

## **The Reluctant Messenger**

by Pastor Alan Hannah

**Scripture: Jonah 1**

**Big Idea: We are all messengers, and our silence has consequences.**

**[Jonah 1:1-6]** - *The Lord gave this message to Jonah, son of Amittai: "Get up and go to the great city of Ninevah. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are." But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the Lord. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart. Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw cargo overboard to lighten the ship. But all the time Jonah was sound asleep down in the hold. "How can you sleep at a time like this?" he shouted "Get up and pray to your God! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives."*

We are Jonah. We run in the opposite direction because

- We are afraid
- We're too comfortable
- We're judgmental
- We're too busy

When we avoid sharing our faith, we're not just avoiding uncomfortable conversations; we're avoiding the very purpose God has designed for our lives.

The people who don't know God are more spiritually aware than the guy who does.

Jonah ran from his calling and now a pagan ship captain is telling him to pray. Jonah knew the truth, but he was not living it.

Jonah's disobedience put everyone in danger. When we run from God's call, we don't just hurt ourselves; we hurt people around us.

We are called to be messengers. We are ambassadors. Even to people who are hard to love.

When we say yes to God's call, we don't just change the lives of others, we experience the life God designed for us.

- Stop running
- Start praying

**Life Group Discussion Questions**  
**Sermon Title: The Reluctant Messenger [Jonah 1]**

**WARM-UPS**

1. Are you enjoying this long-extended summer? Are there autumn chores you haven't done yet? Have you been able to enjoy extra summer adventures?
2. Pastor began his message today with a question, "How many of you have ever tried to avoid something you knew you were supposed to do?"

**DISCUSSION**

1. Jonah was called to go to his country's worst enemies. They were known for being very violent and oppressive. Can you blame Jonah for being afraid? Can you blame him for being prejudiced? What other reasons could he have had for running away?
2. How do you understand Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19-20? Do you imagine yourself as a missionary? Can you define what a missionary is? Do you really believe all men need to hear the message of Jesus?
3. What did you think of the video of Penn Jillette? Does he present a good point about sharing the Gospel? Do you really believe that the unsaved think like that? Is the world craving for us to share the message of salvation with them? Are we sharing a message of hope? Are we pushing our beliefs on someone else?

**IN THE WORD**

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|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| • Matthew 28:19-20 | • Ezekiel 2:1-5      | • Romans 10:14-15 |
| • Isaiah 6:8       | • Jeremiah 1:4-10    | • Jonah 1         |
| • Exodus 3         | • 2 Corinthians 5:20 |                   |

**PRACTICE**

- Evaluate your personal feelings about sharing the Gospel. Are you running away from the place God is calling you?
- Who are you going to have "that" conversation with this week? Are you willing to ask God for the task? Are you willing to obey? Who are you hurting with your disobedience?