

It's Not About a Fish V - It's Not a Parable!

Overview

I wish to bring to your attention that we have a very godly man who's a member of parliament. He serves, I believe it's called Wes Lincoln, his name is Dean Allison. I believe he lives somewhere around Beamsville and he's taken it upon himself to do something that should have been done a long time ago. So, what he's doing, I don't believe is sanctioned by the liberal government. I could be corrected, I'd be happy to be corrected, no problem with that. But the number of people who are suffering and have died or are dying, not from COVID, but from the thing called long COVID that actually is a result of the vaccine. This is proven and I really encourage you to go online, go to the thing called YouTube and Dean Allison is running an inquiry in Toronto. I believe it's in Toronto, could be elsewhere. And he's having people who have come, they paid their own way to come. They flew in from Alberta, wherever they could, and the cost, the cost that people who were in certain professions were told, if you don't take the vaccine, your job is finished. Thousands lost their jobs because they said, I don't trust the vaccine. And I won't go on. April and I sat and watched it for a while last night, I was weeping.

I was weeping when I heard how these people have been maligned. They have been told, you're not sick, there's nothing wrong with you. These people have almost died. One lady's had something like 17 strokes and she was as healthy as a canal horse before this thing hit her. I encourage you to go on. What's it going to do? It will somehow, and click on there, the little thumbs up, you go down to the bottom. Because Dean Allison knows he's not doing this on his own. And the government needs to know. We're not impressed. They need to know. And they will know if we get behind. That's all you have to do, go on and click thumbs up.

Watch it if you dare. Watch it if you can handle it. I wept. I was watching it again this morning. There's no way to prepare myself for the message, but I'm just glued to it. I want to read again this morning out of the word of the Lord from the book of Jonah. I've entitled this series of messages, it's not about the fish. The word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa, found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid the fare, went down into it to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. But the Lord sent out a great wind unto the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and they cried, every man to his God, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten the ship.

But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship, and he was fast asleep. The shipmaster came to him, said to him, what do you mean, sleeping? Arise, call to your God, if so be that your God will think upon us, and will not perish. And they said, every one to his fellow, come, let's cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell to Jonah. Then they said to him, we want to know something. For whose cause this evil is upon us? What do you do for a living? What's your occupation? What are you up to? Where do you come from? What is your country? Whose people are you from? And he replied, I'm a Hebrew.

And they feared the Lord, the God of heaven, which had made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, why have you done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then they said unto him, what shall we do with you, that the sea will be calm? For the sea wrought, the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. He said to them, take me and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will be calm. For I know that for my sake, this trouble has come your way. Nevertheless, the men rode all the harder to bring it to the land, but it was impossible. For the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore, they cried unto the Lord and said, we beseech you, O Lord, let's not perish. For this man's life lay not upon us his innocent blood. For you, O Lord, have done as it has pleased you.

So they took up Jonah, and they threw him in the sea. The sea ceased from its raging, and the men feared the Lord exceedingly. And they offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and they made vows to the Lord. The Lord prepared a great fish to swallow the man, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days, three nights. I think it's a tragedy that most of the mainline churches of Canada, US, and abroad do not believe the book of Jonah is a reliable book. Some of them will say, well, we know it's in the canon. Do you know what the canon is? Many, many manuscripts, many books, many writings are available. And they were sort of tossed into the bin of theologians, deep thinker at the time, so many centuries ago. And they were saying, what records that we have before us truly came from the Lord? What is reliable? Were these writings written by people who knew the moment, knew the situation? I think that many of them were very much aware that the Koran was written by people 400 years after the death of Muhammad.

They never knew Muhammad, but they wrote all about him. That kind of information, for my sake, I believe it's just not reliable. You never even do the man. So they took great care to discover which scriptures lined up with the other books of the Bible until they came up with a selection of books. They said, we believe that. And this took many, many years, much prayer, much deliberation. Finally, they came up with what's called the canon, C-A-N-O-N. And that word simply sums it up and says, we believe these are the writings of people who were inspired by God. So these mainline churches will say, well, it's in the canon, so we think it's valuable, but we believe that it's a parable. That there was no real man named Jonah, and there was no whale. And the idea of him being spit up after three days and three nights, it's preposterous, it's fiction, it's not believable, it's irrelevant, it's not literal. I go on record today to say, anybody who would say that surely cannot be a Bible scholar, and I would suggest he has no business being in the pulpit, because that person, male or female, or one or the other multitude of people, whoever they are, they don't know their Bible, because Jonah, the book of Jonah ...

those four chapters, do not stand alone. And I'm going to show you the same this morning.

