

# MERCY FOR THE MERCILESS

## JONAH 3:1 - 4:1

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.”

So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.

Throughout history, the Spirit of God has visited us with with *spiritual awakenings*. We call them “[revivals](#).”

These movements have **shaped** the Church, **saved** the lost, and **sent** society on a more godly trajectory.

William Nicoll once wrote, “It is by revivals that the Church of God makes its most visible advance.

When all things seem calm, when no breath stirs the air, when the sea is like lead and the sky is low and grey, when all worship seems to have ended, but the worship of vanity. It is then that the Spirit of God is poured upon the Church. Suddenly, the Christianity of the apostles and martyrs, not that of the philosophers and liberals, rises from the catacombs of oblivion, and appears young and fresh in the midst of the obsolete things of yesterday.” *And it’s for this we long...* For real Christianity to rise, and God’s kingdom to advance.

Some historians call the **Welsh Revival of 1904** the greatest spiritual awakening of all time. Taverns went bankrupt when vast segments of society gave up alcohol. New mules were purchased for the coal mines when the old mules didn’t know how to take orders now that their owners no longer used curse words. The Welsh Revival spawned the Azusa Street Revival that birth many of today’s Pentecostal denominations.

Other historians point to the 18th Century’s *First and Second Great Awakenings* as tremendous times of revival. The **First Great Awakening** led to the abolition of slavery in England, and changes to child labor laws.

The **Second Great Awakening** saw American churches packed to the gills. In the South, slave owners and slaves would gather together in open fields to worship God, *because*

*the churches weren't large enough to accommodate them. It was the beginning of the "Camp Meeting" - a tradition of Southern revivals.*

Our family of churches "*Calvary Chapel,*" was born in a revival. The 1960s saw a generation of young people disillusioned by materialism, the Vietnam war, and racial inequality. They rejected the morality of the pervious generation, and immersed themselves in drugs and free sex. But then God sent a **Jesus Movement** which taught the Bible, *giving the young people the truth they lacked - and it emphasized the Holy Spirit, the heavenly high for which they craved.* It began in the heart of Chuck and Kay Smith on the beaches of Southern California, and swept the country.

We could mention the revival of the 12th Century led by Peter Waldo and the **Waldensians**. They believed everyone should have a Bible in their own language.

Or the **Protestant Reformation** that trumpeted the Five Solas - *by faith alone, by grace alone, by Christ alone, by Scripture alone, to the glory of God alone.*

We could even go to the inaugural revival - in the upper room at the **Feast of Pentecost**, when the Spirit of God was first poured out upon the Church. That day Peter shared the Gospel and 3000 souls were saved.

When it comes to revival I like the observation by Scottish preacher, Alexander Whyte, "**There is a Divine mystery about revivals. God's sovereignty is in them.**"

In other words, when the Spirit of God moves in revival, patterns and predictability fly out the window. God takes the helm and the unexpected occurs.

And nowhere was this truer than in the greatest spiritual awakening of all-time. It's ironic, but the most spectacular revival had the most *unlikely messenger*, and it came through the most *unusual circumstances*.

I'm talking about Jonah and **the Nineveh Revival**. We read about *the greatest awakening* in Jonah 3...

Of course remember the story to this point. God sent Jonah to warn Nineveh. *But Jonah hated Ninevites!*

*He hated all things Assyrian.* These people were bloodthirsty, and brutal, and Gentiles. We discussed how Jonah may have been personally violated by Assyrian raiders in the Galilee. He was deeply bitter and angry. He carried a grudge against these people.

And so rather than travel the 550 miles to Nineveh, he boarded a cargo ship headed 2000 miles in the opposite direction, to the far-away city of Tarschish.

But no one runs from God and succeeds.

God *hurled a storm, and directed the dice, and prepared a great fish* - and somewhere under the deep blue Mediterranean - between Sheol and the sea's surface - the reluctant prophet came to his senses.

Trapped and miserable in the belly of despair he cried out to God. He realized that to forsake God is to forsake mercy. If there's any hope in this world for love, and life, and forgiveness, and peace it's to be found *in God*, not *apart from*

*Him.* Jonah agreed to wholly follow God. He concluded, “Salvation is of the LORD.”

That’s when God, in 2:10 commanded the great fish, the prophet’s Uber, to puke up Jonah onto dry land.

Imagine your family on vacation - a day at the beach.

You’re boogie boarding with the kids when a whale suddenly pops up in the shallow water and blows hard.

The great fish heaves its lunch onto the beach. And what a sight - slimy seaweed, half-chewed squid, ocean trash... yet in the midst of it all something is moving... **it’s a man.** At least, you think it’s a man.

