

## I. Introduction and Personal Testimony

I probably get more anxious and nervous about doing stuff like this just to the children, because when I am up here talking, you guys don't exist. Today is always about you guys, and every day I do this, it's always about you guys. You guys are very important to us.

My name is Mike Hammond. A lot of you don't know me, and the reason you don't know me is because of two things: I don't hang out and do things like softball, or ministry-wise, I'm not doing anything. That's why you don't know me.

I've been coming here for about two years, and we came every day faithfully. Pam, she doesn't remember, but she came up to me, and I've been coming here two years, and Pam came up to me and she goes, "Hi, how are you? Are you new here?" I looked at her and I was like, "Pam, I've been coming here for two years." She laughed and said, "Oh, I'm so sorry." I told her, "No, that's all right." She goes, "Well, who are you?" She kept on digging, and I told her, "Well, my wife is Elizabeth." And she goes, "Oh, okay, now I know who you are."

It took a while for that to hit me, but as she did that, and then more and more I learned my Bible and started putting Bible principles into my life, it came across to me. She didn't know me until I mentioned my wife, or a lot of folks in this church don't know me until they see my wife. They know my wife, but they don't know me. It's not because she's doing anything in the ministry, or she's hanging out, it's just because she's easier to talk to than me, maybe.

## II. The Call to Authentic Faith

She didn't know me, but I got to thinking, what if God came down right now and jerked that Holy Spirit out of you? Would people know the difference in you out in the world? Maybe in the church, because we act different, but how about out in the world? Would they know a difference? I bet you 90% of you, not to be mean, they wouldn't know a difference.

You know why? They wouldn't know a difference in me. That's what changed my life, is to realize that I am a sinner, but the most important thing is I'm a hypocrite. The way I act here and the way I act out there are two different things. That's what changed me. That's what woke me up.

I knew once that happened, I started praying to the Lord. I said, "Lord, whatever it is, whatever is keeping me from You, take it away. Just get rid of it. I want to serve You, Father. I want to do whatever it takes to make You happy. I need to be serving You, because one day there's a judgment seat that I'm going to have to stand for and be an accountant on the things I did and didn't." When I get there, I want to be answered with a statement and not a question of what I did for Him. When I get up there, I want Him to look at me and go, "You know what, Mike? You did it halfway. You could have done better. But you tried."

### III. Overcoming Fear and Pursuing God's Will

Boys and girls, before I started doing this stuff, I'd get real nervous. I'm nervous right now doing it, because I'm scared I'm going to make a fool out of myself, because we're so worried about impressing people. That's all we care about. That's what this world teaches us. That's what our schools teach us. We hear every day, we get preached to that. You look at the newspaper, it's always about a race. It's always about who's on top, who's doing what, who's out there in front. We're so worried about what other people think, and we were never worried about what the Lord thinks.

Before I came up here, I know when Bob first asked me to do this, me and the wife, backing up a little bit, I told the wife a Baptist church that I was serving some time at let me do a chalk talk drawing, that tabernacle there at the church. I enjoyed it. I absolutely was addicted to drawing and teaching. I got that from watching Ruckman, which by the way, I would have never come across Ruckman unless I'd been in this church. There's a lot of things I wouldn't be doing unless I came into this church.

So I do that at that church, and we get out, and I tell Liz, I said, "Hey, this is what I've got to do. I don't care what we do in life. I've got to do this. I've got to draw and teach at the same time, or preach, or whatever it is. I don't care what it is and who I'm doing it to. I don't care if three or four kids show up. I don't care if it's the garbage man. I need to do this."

So I started praying for the Lord to put desires in my heart and to take out the other desires. Now that's been painful. That's been very painful because the fact is, if all of us would be doing the things we should be doing, we'd probably lose our job. We'd probably lose some friends that we have. We probably wouldn't be doing some of the things that we're doing if we're doing the things for Him. That's the fact that we don't do it because we're too busy worrying about what people think about us instead of what He thinks about us.

Before I came up here, I was nervous. I was nervous that I was going to make myself a fool on what I'm doing. I'm nervous I'm going to mess it up, and I probably will. I'm young at this game. This is probably the fifth or sixth time I've done this, so I'm sure I'm going to make myself look goofy. I don't have to really work that hard to make myself look goofy, but to the kids, they don't see that. I had to stop worrying about the adults. I'm not doing this for the adults, even though I may try to stick a jab at you every now and then. I'm not doing it for the adults. I'm doing it for them.