Jonah is mentioned as a person in 2 Kings chapter 14 and verse 25. He's mentioned in the record of the king. So if you say he's a fictitious person, now what do you do with the book of 2 Kings? Jesus compared himself to Jonah, and he did so with serious thought and serious speech. He wasn't comparing himself to a Mickey Mouse, the figment of somebody's imagination. He wasn't comparing himself to some person who never existed. How foolish a thing that would be. He said, a greater than Jonah is here among you today. Now, I just want to bounce around. I'm going to share this message with you this morning in a way that in terms of what's called homiletics is not a good way to go. In other words, if I wanted to talk about the fish, that's what the message should be about. I'm going to bounce around just a little bit this morning. I want to move now from the fact that it's not fiction.

It's not a parable, but it's a word of God, belongs in the canon, and should be taken literally. When it says he rose again on the third day, it means the same. And the people who say that's an impossibility are the same people who say, I don't believe that Jesus arose again in the third day. And they would not be able to give you an answer when he said, just as Jonah was resurrected the third day, so shall the Son of Man also be resurrected. What's that all about? If you're going to start tearing the Bible apart page by page, you may as well burn the whole thing. We know so. So I want to jump now to just talk for a few moments about Jonah, because why did he run away from the command of the Lord? Why did he not go to Nineveh? Why did he not obey the Lord? These are my thoughts. I'm not getting these thoughts from somebody else. And that doesn't make them more valid.

It might, in fact, make them more porous. But I believe this. Number one, he said of his own mouth, he says, Lord, and this is in the fourth chapter, he says, Lord, remember when you first asked me to do this, I told you I didn't want to do it because I know you're gracious and you're merciful. In other words, I don't want you to forgive them. I hate these people. I hate these pagans. I want nothing to do with them. And you want somebody to do it? You pick the wrong prophet. I'm not going to do this because he did not believe that they deserved what we would call salvation. They didn't deserve forgiveness because they were pagans, which I jumped to another conclusion that I believe as I read the book of Jonah and I keep on reading it again and again and again, of course, I believe that Jonah was convinced. Over the top in the concept that the Jewish people, the descendants of Abraham, are the chosen people. It's kind of like not so long ago when they said Black Lives Matter, when that was high, high up on the agenda of certain strata of society.

You dare not say. And so white people are. Are important, you dare not say that babies matter, you would have been put down, you would have been laughed out, you would have been canceled or whatever other weird things that society likes to do, because once they said Black Lives Matter, that's it. So I believe that Jonah believe this. Abraham is going to be blessed. His people are the chosen people. Whoever blesses them gets blessed, whoever curses them gets cursed. But then he would say in his own mind, and they're the only people that deserve God's blessing. So he would say, why would I go and talk to those pagans? They're outside of God's chosen people. God wants to destroy them. Let them go ahead. They're ugly.

They're weird. And they're not of our tribe. Pastor Dave, are you sure? No, I'm just telling you what I think, because he was so strong in this. He was so committed to this to the point, even when he did surrender and go and preach to them, they they repented and he went into despondency and said, I want to die. I don't even like that. I'm so but the man was so compelled by this strong feeling of they don't deserve. It was like the black people in the south of the United States. They were hated because of their skin color. Because they were black, they deserve to die because they were black. They were not human and they were treated worse than dogs because you're not of our tribe. And yet it was church people in the south of the United States who had slaves and played the game and played along. Christianity is not always.