This *battered*, and *bloated*, and *boiled*, and *blistered*, and *battered*, and *bleached*, and now *bald-headed* man is still alive! *God is ready to try this again...*

Which is where we begin, 3:1, “**Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying...**” *Isn’t this wonderful, there would be no revivals without “second times.”* Be thankful God is not a one-shot God.

Queen Elizabeth I ruled England and Ireland from 1558-1603. She was a skillful ruler, and she was loved by her people. She brought peace to her homeland.

On one occasion, Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was bowing low before the queen when the Earl broke wind - *he passed gas.* It was audible and odorous.

Well, the Earl of Oxford was humiliated. He had shamed himself before Her Majesty, his Queen.

The Earl was so embarrassed for the next few years he traveled abroad just to avoid another audience with Elizabeth.

Finally, out of necessity he returned home, and was forced to face his Queen. As he stood before her - not sure what he should say - Elizabeth spoke first. She said kindly, "[My lord, I hath forgot the fart.](#)"

Hey, if ever there was a "[stinker](#)" it was Jonah.

And he didn't just smell when he exited the belly of the fish. *Jonah had stunk-it-up all the way from Joppa.*

The prophet's pride and prejudice - his stubbornness and selfishness - had been a stench in God's nostrils.

*Jonah's rebellion had reeked!* His attitude was fishy long before he spent time in the belly of the whale. Please pardon the expression, but I can't think of more fitting label for the Prophet Jonah than "[an old fart.](#)"

Yet God was willing to forgive Jonah. He overlooked his noxious attitude and gave him a second chance.

["The word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time..."](#) Just like it did to Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Samson, David, Peter... *even Sandy!*

Author, William Banks, once wrote, "[We are moved to speak of Jonah's God as the God of the Second Chance. But honest, sober reflection compels the saint to speak of Him as the God of the 999th chance!](#)"

Understand, it is the very nature of our great God to keep forgiving and forgetting. He is the God *of the second chance, and third, and fourth, and fifth, and 999<sup>th</sup>...* He even forgives *stinkers* like you and me!



When Jesus told Peter he should forgive his enemies not just seven times, but seven times seventy, He wasn't asking Peter to do anything He wasn't willing to do Himself. Jonah is proof that God doesn't put His servants on the shelf when they make a mistake.

*You may've staggered in here today not really knowing why...* Maybe you've been on the run from God. You feel like you've been in the belly of a fish.

In recent weeks you've been miserable, trapped, desperate, hopeless, helpless... You feel like God has washed his hands of you. *Well, not so! No way, Jose!*

I hope you understand, God is a coach with a *no-cut policy*. As long as you're honest about your failures, and willing to change, you can still be on the team.

Jonah might've gone on the Disabled List or Injured Reserve - but when he repents in the belly of the fish God reactivates him and gives him another shot.

And God will do the same for you. If you repent and embrace God's will today, you too can start over.

It's been said, *"The victorious Christian life isn't a line of unbroken triumphs, it's a series of new beginnings."*

Verse 2 tells us, God repeated the same instructions to Jonah he gave him in 1:3, *"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you."*

Notice, God gives us *second chances*, but *similar commands*. His will doesn't change just because we find it objectionable. This was the same directive as when Jonah

was first called. Just because God allows us to start over doesn't mean He lowers the bar.

Like Jonah's failure, our sin isn't God's fault. It isn't that there's something wrong with God's plan - that His standard is too hard, or He lacks the resources we need. No, we fail God because we aren't willing to trust Him, and submit to the changes He requires.

Years ago, when *I was in school*, if you flunked a grade you went back and repeated it until you passed.

The school didn't just move you along to save face.

If you couldn't master tenth grade you weren't ready for eleventh. And this is God's policy in *the school of discipleship*. He gives second chances, but He doesn't change the curriculum. His assignments stay the same until we do whatever it takes to learn the lesson.

This time though, Jonah obeys. **“So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD.”**

How much time transpired between Jonah's expulsion on the beach and the second time the Lord spoke to him, we're not sure - perhaps immediately.

*And we don't know where the fish transported Jonah.*

We assume the fish spit him up near Joppa where he boarded the boat - or somewhere along the Israeli coast. But Jewish historian, Josephus, wrote that Jonah was puked-up onto the shore of the Black Sea, a few hundred miles closer to Nineveh, his destination.



Remember, when Jonah disobeyed, and ran from God, we're told he went **down... down to Joppa - down into the boat - down into sea - down into the fish's belly.**

But when he repents and obeys God, he heads **up... he gets puked up - and he shows up on the beach a few hundreds miles closer to the targeted town.**

In other words, it doesn't take God near as long to move Jonah *up*, as it did for him to get so far *down*.