### IV. The Importance of Children and Childlike Faith

You know why I'm doing it for you guys? Because God says, the Bible tells us that when I come to an age to where I understand what sin is, and that the penalty for sin is death. It's a second death, and it's a lake of fire.

I had to come to the point to where I understood that being a sinner, there's a penalty of death, and that's eternal separation and a lake of fire without God in my life. Once I came to that realization, I had to make a decision to accept Christ as my Lord and Savior. Once that took

place, there's a lot of decisions, a lot of things that have to change in my life. A lot of things that I don't like, a lot of things that I'm doing that I don't like that need to change, because I've got to spend time with you guys. The biggest change is accepting Christ as my Savior.

You know when God says, the Bible says that we are to do that? When I go from understanding that I'm a sinner, understanding that I need the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior, so I don't face that lake of fire. You know what He tells me? He tells me that I need to have faith like a child. He's telling an adult that I need to have your faith. A grown man, not very educated, but a grown man, that I need to have your faith. That's pretty cool. We need to take note of that. He thinks you guys are very special, and I need to think you guys are very special.

That's part of this, is I want to reach children, because obviously if we care anything about the Lord, we'll care about what He cares about. This is what's driving us to do this. I've been doing these drawings to the kids, and we've been doing them to home schools, and they seem to be very successful as far as what the Lord's doing, not what I'm doing, obviously, because I would tear this thing apart the first day it happened. We've been really blessed with the amount of kids that come to it. It's been a good deal.

My wife and I, she said, "You know what? You build a board, and I'll get the people to start coming." That's exactly what we've been doing. It's been a team effort. We've been working very hard at this, and we've been working really hard trying to keep ourselves out of the picture to make sure God is the main focus and not ourselves. We had one yesterday, and I did Zacchaeus, and I did it the exact same way Bob did it. It was very good. As far as the message, not me, the message was very good. The drawing was okay. I don't really consider myself a good artist at all. The kids will tell me that.

I did this drawing right here, and there was this boy up at the front. The one thing I've asked the Lord to do is to keep my flesh out of this. I don't want my flesh nowhere near this, what He's got going on in our lives. This kid's up there, and he's sitting here staring at my drawing. I see that, and all of a sudden my flesh takes over. I'm like, "So you want that drawing?" That little boy looks at me and goes, "Nah, that's all right." We don't invite that family back anymore. Nobody else can worry about his little soul, but it's not going to be me.

But I do think, you know what the Lord made up for it? The Lord made up for it. I had this one little girl that comes to every one of them, and she comes up when I'm done, and she very softly asks, she said, "Can I have that?" I'm like, rock star. That's the way I feel. Your parents, don't get this wrong guys, I don't care what they think about me because it's you guys. If you guys care about what I'm doing for you, trying to get you to learn, that's all that means to me. Man, that's payment enough. That's why I do this. That's why I drag this big board around in my van because it's you guys. You guys are all I care about, you guys, because you know why? Because the Lord cares deeply about you to write you in that Bible, and then we need to pay attention.

## V. Parents as Bows, Children as Arrows

You know God compares the mom and dad as a warrior in the Bible, and we are, we're Christian warriors. We are to stand strong in the faith. But you guys are our ammunition. He describes you

guys as arrows, like a bow and arrow. Now a lot of people don't really catch on to that. That's just something He's just comparing us to. The moms and dads that don't hunt don't really catch on to that.

Well, just so I can try to bring some clarification to that, as a bow hunter, the most important thing in my arsenal is my arrows. It's not my bow, and the bow would be the part that you would use to launch that arrow out at that animal or that prey that you're, or the victim that you're trying to kill. Because that's why I'm out there hunting, to kill something. I'm not out there to enjoy God's nature. I'm out there to kill something.

The most important thing in my arsenal of stuff I've got is the arrow. Not the bow, it's the arrow. If I've got a bow, I can't do anything with it. If I've got my backpack, my binoculars, I still can't do anything with that. I can't kill any animals with that. But if I've got an arrow, I can strap it to a stick. I can caveman it. I can do, there's multiple things I can do to strike an animal or an opponent.

But why God's using that as an arrow, and there's other biblical principles you can apply to the arrow itself, as far as the feathers, the straightness of the shaft. But us as parents, we need to make sure that when we have you guys' arrows, that we do sharpen you with the word of God. That we do keep your spine, as far as the shaft of the arrow, very straight. And that we make sure we equip you with the Lord Jesus Christ so He can act as the fletchings and rudders to guide you out there. Those things are very important.