The total answer for people, there's got to be a repentance and there's got to be an acknowledgment of what the Lord says is the truth. Whosoever will may come. So someone would say, well, if those black people want to get saved, let them go ahead, whosoever will. But it doesn't mean that we have to. I believe that Jonah had that kind of a spirit. And yet he's a prophet of God. What does it tell us? Well, he had about as much value at time as that donkey. I'm being careful in the pulpit not to use the biblical word, unless I should offend somebody. But there was an animal that spoke up. There was an animal that spoke up. So to be used by God to do something doesn't make you a wonderful person. I'm not denigrating him, I'm not putting him down.

But even the Apostle Peter that was used so mightily and gloriously in the earliest days of the church, he got totally missed. He just totally misunderstood the whole plan of God. And on the night of Jesus' betrayal, he pulls out a sword and cut off the ear of a soldier. He was pretty good with his fishing knife, I would say. And Jesus healed the man immediately and amazed everybody on the spot. The Apostle Paul was not, the Apostle Peter, was not always the sharpest knife in the drawer. And in fact, it had to be the Apostle Paul who had to stand face to face, nose to nose, and to say to Peter, you're wrong, you're wrong. You are against the Gentiles. I've noticed that when that when you're with us, when you're with us and all the other Gentiles, you're a happy go lucky guy. You live your spaghetti and meatballs like the rest of us. But when we get along with those Judaizers, you go and you separate yourself and you sit with the others. You don't want to be seen aligning with those people. I just thought of an illustration.

I think I'll leave it out. I need to be positive this morning. Somebody said, amen. Do that. Or you better say, help him, Jesus. Joseph Jonas, I keep on calling him Joseph. Forgive me. Jonah's story is indeed reliable. It's in the canon, as I've already mentioned. And it's verified by Jesus in Matthew's gospel, chapter 12. And I want to read to you because this has gravity. Matthew, chapter 12. And I'm going to read at verse 38.

Listen close now. Certain of the scribes and Pharisees, scribes and Pharisees. These are important religious leaders. And they would they would decide kind of like what our government is doing to us now, our government is telling this is how you're to think and this is how you're to talk. And if it don't line up with us, we just might have to arrest you for hate speech. That's how the Pharisees and the scribes carried on back in those days.

In that when a question would come up about about the reliability of this, Jesus, that some think he's the Messiah, instead of people watching, thinking, checking out in their heart, praying about it, they would turn to the scribes and Pharisees and say to them, please, quick, tell me what I believe. They literally did that. So certain scribes and Pharisees had power over the people. And they said to Jesus, Master, we want to see a sign. A sign of his deity, a sign that you're worthy of our worship, a sign that you're the Messiah who we're looking for. So many signs to raise the dead, fed the five thousand, open the blind eyes. They said one more, one more, one more.

We want to see a sign. But he replied and he said unto them, an evil and adulterous generation seek after a sign and there shall be no more sign given except the sign of Jonah. There's Jesus validating the story. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale. So shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Jesus went on to say, he's sticking with the Jonah story. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment. He means on the judgment day, the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it. The Ninevites, who were considered by Jonah to be worthless, shall be in on the judgment day and they'll be allowed to speak. That's what his sighting. They'll condemn this generation. They will condemn you scribes, you Pharisees, and shall condemn it because they repented, they repented. You're not repenting.

They're better than you are. Those people that Jonah hated, they're better than you are. They repented because of what Jonah's preached. And behold, a greater than Jonah's is here. There's validation of the whole story of Jonah. And that to me is an indictment against the seminaries of, let's just talk Canada. The majority of the seminaries in this country would take the book of Jonah and say to the students, we're not even going to open the pages of that. It's kind of like, you know, it's kind of like a lullaby. It's a cute little story, but we all know that it has no veracity. It's a parable. It's, it's a makeup story. It's cute and it's nice, but it has no intrinsic value. It's not theological, it carries no theological weight.

The men of Nineveh shall arise in that judgment time and they will speak in front of this generation and they'll condemn it. They will condemn it. Now I'm going to jump again. Remember I said, I'm going to jump from here to, I want to now talk not about Jonah. I want to talk about those sailors. They were the kind of people that Jonah had no use for. They were the kind of people that Jonah believed they did not deserve grace and they certainly didn't deserve any kind of mercy because they were not of the chosen people, but these sailors recognized that this storm had some kind of powerful source. These were men who lived on the sea, but when this storm came up, you know, sailors will look up and they'll study this guy, this guy, and they will start. The wording is batten down the hatches, stop the water from going in the base of the ship. They'll see how the winds are coming. It's just like you can look up and you can see the rain coming. You see the storm clouds gathering. There were no storm clouds gathering.

They're all sitting there singing and drinking their rum. And all of a sudden the ship is pretty turned upside down. It was sudden. And they said among themselves, this is a supernatural power. So they started praying to their gods, whatever God they could get a hold of and to no avail, nothing took place. What are we going to do? We're all going to die. Well, some God is upset with us. Whose God is upset? And somebody came up. What about that guy that's in the bottom of the ship? So the captain went down and he spoke to him and he said, you need to get up out of your bed because my crew are afraid they're going to die. And we are convinced that there's some supernatural power behind this.

And we think that you are at the root of it. You get up on deck like the rest of us and die like we're going to die. This is a terrible thing. But maybe we can find a way to sort of mellow whatever God is upset with us. So interesting. They were acting out of fear. I am so intrigued with this. The moment that Jonah's body hit the water. The storm like instantly dissipated. And what was the response of the pagan sailors? They were more afraid than they were during the storm. The storm's gone now, they're really afraid because they are fearful they have been serving the wrong gods. And they're realizing that this God, whoever he is, and by the way, when they prayed, they used the Hebrew name of God that Jonah would have used.

So they didn't pray to an unknown God. They prayed to the God that was the God of Jonah. That wording is quite okay because we're familiar with this wording. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. And we've got to be so careful, every one of us. Whose God do you serve? And do you know him? I was raised in a Christian home. My grandmother was a Christian. My grandfather was a Christian. And the church that's sitting on the highway on highway six, just before you get to Hagersville, it's on the right hand side. It's a beautiful building. I went by it just a few hours ago.

April was fast asleep in the chair. I didn't say anything I said, but in my head, I said, there's the church that my daddy started with his mom and his dad. Godly people. And my grandmother was a very profound effect upon my life. She tuned in on every Sunday afternoon. She served dinner and she'd wash up the dishes. I'd be there maybe during the summer. And she'd say, okay, David, oral's coming on soon. Oh, she was on first name basis with the man from Tulsa, Oklahoma. And so we'd have to go into the living room and she would go to the piano. And my grandmother played the piano like this. God save our gracious king, queen. I had to sing that I had to sing God save the queen, because you see, this was going to be a very important moment.

And after I finished singing, God saved the queen. Then and only then did my grandmother turn on that little black and white television, mostly snow. You know what I'm talking about there, right? The sound was all crackly, but then there would be this voice over the sound. And now the man you've all been waiting for from Tulsa, you can finish it if you wanted to. You must have seen it back in the day. And my grandmother would be gripping me by the hand. She'd say, watch this, David. Watch it. Look how he, look how he perspires. He believes every word that he's saying. And then somebody would come up before him and they're going to pray and oral's going, and my grandmother would say, they never show a person on this, on this program unless they get healed.

You know, somebody got prayed for and they walked off the same condition and they came up, that had to happen. You know it. But they weren't going to show you those. They only show. So my grandmother would be all excited. I saw it with my grandmother, crippled, ruined. That was my, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, and my grandmother's God, and my grandfather's God, and my mother's God, and my father's God, my pastor's God, my Sunday school teacher's God, he wasn't yet my God. Now in one of those services in that little church that my dad had started, he and another fellow, Leonard Roundtree, they started it in a farmhouse, my grandparents' farmhouse. And I gave my heart to Jesus on a Sunday morning when the pastor said, I see that hand, which shall be a little hand of David. And he took me in his side room and I prayed the sinner's prayer. I could tell you word for word. And so I had, I had a little beginning. This is important for somebody who gives their heart to Jesus. It's not like, you're done.

You know, little child asks his mom, how did I get my belly button? And she said, well, it's like the Pillsbury dough boy. When the little bun comes out of the oven, the coat, the, you're done. So as a little fellow, I gave my heart to Jesus. But the only thing I had was, there, you got it. I didn't have an understanding. Listen to this. I had no fear of God. Well, how sure are we supposed to be afraid? Oh, yes. Well, why would we be afraid in this passage of these sailors? There's two kinds of fear. One was we're going to die, but the other one was, oh, great is our God.

