

LESSONS LEARNED FROM A STUBBORN PREACHER

Selections from Jonah

The Bible does not hold back when it comes to revealing the truth. It drips with unguarded realism. The people who are mentioned in its pages are neither airbrushed nor polished to look better than they were. Whether it's Lot's moral passivity, Rebekah's favoritism of Jacob, Samson's lust for women, King Saul's jealousy of David, Gehazi's greed, or Ahab and Jezebel's partnership in gross corruption . . . every character is portrayed "warts and all." All this brings us to Jonah's story. Though it's not about a man we admire, it includes decisions and events, responses and consequences that offer insights for us to this day. Referring to this, Paul wrote, "*Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled*" (Romans 15:4). No matter where we may turn in our Bibles, there are truths to discover and lessons to learn. Both categories are reliable and relevant, since God's Word is "alive and powerful . . . sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword . . . it exposes our innermost thoughts and desires" (Hebrews 4:11). From the Scriptures, we're able to know certain truths that equip us with a better grip on life as well as to learn certain lessons from others that give us understanding. Let's do both today as we revisit the unusual story of Jonah this last time.

I. Three Essential Truths We Discover from the Word of God

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II. Four Practical Lessons We Learn from the Story of Jonah

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The main message we glean from Jonah, which we must never forget: