

Jonah 2:10

So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Excuses, excuses, excuses, we all have excuses that we give to the Lord for why we can't do something. If we are honest, most of the time the excuses are because we don't want to do it, not because we can't. But here is something to think about next time you do not feel like you honestly can't do something for the Lord. Read today's verse again and just think about it for a minute:

So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

So, what comes to mind when you read that? For me, I read of a man who was rebellious and did not want to do what God told him to do. But I read even more than that. If you think about it, Jonah was in the belly of a fish for 3 days, which means he was floating around in all those stomach acids and dead fish and seaweed and other things floating around in it's stomach that would make us sick if we really pondered it.

So here is Jonah, bleached white skin from the fishes stomach acid, dead fish parts probably clinging to his skin and clothes, and can you even imagine what he smelled like?

I can just a little bit, because there was a place I used to work at in California, which was not far from was farm land. Now in the summer, they would fertilize the land with fish parts, and I could still remember walking out of the building I worked in, and it was scorching hot and the smell of those dead fish parts and the heat almost made you sick to your stomach. That was probably just a hint of what Jonah smelled like.

Now that you have that image of Jonah (White bleached skin, fish parts, seaweed hanging from his body, and the smell), this same man gave one of the shortest evangelical messages recorded in the bible.

† **Jonah 3:4** *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!"*

Eight words long, and with that eight word sermon, looking and smelling like the back alley of a fish market, what do you think the results were?

† **Jonah 3:5-10** *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.

All, not some, but all the people in Nineveh, including the king repented.

So no matter what you look like, smell like or what you have, it's not about you. Just like it wasn't about Jonah, but about eight words from the Lord that pierced the hearts of the people.

Now, what was your excuse again?

† **1 Corinthians 3:6-7** *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.*