God is eager for you to possess *a good life - a joyful life - a blessed life*, and He'll move the restoration along as quickly as possible... *but after you repent!*

Verse 3 tells us, **“Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk.”**

Three times in this book Nineveh is called **“that great city.”** Here it's called **“an exceedingly great city.”** In the early 8<sup>th</sup> century BC Nineveh was the capitol of the world's only superpower - the Assyrian empire.

And usually a city's walls reflected its strength. This was true of Nineveh. Its walls were colossal - 100' high, 40' thick. Three chariots could race side-by-side atop them. Add 1500 watchtowers... and it was impressive.

Here we're told Nineveh was **“a three-day journey in extent.”** A day's journey for the pedestrian people of the ancient world was about 20 miles. That meant Nineveh had a circumference of 60 miles - which is comparable to many modern cities. Archeologists tell us the walls around Nineveh proper were not that expansive - so the 60 miles must've also

included the suburban areas. Apparently, Jonah preached to *metro Nineveh*.

And once Jonah arrived he didn't beat around the bush. He preached from Day One... *boldly, fearlessly, unashamedly*. He cried out to the people in verse 4, "**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!**"

Imagine what this was like... Ancient Nineveh is now modern Mosul. Until recently the city of Mosul was an ISIS stronghold. Imagine, you going there wrapped in the Christian flag, standing on the street, preaching that Mohammed is a false prophet, and that Jesus is the only way to God... *This was Jonah's mission!*

Jonah was a Jew, in the heart of a pagan, Gentile city, proclaiming a message from the one, true God - among idolatrous people who believed in many gods.

Before his ordeal, Jonah probably viewed his assignment as risky. But after three days and nights in *Shamu's stomach* what could be worse? This time when God calls, come what *may* Jonah obeys.

And notice again, Jonah's amazing sermon - in verse 4, "**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!**"

That's just **eight words** in English - even shorter in Hebrew, just **five words**... *Of course some of you might enjoy eight word sermons!* But it makes you wonder *was there more to the message, or was this it?*

Josephus makes a statement, "(he) went to the city Nineveh, where he stood so as to be heard; and preached, that in a very little time they should lose the dominion of

Asia...” The idea was that Nineveh and Assyria were about to be conquered by another nation.

But I’m not sure, Jonah’s *wording* was as important as God’s **waiting** of **“forty days.”** In oriental culture the number **“forty”** had a special, symbolic significance. **“Forty”** was the number of **“probation and testing.”**

Moses was on the back side of the desert for forty years... The Hebrews wandered for forty years in the wilderness... Jesus was tested by Satan for forty days... After His resurrection Jesus was seen by His disciples forty days before He ascended to heaven...

And when Nineveh heard that God was waiting **forty** days before He judged them, they must’ve reasoned, **“God is testing us. If God is waiting forty days to judge us, it means He’s giving us time to repent. And if we do, He might just have mercy on us and spare us!”**

Verse 5 tells us, **“So the people of Nineveh believed God...”** Never forget in both *ancient times and modern times - in the Old Testament and New Testament - for the Jews and the Gentiles - salvation is always by faith!*

Repentance, *turning from our sin*, sets the stage, but no one is saved unless they **believe** in God’s salvation.

As Jonah preached, the Ninevites believed God... They believed **His warning**. They knew God meant business... But they also believed **His waiting**...

For God to delay His judgment for forty days, it meant He still loved them, and wanted them to repent. If not, His judgment would've be instantaneous.

Notice too, the Ninevites never question the reason for God's judgment - *and Jonah's warning didn't give them an explanation*. Apparently, these people were well aware of the cause of God's displeasure.

They knew they'd sinned. Assyria had forsaken the one, true God to follow the idolatrous religion of Babel.

Though they believed in many gods, Ishtar was their chief deity. She was a fertility goddess and the god of war. Thus, Nineveh worshipped sex and violence.

And this was evidenced by how the Assyrian troops treated those they defeated. They specialized in torture tactics, and ravaged the women they conquered.

In one sense, Jonah was certainly right about the Ninevites. They were a mean and immoral race. You'd be hard pressed to find a group more deserving of God's judgment, and less likely to believe and repent.

Yet Jonah made the mistake all too common among Christians today. We write people off as *hopeless, unreachable, unredeemable*. We underestimate the power of the Gospel and the love and patience of God.

Too often we forget the miracle God worked in us.

There is *no one* - I mean **NO ONE** - too far gone to be saved by Jesus. No one is outside the reach of God's grace. Paul wrote to the Romans (1:16), "*I am not ashamed of the*

gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...”

Assyria reveled in violence and sexual perversion, *yet God miraculously saved them*. And I’ve got to say it, if there are two characteristics that sum up American culture in the 21st century, it’s our country’s **taste for violence**, and our **lust for sexual pleasure**.

From video games, to cage fights, to road rage, to rogue shootings, to gang wars, to the bullying problem in our schools, to domestic abuse - Americans are becoming a more and more and more violent people.

And we’re becoming a more lust-obsessed people.

Today, every 39 minutes a new pornographic video is *made in America*... 40 million Americans regularly visit pornographic sites... It’s shocking, but 35% of internet downloads - *more than one in three* - are porn related.

We live in a world sick with perversion and violence.

Our society today is out of control. When it comes to *sexual appetites* and *violent impulses* people today have little restraint. Like the ancient Assyrians, many Americans today live to satisfy their base desires, regardless of the cost to themselves and to others.

Yet here’s a ray of hope... *Ancient Assyria* was more perverted and violent than *modern America*, yet the Spirit of God convicted Nineveh of their sin through the preaching of Jonah. When confronted with the mercy and righteousness of Almighty God, Nineveh repented.

**And if revival can come to Assyria it can come to America.** A spiritual awakening can occur in the heart of your stubborn spouse, your perverted neighbor, your out-of-control teenager - it can even come to *sinful you!*

Jonah 3 teaches us, **no one is beyond God's reach!**

The Ninevites not only believed God, but they repented of their sin. Verse 5 tells us they **“proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.”** These were expressions of repentance.

Sackcloth was a rough and gritty cloth - the texture of burlap. **“Fasting”** and **“sackcloth”** were ways of renouncing fleshly desires and pleasures. They gave tangible evidence of their willingness to change.

Verse 6, **“Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.”**

This revival made it all the way to the Assyrian White House. King Trump showed fruits of repentance.

Actually, for you history buffs, the king of Assyria at the time was **Assurdan III**. Even the emperor himself was struck by Jonah's message. God's Spirit swept over the land of Assyria - reaching even to the throne.

And this brings up the question... **“How did Jonah have such an amazing impact on the city of Nineveh?”**

Obviously, it wasn't the content of his sermons - they were just eight words long, *and the same eight words.*

*Let me give you four answers to that question...*



The time was right... The prophet was white... They heard of his flight... And the Spirit showed His might...

First, **the time was right.**

During the reign of Assurdan III a series of disasters had occurred in Assyria that the people had interpreted as omens or signs... There had been a solar eclipse (*a scary phenomena for ancient people*) - an earthquake and famine had rocked the Assyrian empire - as well as a few surprising and uncommon military defeats.

The people were open to a message from God.

Second, **the prophet was white.**

I don't mean Caucasian. Earlier I described Jonah as *battered, bloated, boiled, blistered, buttered, bleached, bald...* but alive! Three days baking in the gastric juices of the fish's belly had definitely altered his appearance.

It singed his hair, and whitened his skin.

When Jonah walked into Nineveh *he just looked fishy.* He immediately captured people's attention.

And third, **they heard of his flight.**

In Luke 11:30 Jesus said, "**Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites...**" Apparently, his story became known among the people. Perhaps 60 Minutes did a segment on him, or he was interviewed on Fox And Friends.

Somehow the Ninevites knew Jonah didn't want to come to their city, and God had to chase him down.

His testimony highlighted God's great love for them. It also reminded them how impossible it would be for them to escape God's judgment if they didn't repent.

It's also interesting the ancient Ninevites worshipped Dagon, the fish-god. Dagon was half-man and half-fish. He had the head of a fish and the torso of a man.

A manifestation of Dagon in Assyrian mythology was the fish-man, "*Oannes*." In fact, the two names "*Oannes*" and "*Jonah*" have a very similar spelling.

It's possible that Jonah's submarine ride in the fish's belly made the pagan Ninevites initially think he was of their own god, Oannes. This gave Jonah an immediate hearing, *and allowed him to preach to them the truth!*

Hey, *the time was right, the prophet was white, they heard of his flight*, but the most important cause for this revival was **the Spirit of God showed His might.**

When Jonah repented in chapter 2, he said in verse 9, "*Salvation is of the LORD.*" Jonah's deliverance had been the work of God, as are all true conversions.

It's the Holy Spirit that ultimately draws us to Jesus.

In John 6:44 Jesus said, "*No one can come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me draws him.*" Nineveh's revival, as with all subsequent spiritual awakenings, was a sovereign work of God's amazing grace.

