obeyed the Lord's command and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to see it all.* <sup>4</sup> *On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: "Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!"*

Even though Jonah's delivery was a bit lackluster, God ran with it! Jonah's story demonstrates the wonderful thing about God—even just a little trust can make a big difference.

Spoiler alert: Because of Jonah's basic trust and obedience, a great city and over 120,000 people were saved from destruction. They too received a second chance from God that turned around their wicked ways.

### **Questions:**

What is your reaction when God says, "Go!"?

Do you display the kind of trust for a successful turnaround?

### **Next Steps:**

Read the story of Jonah, plug yourself into his life, and honestly contemplate how you would have reacted.

Tune in next weekend for the conclusion of the *Nah, I'm Good* series.

## **[21 Days of Prayer](#)**

### **Day 16 Focus - Surrender to Him ([Romans 12:1](#))**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for all you have given me: all the time, resources, relationships, and abilities. I now give them back to you. I surrender it all. I am only a steward, someone you have entrusted these things with to care for while I am here. It all belongs to you. God, guide my actions. Help me to listen for and obey your directions. Teach me to trust you and use what you have given me according to your will. May your will be done in me and through me. Amen.*

### **[Today's Parent Prayer](#)**

*This post was written by Ned Miller, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*

# Deliver Hope – Nah, I’m Good

August 24, 2022

God is extremely creative in getting one’s attention, and our current series, *Nah, I’m Good*, is a strong reminder. Choosing not to embrace an assignment given by God, Jonah initially went in the opposite direction. But God had other plans. He arranged for Jonah to be thrown overboard by shipmates and swallowed by a great fish, where he remained for three days and three nights. Now that’s a lot of creativity!

Eventually, Jonah had a change of heart, the fish regurgitated him, and he delivered God’s message to the people of Nineveh.

## Jonah 3:4

*On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: “Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!”*

Just as God called Jonah to share a message with unbelievers, he also calls us to share the Good News of Jesus with others. How we do that often varies, depending on how we are wired.

Some people use a **Confrontational** approach. like the apostle Paul or Peter. These individuals can stand up and boldly share their faith on the spot with anyone. This is what people commonly think of when they hear the word “evangelism”, but it’s not the only style.

For others it starts with an **Invitational** “come and see” approach ([John 1:39](#)). Starting relational connections with trust is an intentional focus at CedarCreek. Every weekend service, by design, is created and delivered with an unchurched person in mind. Lead Pastor Ben Snyder referred to this as “*invitational evangelism*”. Come and see. Visit an event at CedarCreek.

Another type of evangelism is **Testimonial**—one’s own personal story of God’s grace. Writing this week for LIO gave me pause to recall my own personal messenger from God some forty years ago. It has been a *long* time since this event has surfaced in my mind. Although I do not recall his exact words, God’s messenger that day delivered a simple notification to me: “You think you are here for a chronic medical problem, but the physical problem you are plagued with is truly a spiritual one.”

Hmmm... The messenger departed as quickly as he had appeared. There was no shame, no blame, no judgment, and no questions. He clearly was on a mission, and I was his target audience! It is clear now—God sent him at what could have been a pivotal time for me.

As followers of Christ, make it a goal to draw others to Christ through dismantling all harsh words and self-righteous judgment.

### **Proverbs 15:1**

*A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.*

Likewise, if you receive an unexpected message, consider it and pray to God for clarification. Had I seriously considered the validity of the message delivered that afternoon, the spiritual landing awaiting me would have shaved off many, many months of spiritual wandering!

Like Jonah, sometimes we are called to receive God's message, and other times share it. In either case, every turnaround starts with trust.

### **Questions:**

What messages/warnings have you received from someone brought into your life by God?

Have you ever been called to share a message with someone else?

### **Next Steps:**

Take some time to reflect and journal on the messages/warnings you have received that drew you closer to or repelled you away from God. Consider the circumstances in your life and what would have been helpful at those turning points.

If you're called to deliver a message, consider the healthiest, most loving way to deliver it before speaking into their life. Pray for God's guidance in speaking specific concerns to those closest to you. Make it a habit to deliver messages in the same loving way you would hope to receive them.