We need to make sure we equip you guys because an arrow can go further and faster than I can, as far as my children. So when I launch them, they're going to go, they're going to do it, hopefully like what Bob's doing with us. It took him a while to gather it, and now we're all his arrows, and he can send us out faster and quicker and do more, I don't want to say damage, but do more damage than what he can do. That's with our children. We need to make sure that we sharpen their tips. We need to make sure their spines are straight. We need to make sure the feathers on the arrow, which are Christ, are leading you straight.

Not only that, but it's also important as parents, we need to make sure that we aim straight. Because we're not done yet. We still have to shoot that arrow out of there. All the preparation of making your kids straight, you know, we can train our kid up in this church and take all the Bible notes you want. That still is not going to be enough. It's the parent. We've got to aim straight and aim true. Because if we're in a war, which we are, we are in a spiritual war, we are shooting our arrows.

You know what happens if you're in a battle, or how about this, if we're playing Star Wars, and we got some cool bows in Star Wars, and we shoot that at Darth Vader and his little guys, what's going to happen if we miss and that arrow hits beside him? He's going to pick that arrow up and shoot it back at us. So we need to make sure our aim, parent-wise, our aim is true. Because it's all about our children.

## VI. The Story of Jonah: Disobedience and Repentance

Moms and dads, what I'm doing up here, I want to inspire you. If I can, I am not a good artist. I'm not a good preacher. But if we can take 20% goodness of here and 20% goodness of a preacher, I'm 40% now. So take whatever it is, like auto mechanics, teach some people, have a Christian class on that, do something, get up, whatever, how goofy, I don't care if it's doing hair, get up and teach somebody something with the Bible. Sometimes, you've got to make it interesting to get them into it. You may have to do some little bit of tricks and stuff. I'll never have flashing lights or anything goofy to get people into my drawings. Because I don't want them walking away going, "Man, that drawing was great," or "Man, Mike's good," or I don't want that. I want these little kids walking away going, "You know what, that Bible story really inspired me. I like that Bible story." That's what I want. And that's what we need to be doing as a church, is grabbing people.

That's why no one really, really knows who I am, is because I don't really do a whole lot for the church, or should I say God's ministries. But that's going to change. We're going to do everything we can to focus my family on the Lord, and whatever He needs done, I don't care if it's taking out the trash somewhere. I'll do that for Him. That's what we're going to do. We're going to take out the trash.

What I'm drawing here today is the story of Jonah. This story is in the Old Testament. This story is here for our learning. There are lots of applications, and this isn't Bob, by the way. This is Jonah. I want you guys to help me. As Christians, as people that are Bible believers, you need to make sure that I'm staying straight. You need to make sure that I'm doing what's right as far as that Bible is concerned. So if I start telling you something that's not right, you guys need to correct me. Can you do that? Can you correct me? Tell me what's correct if I'm doing it wrong? If not, then I'll have to get your parents' help.

We've got a story of Jonah, and the Lord comes down, and He tells Jonah to rise. "Jonah, rise. I need you to go to New Jersey for Me." Is that right? No. Where was he told to go? It was Nineveh. He said, "Arise and go to Nineveh." Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh. The reason he didn't want to go to Nineveh is everybody in Nineveh doesn't like Jonah or his people. So that's not a good idea as far as Jonah's concerned. Actually, Jonah would rather see those people die if he could, just because he doesn't like those people, and he knows they're out to get his people, the Jews or the Hebrews. So he wants to let God destroy them because he knows if he stays away from them that God will destroy them. What's going on is Nineveh's very bad. They're hitting their brothers and sisters. They're not doing what their mommies and daddies tell them. They're not doing their schoolwork. They're not doing their Bible studies when their mommies and daddies want to share it with them. So God's very angry at these people, and He wants to destroy them. So He is trying to get Jonah to go there and to preach to them.

What does Jonah do instead of going there and preaching? He gets eaten by a whale. Why does he get eaten by a whale? Because that was his punishment. Because he didn't do what God asked. That's right. What happens to me and you if we don't do what God asks? We don't really get punished. No, He won't say anything bad to you. We will mess up enough on our own to where I will run myself into the wall. He won't have to punish me. I'll do it myself, I promise you, and I'll do a very good job at it.

