

Signs of Spiritual Rebellion (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] Pay attention to signs, all kinds of signs. For an example, here's a body language sign. That's the first of 13 definite signs he's not serious about you.

Ladies, if you ever go out with a guy and he does that, smack him upside the head with a menu, then leave. Don't tolerate that. Here's a relational sign.

All men are idiots. I married their king. Both of my daughters-in-law bought and wore that T-shirt at the beach this past week.

My wife bought me a T-shirt. But I was too embarrassed to wear it, so. For the 2% of people who thought I was serious in those two slides, I wasn't.

But after seeing that on the screen, I'm going to guess at least one of my daughters-in-law will get that and wear it. On a more serious note, health signs.

[1 : 14] This could be especially appropriate right now if you're working outside. Signs of a heat stroke. My point here is that all around us, there are signs that we need to take note of.

Signs that can help us to understand things about ourself. We can even see that in people. And we're going to look back in Jonah and see some of the signs in his life that we can learn from.

Turn, if you would, Jonah. We're going to stay in chapter 1 a little bit longer. We'll pick up steam as we move into chapter 2. But this morning, I want us to look at verses 1 through 6 again as we continue the thought, signs of spiritual rebellion.

And we'll read the first six verses. Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.

But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish away from the presence of the Lord.

[2 : 43] But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea. There was a mighty tempest on the sea so that the ship threatened to break up. Then the mariners were afraid and each cried out to his God, and they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them.

But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep. So the captain came and said to him, What do you mean, you sleeper?

Arise. Call out to your God. Perhaps the God will give a thought to us that we may not perish. Let's stop there for right now. I want us to do a little bit of review, but add on to what we looked at last week to start with.

We began looking at this passage last time and thinking about these signs. There's some signs in life that can be misleading. And we see some in Jonah's experience.

Look first with me at deceptive signs of spiritual wellness. Some people like to interpret what happens to them or what's happening to them as a sign.

[4 : 01] If all's going well, it's a good sign that maybe God's pleased with me or that just life is good right now. If there's some bad things happening, some difficulties, I think maybe, well, God's trying to get my attention or it's just a negative time in life.

All these kinds of signs don't really indicate the reality. Jonah shows us that some signs can be misleading.

Let's look at two. Everything seems to be falling in place for you is not necessarily a sign that all is well. When Jonah rebelled against God, you understand, Jonah was a man of God.

We're not talking about an unbeliever here. We're talking about God's man, God's prophet. He had been used by God. He had served one of the northern kingdom's kings.

He's talked about in 2 Kings 14 in a positive way. Jonah heard God's call. He understood what God wanted him to do. Go and preach to these evil, wicked, ruthless people who are the enemies of Israel.

[5 : 18] Go and preach to them. What did Jonah do? He went in the opposite direction. You look in verse 3. He went, found a ship that was going in the opposite of where God called him to go.

He found a ship going as far away as he knew he could go at that point in history, the west coast of Spain. He paid his fare.

He got on the ship and all was well to start with. We don't know how long it was, but some people think it could have been many months from the time Jonah first heard God's call till he got on the ship and the storm struck.

So what I want us to see here is Jonah knew what God wanted him to do, but he said, no, I'll not do it. He rebelled and he literally went away from where God was calling him to go and for a time all was well.

But as you know the story, the smooth sailing didn't last long. The second sign, a deceptive sign, nothing seems to bother you.

[6 : 33] You sleep well. You know, you may be at a point in life where, you know, you just sort of, you're just relaxed, you're at ease, not stressed, and you think life is good.

Well, it may or may not be. The storm that terrified these seasoned sailors, it didn't bother Jonah. He was able to sleep in the midst of it.

But as we just read, God worked through the captain, these sailors, God worked through others to wake Jonah up and got his attention both physically and spiritually.

The storm eventually got Jonah's attention is what I want us to see. Now, let's, I want to add something from the last time when we went through this. What God did to Jonah helps us to see that there is always some kind of storm attached to our willful sins.

There's always some kind of storm attached to our willful, intentional sins. look at something Tim Keller writes about this.