Verse 7 records the king's royal edict, "*And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor*

beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.”

This was amazing, the king was so serious about repentance that he orders even the Assyrian livestock to share and wear the symbols of repentance.

*Put **Rover** in sackcloth, and empty out **Spot's** bowl. Start **Muffin** on a fast, and dress **Boots** in burlap.*

It wasn't that the animals had a relationship with God, or moral capacities. The king just wanted to include all he could in Nineveh's attempt to show God they meant business in their decision to turn to Him.

This king took repentance seriously... *so should we!*

When God looked down on Nineveh, the king wanted Him to see cows and horses in sackcloth and ashes. Pigs use to living high on the hog, now fasting.

Rebellious cats, *and we know all cats do whatever they want*, sounding a repentant meow. The king wanted God to look down from heaven on a repentant Nineveh, even to the point of saying, **“Holy Cow!”**

Of course, this isn't the first example of animals getting religion. Already in this story, we've seen a whale that was more obedient to God than a Prophet.

**But**, *have you ever heard about the Christian Bear?*

This guy is walking through the woods when a bear jumps out and starts to chase him. The bear finally corners him.

There's no hope, he's about to be eaten, so he prays, "Lord, please let this be a Christian bear!"

Suddenly, the man looks up and he sees the bear on his knees praying. He thinks, "Praise the Lord! This is a Christian bear!" He walks over to give his brother bear a hug when he overhears the hungry bear praying, "*Lord, thank you for this food I'm about to receive.*"

Notice verse 9. The king then asks, "Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?" "**Who can tell?**"

This is amazing, God never promises them forgiveness. Their repentance was based on a hunch! They're all thinking, *Maybe God will change His mind.*

In contrast, those of us who know Christ, have been given a promise! 1 John 1:9 is God's guarantee. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Our repentance rests on God's word and promise, *how much more should we be willing to turn to Him?*

As I mentioned at the outset, throughout history God has launched many revivals - *where His presence was felt, and sinners were convicted, and people repented, and lives were changed, and society was altered...*

And of it all happened on a massive scale.

And our merciful God has been faithful to send these spiritual awakenings whenever they've been needed.

Yet few revivals compare to Nineveh's Great Awakening. At Jonah's preaching a whole metropolis, over a million people, repent of their sin and turn to God. It'd be like everyone in New York City confessing their sins and getting saved - from the thugs in Washington Heights to the bankers on Wall Street.

This may've been the greatest, most comprehensive, outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the history of the world.

Verse 10 reveals heaven's reaction to Nineveh's repentance. "Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it." Rather than spared forty days, their repentance bought Nineveh an added 175 years.

The greatest miracle in this book is not that God prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, but that He forgave and saved the wicked city of Nineveh.

Sadly, the next generation of Ninevites returned to violence and perversion... And again God sent a Hebrew prophet to warn them. Nahum 3 begins, "Woe to the bloody city!" But tragically, Nineveh failed to respond to Nahum's warning, as they had Jonah's.

Finally, in the year 612 BC, God's word to Nineveh was fulfilled. The city was overthrown by Babylon. Seven years later the Assyrian empire was no more.

Verse 10 reveals God's reaction to Nineveh's repentance, **but in 4:1 we learn of Jonah's...** "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry."

Jonah experienced every missionary's dream come true! How many pastors and evangelists have prayed for God to pour out His Spirit and shake a city to repentance - *yet they never live to see it happen?*

But it happened for Jonah! *And when it did, he was displeased.* He hated Nineveh and was angry with God that He didn't hate them too. *The Ninevites didn't deserve God's mercy.* The Prophet Jonah forgot the definition of **mercy**... *its love that nobody deserves.*

2 Peter 3:9 tells us, God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

Ezekiel 33:11 quotes the words of God, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?"

And this is God's heart for all people. God loves the people He's created, and desires to forgive and heal.

Here's a closing thought - *and I think it's very important...* When God prompts your spirit to reach out to a Ninevite (*that is, an believer*) - at work, or on the block, or in your own family - *a person you might be inclined to write off as unreachable.* You might be thinking, "*This girl is into some kinky stuff, or this fellow is a really violent person...*" **Just don't think God's Spirit is only at work on your side of the encounter.**



He's also working in the heart of the person He's asking you to love. The Holy Spirit moved mightily in Nineveh. *Mercy is for those who don't deserve mercy.*

**In God's heart, there is even mercy for the merciless.**

All that stood in the way of Nineveh's salvation was a runaway prophet turning around and obeying God.

And all that might be standing in the way of your friend's salvation is for you to obey. Chapter 3 teaches us that no one is outside the reach of God's mercy!