Jonah is a prophet. Do you know what a prophet is? A prophet is someone that works with the Lord. So if there's a king, Jeroboam, that Jonah works for, God speaks through Jonah to tell Jeroboam what to do. So that's sort of like if we were back in the Bible days and we had Bob, Bob would be our prophet. And God would give Bob direct commandments on what to tell us and what to do. And then he would give them to us. But now we have the Bible. And that's what Bob uses is the Bible to give us our commandments on what we should do and how we should live. So Jonah is a prophet. And so Jonah has direct contact with, or speaking with the Lord, they're on talking terms. Just like we are, we're on talking terms, but He talks through that Bible to us.

So Jonah doesn't like the idea that he needs to go to Nineveh. He doesn't want to go to Nineveh. So just like us, when our mommies and daddies tell us stuff, what do we do? We don't do it. I know I don't. Well, sometimes you do. That's good that sometimes you do it. But the same thing, if we don't do what our mommies and daddies tell us to do, which it's hard, I understand, that our parents don't know a whole lot. If we won't do it, our mommies and daddies, if we're not submissive to our parents, then we won't be submissive to the Lord. So this is kind of training for us. This right here is all, and I'll come back through, but we can apply all of ourselves to the story. So as I'm drawing this story out, I want you guys to look at it. While I'm talking, see if you can apply yourself. There's lots of stories in here as far as Christ, Israel. There's a ton of stories in here, but I want you guys, this is about you, I want you to try to find yourself in the story of Jonah.

Jonah's running from the Lord, so he goes down to a place called Joppa and he gets on a boat. He pays the captain to get on the boat and he runs. He runs to a place called Tarshish. He doesn't quite make it there. Why doesn't he make it there? Can they not get the boat motor started? No, they don't have motors. Good job. No, that's awesome.

So Jonah's running. He goes down to a little coastal town called Joppa and he gets on a boat. But the funny thing is, the Bible mentions when he gets on that boat, he goes down into the boat and he ends up going to sleep because he's very comfortable with the decision that he's made. He thinks that his decision is better than the one God's made. That's what we do the same thing. We think our decision is better than what our parents say. I know this, I've got five kids that don't do a thing I say. And they think that their decisions are better. But always you'll see what happens to our decisions when we make decisions that they're not always the best decisions and that there's consequences to those decisions. I'm glad because you know why? You know what consequences are? Those are U-turns for me and you to come back to the Lord. Those are U-turns for me and you to come back to get back good with our parents so we can get on the right path.

Jonah goes down to that boat and he gets on the boat and the boat gets out there and a great big storm blows up. That's right. They do throw him overboard. A big storm comes up and this storm is just the biggest one those guys have ever seen. So you see on this boat there's a captain and there's a couple sailors on there. They're all doing the sail and the rudders and they've got guys that are rowing and they can't get past the storm. These guys, they have enough common sense to know that this storm is different. This storm is bigger than any other storm they've ever seen. So they know that obviously somebody has made a God mad.

Now these guys don't know what God's mad because the captain and the sailors are all pagans. They worship stuff like fish. They worship the sun. They worship birds. So when this storm hits them, they all start freaking out. They get scared. They get panicky. You know what they start doing? They start praying to their gods. They start praying to their fish God. Can a fish God save you? No. How about the sun? Can it save you? No. You know what the moon can? No, it can't. No, the moon can't save you.

These guys, they're praying to all their little gods and nothing's happening. No one's coming to save them. So they start freaking out because now they realize that their gods are useless and that their gods can't do anything to save them. So they start looking around for everybody because maybe there's some other gods out that they miss, like a crawdad or a snake god or a tree god. So they start looking for everybody saying, "Hey, we need everybody to pray to their god." Then they notice that Jonah is missing. "Where's Jonah at?" There ain't no other God though. There's only one. That's right, sweetie.

They're freaking out because they can't get themselves. They're trying to save themselves through talking to their gods. So they're looking for everybody on the boat. So hopefully someone has, they figure if they pray to all the gods, they're going to hit one of them and get saved. But they can't find Jonah. They're like, "Where's Jonah at?" And the captain says, "You know, I'll go down. I'll go down and look for him." So they go downstairs and what's Jonah doing downstairs? He's sleeping downstairs. So that captain looks down there and says, "O sleeper, what are you doing? Get up here and pray to your God that we might not perish."

So they get Jonah up there and they're all very scared to death of what's happening and why whatever God is mad at them. So they kind of, they draw all these things called lots. Lots is like rolling the dice, basically like spinning an arrow on a game board and there's five of us sitting around and when that arrow points to you, then it's pointing to you. So they do this with Jonah and they begin to question Jonah, "Jonah, where are you from? Who are your people? What are you doing? What's going on?" Jonah begins to spill his guts that he's basically confessing that, "Hey guys, I am a Hebrew and my God is the God of the sky, the heavens and the earth, the dry land and I am running from Him." Jonah begins to tell the sailors, the pagans, why he's running from the Lord.