## **[21 Days of Prayer](#)**

## **Day 17 Focus - To be like Christ in Relationships** ([Philippians 2:3-4](#))

Dear Lord, please help me be like you in all my relationships with others. Help me humble myself and think of the needs of others before my own. Teach me to see how I can serve those around me. Please show me the places in my life where I can make others feel like they matter and let them know that they are not alone. Amen

### **Today's Parent Prayer**

*This post was written by Karen Peck, a regular contributor to the Living it out.*

# Shine Your Light – Nah, I’m Good

August 25, 2022

What do you think of when you hear the word evangelism? For me, I think of televangelists like Jimmy Swaggart, Oral Roberts, and Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. Unfortunately, they have given me a bad taste in my mouth on something that is an important part of spreading the Good News about Jesus Christ.

Last weekend, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder dispelled this misconception for me by explaining the six styles of evangelism. Yesterday we unpacked Confrontational, Invitational, and Testimonial Evangelism. Today we will dive into the last three: Relational, Service, and Intellectual.

**Relational:** Someone gifted with this style of evangelism easily builds relationships with people and then is able to share the Good News about Jesus through those relationships. They create a safe space to discuss the life-changing adventure of following Christ with their families, friends, and co-workers.

In [Acts 16:25-28](#), the apostle Paul and Silas were imprisoned, singing and praying to God. Suddenly an earthquake shook the prison, all the doors were opened, and the chains of every prisoner fell off. When the guard awakened, he assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. Paul stopped him by shouting that everyone was still there.

## **Acts 16:29-30**

<sup>29</sup> *The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.* <sup>30</sup> *Then he brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”*

Apostle Paul demonstrated a joyful life even though he was in a miserable situation. The jailer saw the love and compassion that Paul showed to him and the other prisoners, and he wanted that kind of life.

When we display this genuine caring for others, we are like a magnet that draws people to the Christian life we live.

**Service:** This form of evangelism is the heart of the Christian faith. This is where people prefer acts of service over words to make a difference in other's lives. At CedarCreek, we have many ways of serving others. Some examples are [Serve Day](#), [2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Serve](#), and the recently announced *Dollar Club*.

### **Matthew 5:16**

*In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*

**Intellectual:** This style of evangelism is characterized by making arguments (known as apologetics) around why we can trust that Jesus came back from the dead.

### **Acts 17:18-20**

<sup>18</sup> *He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, "What's this babbler trying to say with these strange ideas he's picked up?" Others said, "He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods."*

<sup>19</sup> *Then they took him to the high council of the city. "Come and tell us about this new teaching," they said. <sup>20</sup> "You are saying some rather strange things, and we want to know what it's all about."*

During apostle Paul's visit to Athens, he gave one of his most important gospel messages on Mars Hill. This is a classic example of apologetics—Paul started his message by addressing the “unknown God” and then proclaimed the one true God and how they could be reconciled to him.

Pastor Ben said that, over time, a Jesus follower's life is like a light pointing to Jesus. This brings back a fond childhood memory, learning the song, “This Little Light of Mine.” CedarCreek invests heavily in our children's ministry to grow the next generation of Christ followers, but we can't stop there. We all have a job to do. Are you letting your light shine?

### **Questions:**

Which style of evangelism do you identify with? Are you using your God-given talent to draw others into the Kingdom of God?

Who is your “one” that God is placing on your heart? Have you decided how to discuss Christ with them?

## **Next Steps:**

Begin thinking and praying on who the one person is that God put in your life to make a difference in theirs. Trust God that he is inviting you to play a part of his work in their world with your unique evangelism style.

Participate in the *Dollar Club*. It's easy—simply give a dollar more than you normally give. This weekend, Pastor Ben will reveal the impact of your dollar.

## **21 Days of Prayer**

### **Day 18 Focus - Clarify My Focus ([Romans 12:6-8](#))**

*Dear God, please clarify our purpose. You have so generously given all of us unique gifts. I pray that we can identify them in our lives, so that we can serve you and your Kingdom. Help us to not only use our gifts, but to give you all of the glory when we do. You have said that the most important thing to do is to love you and love others. I want to use the gifts you gave me to find and live out my purpose and to follow your greatest commandment. Amen.*

### **Today's Parent Prayer**

*This post was written by Jenn Macke, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*

# Don't Be a Jonah – Nah, I'm Good

August 26, 2022

Today I want to tell you the story of Rusty Woomer. Rusty had a rough childhood. He got involved in drugs at an early age, spent time in jail for rape, and got involved with the “wrong crowd.”