Sing with me. How great is our God? It's a sense of the awesomeness of God. And the book of Proverbs says that the fear of the Lord, not cowering down, don't hurt me, but the fear of the Lord, the sense of his often awesomeness. That's the word says when you when you fear the Lord, you acknowledge him. You have begun. It says fear of God is the beginning of knowledge. It's not the great grandson. It's the Lord putting his finger on your belly button and pushing it a little bit further. You're not there yet. I came down with a major problem with one of my ears. Doesn't matter which one. And I, I, I, I, I suffered and suffered with this thing.

And it turned out that I had an abscess in my ear to the point where I couldn't even open my mouth and eat food. My mother rushed me to the doctor and he said, we're going to the hospital right now, Mary, and get him to the hospital. And he knocked me out with some kind of smelly stuff. And he went in my ear and he poked it and he drained it. And he said, it's a good thing we got it. If this thing had broken on its own, this the the the the mess in there would have gone through, he said we would have lost the boy. I heard him say it. About a week later, I had a horrendous Saturday night. I couldn't sleep. I felt a pain coming and coming. And by the time we're at church on a Sunday morning, I said nothing to my parents. By the time we're in the Sunday school class, the teacher asked me a question. I couldn't open my mouth to answer.

The pain was incredible. This happened in a church called Bethel Hamilton. So the boys, but we all the class was dismissed. When we came down the stairs, there was a little room where the pastor would wait before he went to the service. And we had to go through that. And as we follow file through the pastor, Alan Mallory said, well, there's David, how you doing nowadays? Because he'd heard I'd had that problem. And through my teeth like this, I said, I'm sick, I'm sick, it's back, it's back. My pastor had a guest speaker with him that morning. They said to the rest of the boys, where you go?

They laid hands on my head and they prayed just like we did a few moments ago. They prayed over me in the name of Jesus. And Bill, I tell you, the moment they prayed. I was pain free. It was gone and it was the very same pain I'd had a week ago, identical same symptoms, same everything. This boy would have died if we hadn't got to it. OK. I went into the Sunday morning service and he was a typical pastor. He looks down and he says, where's that David for us? It was quite a crowd. I raised my little hand. He says, David, stand up for us. He said, tell this church what God did for you. In that moment, tears started racing down my cheeks. And I said, Pastor, I had surgery last week to get rid of a problem. It was back very, very, very same.

But when you laid hands and you prayed for me, I said, I got healed. The place broke out into applause. And I've told this so many times in that moment when I confess it with my mouth. If thou shall confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus. Listen to this, sweetie. The one I prayed with, too, we got if you the word, this is what the Bible says, if you confess with your mouth, the Lord Jesus. But does that mean. To with a sense of awe to say, I confess you, Jesus, I believe you died on the cross for me, I believe you rose again from the dead, I believe you're coming. If you confess with your mouth, the Lord Jesus. And at the moment, believe with your heart. So confess with your mouth. Your heart is engaged, thou shall be saved. And so I'm telling you that it's an ongoing saga.

You've got a belly button, I'm sure of it. No, I don't want to see it. I'm sure, brother, you have a belly button. But that was the beginning. The beginning of wisdom is the acknowledgement of God. But in that moment, I've been with my grandma. I've been to church. I had even taken communion. I'd done all of these things, but it was in that moment when I was allowed prompted stand, tell us, David, what God did for you. And with my confession, with my mouth, believing it with all of my heart. How come I believe it? Because I'd experienced it. Let me tell you that the word of God will convince you of the Lord.

But when you experience the presence, the power, in my case, the healing of God, in my wife's case, delivered of cancer, she was dying. It was her last day on Earth and Jesus healed her. Incredible. And it's documented in Hamilton St. Joe's. Beloved, when you get healed, that also contributes to your faith and that sends you off like a guided missile. Confess with your mouth, believe in your heart. And God will work a miracle. And on that day, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, my grandmother, my grandfather, my father, my mother, my Sunday school teacher. My that day he became the God of David Forrest. Now, there are some people, probably the same gang that don't believe in the book of Jonah. Don't like it when we get emotional. Religion shouldn't be an emotional thing.