So they say, "Hey Jonah, what do we need to do to satisfy your God to make your God happy?" And Jonah, what does Jonah tell them? Jonah said, "Hey, if you all want this storm to stop, you need to throw me overboard." But they didn't do that. You know what they did? They got their rowboats, their oars, and they started rowing themselves and they were rowing very, very hard and they were trying to save themselves. But can you save yourself? No, they were doing their best to row and row and row, but the storm was so powerful because God brought a really big storm to them that they couldn't save themselves. So those guys kind of came to the conclusion that, "Okay, we know we can't save ourselves because this guy's obviously the God." So they get with Jonah and sorry buddy, they toss him over.

What happens as soon as Jonah gets tossed over into the ocean? The storm stops. That's right. It's very, very calm. Once those guys see that, every one of the guys that were pagans that were

worshiping the suns and the moons, they realized that point and they all start making their vows and doing their little sacrifices because they'd seen the power of the real God who's the same God that me and you read about in our Bibles. As soon as he hits that water, that's right, it becomes calm.

Then the Jonah story says it's a big old whale that comes and swallows him up. But I want to, I think it's a big catfish. Don't you think it's a big catfish that comes and swallows him up? No, a whale. How do we know it's a whale? We know that because someone said because the Bible says that, right? The Bible tells us that's where we get our truth from. But what if I want to change it to a catfish? Is that okay? But there's a reason though. Why should we stick with the whale? That's right. Sadie, do you have that verse? You can stand up and read that for me.

*Matthew 12:40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

That's right. So it's the Bible there. Jesus is actually giving an account of Jonah and Jesus, our Lord and Savior, is telling us that it's a whale. So it's a whale regardless of what anybody thinks. It's a whale. And that whale comes and swallows him up. Right? How long is Jonah in the whale's belly? Three days. That's right. Who else is in a grave for three days? Jesus was, right? So see that's Jonah was a sign to the Jews back then, the Hebrews. That's why Jonah had to be in that whale's belly for three days and three nights.

Jonah's in that whale's belly and what's Jonah do in that whale's belly? What's he doing the whale's belly while he's in there? He starts praying. He starts repenting on his decisions. Because sometimes the things we do, God has to send us a storm and He has to send us a whale to get us back on track because we spend a lot of time running from Him and we'll justify why we're running from the Lord and we'll come up with all kinds of things. Just like Jonah did, he was so comfortable with why he was running from the Lord that he went down and went to sleep. So we will justify things all the time.

What happened after Jonah said that prayer? The whale, did he spit him out though?

*Jonah 2:10 And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.*

Yes, there you go. So we want to stick with vomiting because the Bible says that the Lord spoke and had the whale vomit up Jonah. Have you ever been vomited on? Yeah. How many of us have vomited up on our mom? I vomited up on my dad. That's right. Truth be told guys. That's right. So you know what your dad, you know what your mom or dad does as soon as you vomit up on them? You know what they do? If they don't drop you right there. You know what they do? They go and they wash themselves off. You know why they wash themselves off? You stink really bad. I mean it's a bad smell. It sticks to you, it gets in your hair. It looks like somebody put way too much mousse in your hair. You know, you got flies all around you. You're just disgusting. Can you imagine if someone just dumped a bucket of vomit on your head? Do you think anybody would talk to you? No. You stink like a skunk. Yeah, you would stink like a skunk. You stink so, so bad.

When he got vomited back up on the beach there, back on dry land, not New Jersey. When he got vomited back up on the beach, the Lord came down and told him, "Jonah, get up and go to Nineveh and preach." So he gets up and he goes. But you know the thing is, Jonah has got vomit all over him. He stinks. He is just utterly gross. He's probably a very ugly sight. Not very pretty to look upon. He smells. But you know what? Even though in his condition, God still wants to use him. Even though he stinks, God wants to use him. Even though he looks ugly, God wants to use him. In his short, parlous stature, God wants to use him. It doesn't matter. God wants to still use him. I can't talk and write at the same time, so I had to stop.