[7 : 54] He says, every act of disobedience to God has a storm attached to it. But then he clarifies, we must be careful here.

This is not to say that every difficult thing that comes into our lives is the punishment for some particular sin. The entire book of Job contradicts the common belief that good people will have lives that go well and that if your life is going badly, it must be your fault.

The Bible does not say that every difficulty is the result of sin. But it does teach that every sin will bring you into difficulty.

The Bible speaks sometimes about God punishing sin. For example, in Proverbs 16, 16, the Lord detests all the proud of heart.

They will not go unpunished. God's going to punish the prideful. In the book of Acts, chapter 5, God actually killed two church members who lied to him, about him.

[9 : 07] You can read about that in Acts 5. The Bible sometimes talks about God punishes sin specifically, directly. But there are other times when the Bible speaks of sin itself punishing us.

The violence of the wicked will drag them away for they refuse to do what is right. I saw how that works firsthand and you can probably think of your own examples.

When I was in high school in the 10th grade in a P.E. class, there was a guy who for whatever reason, I don't remember why, he got so angry he just totally lost control and he punched a steel door twice with his fist.

I mean, I just saw it. He just came unglued, went berserk and bam, bam. The next day, maybe it was a couple of days later, I don't remember the exact time frame on this, but the next time I saw him, he had a cast from right here all the way to his elbow.

His own anger was the cause of his suffering. So what I want to see in this is, as the scripture says, as my example, and you've probably got your own examples, sometimes just the stupid things that we do or the blatantly sinful things we do, it bites us.

[10 : 38] There's no one to blame. We just reap what we sow. Paul talks about that, what we call the law of the harvest in Galatians 6. Look at it.

He says, do not be deceived. God is not mocked for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh, that is his sinful nature, will from the flesh reap corruption.

But the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. If we're wise, as we read what happened to Jonah, we will learn that God does not overlook our willful rebellion.

Right this moment, if you are refusing to obey God about something he's made known to you very clearly, maybe you've read it in his Word.

Maybe there's something that you just know you ought to be doing or not doing. Maybe it involves an attitude. Maybe it involves a relationship. But right now, if you are willfully refusing to obey God in something he's made clear to you, and all is well, you're sleeping soundly, don't think that God has decided to let it go.

[12:11] Don't think he's going to give you a free pass. Remember what Keller said, every act of obedience to God has a storm attached to it.

As Christians, we need to think of such storms as God's fatherly discipline. Sooner or later, God disciplines his rebellious children, and God does that.

We saw another message a few weeks ago. God does that because he loves us. Every parent here, every child here, who had a good, positive, Christian home experience, even if it wasn't a Christian home, every good, positive home experience, child and adult, as a parent, you know parents that truly love their children, don't let them get by by just whatever they want to do.

We go, we die on many hills as parents because we love our children enough to go through the whatever, to teach them what's right, what's wrong, teach them consequences, to try to help them. what kind of child of God are you? Are you a foolish one who has to learn everything the hard way?

[13:43] You have to experience God's discipline over and over and over again because you're just so hard-headed. You're foolish. Or, are you a wise child who understands how important it is, how good it is to obey God the first time, every time because it will enable you to avoid a lot of heartache, a lot of discipline and punishment.

Let's look now at the definite signs of rebellion that we see in this chapter. As I want us to understand, Jonah is a believer. Jonah is like us.

Jonah is not some unbelieving pagan who doesn't care. But in chapter one, he acts worse than unbelievers. So here's the first sign of someone rebelling against God.

You have less spiritual awareness than unbelievers around you. That's a certain sign that you're rebelling against God. When the people you know are not Christians, they're more godly than you. They're more wise than you. They're more concerned about other people than you. The sailors on Jonah's ship, they believed in multiple gods.

[15:11] They were idol worshipers, we would call them. They didn't know God, but yet, what they did know, they cried out to. They sought what they thought was help from above.

Jonah had a real relationship with God. But when the storm struck, he did his best to ignore God. Instead of praying, he slept. it's a shame when we as Christians who know God through his son, Jesus, it's a shame when we show less spiritual interest and commitment than, say, Muslims who do not know God because they reject Jesus as God's son.