My mother makes better cookies than your mother. I'm going to tell you what, if you've never experienced his divine presence. No wonder you're afraid. You're afraid to open up and let Jesus work in your life. I'll be careful about that. I got so much more to tell you this morning, but I've got to stop. I've had people say, stop that. Stop stopping. Well, just a little more since you're begging for more. There are theologians who believe there are Bible scholars who believe that this was like what came to be known from the Second World War as a trench conversion. I bet I don't have to describe any more. April's uncles, I don't believe they got converted in the trenches. They were definitely over there, and they have never wanted to talk about it since they came home.

So horrendous. What they saw, what they smelled, what they experienced. They don't even want to remember it. And the story comes back from the Second World War. In a tidal wave, the number of men in the trenches called out to God. Those who had used his name in horrendous ways. Those whose mouths were like a toilet. Those who lived the most ungodly, suddenly called, Dear God, I don't want to die here. But when they came home, 99 bottles of beer on the wall, 99 bottles of beer. They just went back to the old life. It was a war trench conversion. So these pagan men suddenly believed and understood because of an experience with a storm and throwing this man overboard and suddenly. The storm ceased, they said, he is God.

And there are those who believe that these men got converted. There's no record beyond this little story of whether this was a World War II trench conversion or if they really walked with God. I will tell you this, that at the moment in their trench. In that moment, they believed. In that moment, they believed. But that they only experience the bellybutton moment, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of salvation. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of real faith. To say the fear of the Lord means you are believing. Believing, not like believing if you flip a switch, the lights will come on. But in your heart of heart, I call it knowing in your knower. Knowing in your knower, I speak of another way, it's not new to you. I know that I know that I know that I know.

We know that to some degree. They were converted. Then lastly, Jonah's lessons reaffirmed his understanding of the omnipresence of God omnipresent everywhere, several times it's announced in the opening chapter. He ran from the presence of the Lord. But he discovered. In the first of all, in his bunk bed and then on the plank as he went over the side and then as he swallowed by a great fish. God's here, I did not escape. Here's a unique thing, he did not, he despised. The idea that God would show mercy to those pagan sinners. But it was that mercy that saved his life. The other thing that he came to understand is this. What God's going to do, he's going to do with you or without you. Jonah came to know God is sovereign.

The sovereignty of God, not only is God omniscient, knowing all, omnipresent everywhere, omnipotent, all power. There's more. God, with all of those attributes, is sovereign. He's sovereign, he's sovereign. I quickly close. Jacob fled home, running away, not just from Esau. He was running away from God. I had a man who was on my staff. He was not my idea. He was the leadership's idea. It was a very unique setup. Trust me. They said, we want this man.

The church was double full on Sundays. We had to build a piece onto it before the piece was totally finished. It was full already. Like the church was absolutely booming. You need help. So they hired this man. I was not impressed with it. And within about six or seven days of the man's arrival, I caught him on the phone in the evening and never knew I showed up at the church. I'm going down the hall as I go past his office. He has no idea I'm there. I hear him saying, trust me, this is my church. I'll get rid of this guy in no time. He's a flake.

He's an evangelist. He's not a pastor. Do you know he's actually going to let other people do the water baptizing? What kind of a college should he graduate? I tell you, he's done. He's cooked. Welcome to Dave's world. So I had a meeting with Elmer. And I said, Elmer, do you know the story of Jacob? Well, of course I do. I read my Bible. Well, that was good news. You'd never know.

So to hear him preach, I said, is it possible that Jacob got out of the will of God? Never thought about that. I said, here's what I here's my take on it. Esau, I do not regard. Jacob, I love. It's stronger. Esau, I hate it. That's a strong word. Don't get too carried away with it, but. I don't I didn't choose Esau, I chose Jacob, that's what it means. So I said, no matter what Jacob did, he was going to end up in the royal line that would bring us to Jesus. He said, OK. So I said, all that nonsense that he did, he betrayed his father, fooled his father.