One night, while high on drugs, he and a friend robbed, assaulted, and killed five people, wounding several others. He was sent to death row for his crimes. There he remained, wasting away until the day he met Bob McAlister.

Bob was visiting another man on death row at the prison in Columbia, South Carolina, when he met Rusty. Rusty was living in filth and didn't seem to notice. Bob could see that Rusty was suffering under spiritual oppression. He urged Rusty to call on the name of Jesus, and Rusty feebly cried, “Jesus. Jesus.” Bob led Rusty in a prayer for forgiveness and went home. He returned the next week to find Rusty transformed—physically and spiritually. Rusty met Jesus, and his life was radically changed.

What is your response to a story like Rusty's?

Are you praising Jesus for a lost soul finding forgiveness and eternal life? Or are you like Jonah, bitter because the wicked can be forgiven?

Last weekend, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder spoke of the remarkable transformation of the people of Nineveh. They put on sackcloth and ashes and fasted in hopes that their repentance could reverse the curse that the prophet of God, Jonah, had spoken upon them. God heard their cries and forgave them.

How did Jonah respond?

## **Jonah 4:1**

*This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry.*

Jonah looked at the mercy God shed on the great city of Ninevah and started fuming. He wanted them to suffer God's judgment and vengeance, but God gave them mercy.

Are you like Jonah when you hear of great sinners coming to repentance? What would you think if you discovered that, before their deaths, Adolf Hitler or

Osama bin Laden came to faith in Jesus? Would you celebrate with the angels in heaven or sit with Jonah, mourning God's great mercy?

My flesh wants judgment for the evil done by those in the world, but when I seek justice on my terms, I am forgetting the mercy God has shown me. I want to join with the angels in celebration, rejoicing when another soul discovers the love of Jesus for themselves.

**Luke 15:7** NIV

*I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.*

**Questions:**

Has someone hurt you, causing you to have bitterness in your heart toward them? What is stopping you from offering them the forgiveness God has offered you?

Are you grateful for God's mercy to all who come to him, or are you secretly disappointed when people don't "get what they deserve"?

**Next Steps:**

Pray for those who are far from God and doing evil in this world. Pray also for opportunities to offer forgiveness and share God's mercy with those who have hurt you. When those opportunities arise, take the next step and forgive them. Remember Christ has given his life to forgive you.

**[21 Days of Prayer](#)**

**Day 19 Focus - Give me the Courage to Make a Difference** ([Matthew 5:14-16](#))

*Thank you, God, for blessing us with your love to share with the world. Please, give us the strength to step out in faith when we see a need. Give us the courage to reveal your truth, so that others can receive the knowledge of your heart for them, and then join you in the work you are doing. Help us to reach our neighbors through our everyday actions and grant us the confidence to live by faith, sharing you in some way with everyone we meet. Let them see your forgiveness in us, so that they may also experience your grace. Amen*

## Today's Parent Prayer

*This post was written by Julie Mabus, a regular contributor to the Living it out.*

## [21 Days of Prayer](#)

### **Day 20 Focus - Fill My Life with Your Fruit of the Spirit** ([Luke 6:43-45](#))

*Dear God, help me to be completely rooted in you, so that the only fruit I produce is the good fruit from you. I know that it is only through the Holy Spirit that my life can be filled with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)). I want my relationship with you to produce good fruit in my life and in the lives of others. I want to do this all for you, your glory, and your kingdom. Amen.*

### [Today's Parent Prayer](#)

### **Day 21 Focus - Fill My Heart with Praise and Worship** ([Jeremiah 20:13](#))

*God, we praise and worship you for the things you have done and will continue to do for us. May there be a moment each day where we're given the opportunity to show the world how thankful we are for your love and grace. Thank you, God, for allowing us to ignite our passion for you each and every day. May our lives be a testimony to who you are and the transforming power of your love.*

### [Today's Parent Prayer](#)