They wouldn't think of him thinking of him as their savior. Yet, faithful Muslims pray five times a day. How often do you pray? How sincerely do you talk to God? Faithful Muslims take what they call, what we would call their Bible seriously, the Koran.

They take the study and understanding of it very seriously. how seriously do you take God's word? In that it shows up, you actually do read it.

[16:40] Try to understand it and apply it to your life, in your home. Signs of rebellion.

When unbelievers around you are more spiritually minded, it appears, than you are. Number two, you're unfazed by God's obvious discipline. I don't want to spend any time here, really.

We've looked at it, but don't you just note, a sign of real rebellion is when God's discipline has no effect on you, at least at the first.

You try to ignore God as he attempts to get your attention, like Jonah when he slept. or you try to ignore how your sin is affecting other people. Look back at verse six.

So the captain came and said to him, what do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your God. Perhaps the God will give a thought to us that we may not perish.

[17:43] You see, other people were suffering because of Jonah's rebellion. They'd already lost part of their cargo, their income. they're fearing for their lives.

But Jonah just doesn't seem to care how his sin is hurting other people. Let's go to the next one because here's where I want us to focus for a little bit.

A sign that you are really in full-blown rebellion against God is this. You don't try to cover up your rebellion. You don't try to cover up.

You don't care who knows it. You're not ashamed. Look at verse 10. Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, what is this that you have done?

For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord because he had told them.

Verse 12. He said to them, pick me up and hurl me into the sea.

[18 : 41] Then the sea will quiet down for you for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you. Jonah is running from God and for whatever reason he's told these people.

He doesn't care. He makes it clear. All this is happening because of me. And it seems this attitude in verse 12, he's more willing to die than to repent at this point in time.

Jonah deliberately rebelled against God by running from God's call to go to Nineveh and preach.

And he wasn't ashamed. He didn't try to hide it.

And so here is where we need to make this real personal. Are you deliberately disobeying something that God has made clear in his word and you don't care who knows it?

Truth is you flaunt your sin. I'm thinking about maybe at home. At home, you as a boy or a girl, a young person, you profess to be a Christian.

[20 : 06] Yet, it's real obvious in the way that you talk, your attitude towards your parents, you know you're disobeying what God says about your attitude towards your parents.

But you don't seem to care. You're not ashamed. Or maybe husband, wife, as parents, you profess to be a Christian.

You know how God says you are to be towards your spouse, towards your children. But you don't give a rip. You as a man, the last thing in the world that you're thinking about is how to love your wife like Christ loves the church.

And as a wife, rather than having a submissive spirit, you've got to I'll show you spirit towards your husband. But you know what the Bible teaches.

You know what a Christian husband, wife, parent, child, you know what God expects. And everybody in the family knows what God expects. But you live day in and day out in front of one another ignoring it, suppressing it, rebelling against it, disobeying it.

[21 : 27] It's like you are flaunting your sin there before other people. That's a sign of a hard heart. That's a sign of calluses developing.

That's a sign of you're rebelling and you don't give a rip. Who knows it? That's dangerous. That is very dangerous.

You know, we do some things today in the church. We're involved in some things today in the church that that shows that we don't really care what the Bible teaches and where I'm going this time now is in terms of sexual ethics.

In this country today in most communities premarital sex is just a given.

Everybody does it. People who go to church who profess to be Christians a lot of times live together. not married.

[22 : 48] Or if they don't live together they spend a weekend together. Take trips together. And everybody knows they're sleeping together and they don't care who knows it.

In the context here they're flaunting their sin and if that's you you're flaunting your sin. some professing Christians do this and stay active in the church.

My favorite TV show is Blue Bloods. I like Tom Selleck. He's the star. Well in that show and a lot of you are familiar with it he is a widower.

Well in one episode he spent the night with an old girlfriend in a hotel room. The next morning there's a scene showing him up getting dressed and his girlfriend asks him where are you going so early?

And his reply was to church. That scene was obviously intended to be funny because it was so blatantly hypocritical.