What a horrendous thing to do. Got his mother involved and she was stupid enough to go along with it. And when he ran, he ran away from his mother. He ran away from his father and he ran as fast as he could away from Esau. I said none of it was necessary because God's plan would be that Jacob would be in the in the divine line. And I said, Elmer, if it's God's will for you to pastor the church, have at it, because I don't own it and quite frankly, I didn't want it in the first place. I said, but you don't even know. I said that board came to my house and they begged me to be the pastor. And I said they gave up some opportunity. I was called to go into Kenya. I canceled some revival meeting because I was I said I came because the church was in trouble. I'm here because a board pushed me. I said, I don't own it, I don't want it.

But I said, if you try and get it without, I said, you're acting like Jacob. I said, you're you're hoodwinking everybody. I said, you haven't tricked me. I know what you're up to. And I said, this is going to be a failure. I said, I will be on my way. And whoever God's going to put in the pulpit, God bless him. Watch this. The guy betrayed me, betrayed me, betrayed me. I'm not sour apples. I got over it. I wanted to kill him, but I didn't. He made his way into the pulpit of that church.

And within six months he was in his grave. It wasn't God's will for him to be the pastor of that church. God is sovereign. God. Is the old sage of the Old Testament said, I know that I can trust him. And when he's done testing me with fire, I shall be pure as gold. We need to trust in the sovereign works of God. The Lord giveth. And the Lord retrieves, and he says to us, there's a time to dance. There's a time to mourn. I don't want to mourn. It's God's time. It's God's time.

The disappointments come, the horrendous things that you trip over and you find yourself saying, why, why, Lord God, why? I'll finish with a man I spoke to within the last 14 days. Not a believer. I befriended him and I said to him, just the two of us were alone together, I said, as church, I just use this terminology, that'd be the that'd be the terminology that would work for him. I said, has church had any influence in your life? I meant more than that, but I use that term. He said, no. I said, OK, you know what I do, I know what you do. I said, did you have a bad experience, maybe when you were a youngster with your no, never had anything to do with church, my parents never took me. I had nothing to do with it. He said, I want nothing to do with it. I said, wow. I said, church is not a club.

It's not a bunch of marbles in a bag. I said, it's a living organism. But the king of kings leading it, he said, I don't believe that stuff. He said, in fact, I have a question. I said, let me tell you the question that's killing you. If God is such a good God, why does he allow all these ugly things in the world? And I said, that's it exactly. I say, well, let me tell you exactly what I believe. I said, you think this through. I said, if God was in charge of every breath that you take, I said you'd be a robot.

I said, right now I can double up my fist and I can pound you in your chest and actually knock you to the ground, if not kill you. Do you think I could do that? He said, you don't want to try it. I said, I'm not going to. I said, I have the liberty to do it. God won't stop me. I'm not a robot. And I said, all these terrible things that people are doing in the world is because God has given us all a choice. But at the end of the day, I said to him at the end of the day, God's sovereign and the Hitler's of history will stand before him naked and they will be thrown into a fire and they will suffer forever. I said, a reckoning day is coming. And then I said, we better get in the car and move along here before I call the altar. But I believe that with all my heart. He's sovereign. And that's a difficult thing for Pastor David to kind of cave into. But trust me, I have to lean on that every, every, every, every day, because if anybody wants to cry out why, it's I. With tears, I get trouble saying, oh, Lord, but I won't say why.

I have to leave in trust with him. Here endeth the message, Heavenly Father. I thank you for your goodness and your mercy. And, Lord, I'm glad that Jonah came to the realization and we don't know if he ever repented. We don't know if he ever, ever made things right with God. But he certainly learned a lesson. And I pray, oh, God, that I will learn a lesson and that all of my friends here and beyond through the Internet will also come to learn the lesson. He is sovereign. He is Lord. He's God. I'm his servant, and more than that, I am his beloved child. No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. He knoweth the way that I take him when he's finished with me.

I shall be his gold. Thank you, Jesus, for these people who love the word of God.

I pray, oh, Lord, that they will get deeper in the word of God and not rely on David on Sundays, may we get into the word of God in its beautiful depth.

I ask it in Jesus name.

Amen.