[24 : 07] you see Tom Selleck's character Frank Reagan he is a staunch Roman Catholic. He goes to church every single Sunday.

But in that episode Tom's character the strong Roman Catholic is getting ready for church after a night of deliberate intentional sinful behavior.

sin. And that's just not on TV. That is rampant in the south among Baptists and among many families.

But it's flaunting sin. And that's not the only one. I want to ask you what do you know that you deliberately disobey God about but you don't make any bones about it. You just do it. That is a dangerous position for you to be in. We cannot turn up our nose to God and the truth of His word without consequences.

[25 : 30] And Jonah learned it in the context storm. Now I want to make something real clear here real quick. Over the years especially in days gone by when I pastored in Seneca from time to time we had young couples come to our church who were living together and not married.

And a couple about three or four times they expressed interest these couples in joining our church. And I would go to visit with them. Go to their home where they were living together. And we'd have good talk and I'd say now listen to say that you want to join our church means you're saying two things.

Number one I am a Christian. And number two I'm seeking to live a faithful Christian life. And I'd look at them and I'd say you're not married.

You're living together. Sleeping together. You know you're not living a faithful Christian life. And all but one looked at me and said I know.

We know. And I would tell them I'm glad you're coming to church. I want you to keep on coming to church. But if you really want to be right with God and be serious about your relationship with Him you need to separate now.

[26 : 50] Date. Get married. Just don't continue in this kind of relationship. But as long as you continue in this kind of relationship you cannot join the church.

But I want you to keep on coming. All but one. The ones that lied. All but one came back at least one time. And one of those couples years later one of the ladies came up to me and said you don't remember me probably and I didn't but she said you came to our home.

My boyfriend and I were living together and you talked about that. And I really got under conviction and I didn't do it as soon as I should have but I did separate.

We did separate. We did separate. And we're no longer together. It's important for us to speak the truth in love. I did it in love. I didn't offend. I spoke the truth.

They heard the truth. They believed the truth. They just weren't living it and they even came back. No matter what anybody's condition is in here or if you've got family and friends, you bring everybody under the sun here to hear the truth of God's word.

[27 : 59] And my prayer will be that the spirit of God will use the word of God to change people's hearts. That should be all of us our goal. But I want to go back to Tim Keller's description of sin or bring up his description of sin that I think helps us to see the serious nature.

I'm talking about you. I'm talking about me because we do sinful things. And it's a serious thing when I do it and when you do it. Look at what he says.

Sin is a suicidal action of the will upon itself. It is like taking an addicting drug. At first, it may feel wonderful, but every time it gets harder to not do it again.

Sin always hardens the conscience, locks you in the prison of your own defensiveness and rationalizations and eats you up slowly from the inside.

All sin has a mighty storm attached to it. The image of a storm is powerful because even in our technologically advanced society, we cannot control the weather and we cannot control sin or its consequences.

[29 : 19] as some wise person said one time, sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.

It will, you or me. Sin is serious wherever it's found. However, we should not be surprised when people who do not even profess to be Christians, when they do sinful things.

When they do sinful things without being ashamed, what do you expect? There's a whole different story when we, professing Christians, deliberately disobey God's word.

There's something terribly wrong if we can willingly sin without shame or guilt. It's a sign that we're either in full-blown rebellion against God and that our heart has become hard, or it's a sign that we aren't a Christian.

If either of those signs are present in your life right now, the first thing you need to do is admit your sin to God and change your mind about it, turn from it, repent. If you're not a Christian, put your trust in Jesus, call upon Him to save you.

[30 : 46] When He died on the cross, He paid the penalty for that sin. Trust Him now. If you are a Christian, not only repent of your sin, turn from it, but humble yourself before the Lord right now. and commit yourself anew to Him as the real Lord, boss of every aspect of your life. Live to honor Him and please Him. Let's pray together. Father, make it clear how we should respond, every single one of us, and give us the grace to do that right now. And let's just in an attitude of prayer, respond to the Lord as He speaks. I would be happy to pray with you during this time right here at the front. But I just want you to take a few minutes to act on what God has made clear to you throughout this message. Let's just pray together in silence. Z APPPro to