So Jonah is here, and so the Lord says, "Get up and go to Nineveh." So he goes to Nineveh and he preaches. He preaches, it takes him a day to walk into that city. The city is huge. There's probably five to six hundred thousand people and women and children in this city. So it's a huge city. The Bible says when he starts to walk in this city, it takes him a day just to get to the center of the city because it's so big. But when he gets there, he preaches. Sage, will you read your second verse for me, bud?

*Jonah 3:4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*

That's right, "Yet forty days, Nineveh shall be overthrown." Jonah doesn't want to go there anyways. He really wants these people to die. It would really take a lot of stress off of him and his people. The crazy thing is, these people didn't go on being bad. They repented of their sins. They believed Jonah so much on what he was telling them that they all took these sackcloths. These sackcloths are like burlap sacks, but I think these were made out of like camel hair and goat's hair and they were probably dark in color. Can you imagine wearing a camel outfit and then going outside and getting charcoal or ashes and putting them all on you and your armpits and your ear and your hair? That's what the whole, even the king from the greatest to the littlest went and did that because they were doing works and they were trying to show the Lord that, "Hey, we are sorry and we repent from and we turn from our evil ways and we don't want to do that anymore," because they didn't want to die.

But Jonah didn't like that. He didn't like that at all that these people are repenting. He knew back there on the bank before he ever got on the boat in Joppa that if these people did take his warning and these people did repent from their sins, that God would forgive them because you know why? If we ask the Lord, no matter what you've done, if you ask God for forgiveness, He will forgive you. So Jonah knows this. That's why he's avoiding them.

Jonah goes to the outside of the city and he sits there and he's sulking like a little baby because he's upset that God is forgiving these people. Jonah is really hoping that they don't turn from their sin. He's waiting and waiting and nothing ever happens. So Jonah gets very, very angry that the Lord is not destroying these people. So Jonah makes himself a booth on the outside of the city. Now a booth is something that has a couple sides to it. It's got one, two, three, three of the most sides to it. It's something they can get in to kind of protect themselves from the weather a little bit. But it doesn't really protect you from the sun a whole lot.

Jonah's sitting there and he's sulking. He's just pouting. He's upset because things didn't happen his way. And the sun's pretty hot. It's been probably like it was here the last couple of days. So Jonah's out there and he's very hot. God, that night when Jonah falls asleep, God grows up a gourd. This gourd's a pretty big gourd and it shades Jonah from the sun. So when Jonah wakes up that next day, he sees this gourd and how it's covering him and it makes him very happy that he has shade of this gourd. That night he falls asleep and the Lord sends a worm. I don't know if the worm's mad, I just drew the worm mad. The worm comes and he eats the gourd at night. So when the worm eats the gourd, the gourd withers away. It kind of falls apart. So now he didn't have that shade. So now Jonah is exceedingly mad and angry because the gourd's gone.

## VII. Application: God's Desire to Use Us

God did that as He does things to me and you to prove a point. What's important is that we recognize that there's a point to be taken as the story of Jonah is a point for us to be taken. Jonah didn't have anything to do with this gourd. He didn't plant it. He didn't grow it. He didn't water it. Didn't take care of it. Didn't prune it. Didn't do anything. And when it grew up and perished, he was upset about that. He was more concentrated on this than he was this.

God sent him to Nineveh to preach there because there was, the Bible says there was about 6,000 children in that city that were going to perish if he didn't go and preach to them. So because of his selfishness, this is what the Lord is trying to teach him is you are more upset over this gourd than you were 6,000 children. So the whole thing, I did all this to come back and do this.

God tells us all the time that we need to be doing stuff. We need to be witnessing. He was talking about that guy, Cascos, that obviously there was something going on and he died. Did any of us witness to him? I can guarantee you, any of us Christians that walk past him, there's a little tug in our heart that says, "Hey, tell him about Me. Talk to him about Me." And we didn't do it. You know what we did? We walked right past him. Sometimes we get that, well, that took a man's life to bring us back to right here.

That's what happens to me when I was at, when I first accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. After that, I started having these goofy dreams about preaching. I have no business having dreams like this. And I couldn't figure out where they come from. I would wait, it'd keep me up at night thinking about preaching. Obviously that was, I was delusional from what I'm thinking. But when I came to Old Paths, things started coming together, but still they wouldn't come together enough because I was still running from the Lord. I sat back there, took my Bible notes and I kept quiet and I did nothing in the church. I did nothing for the Lord. Therefore, half of you don't know me because of that.

So this is me sitting back here taking my notes. I'm not doing, I'm not answering that call. I'm not getting up and doing anything for the Lord. So I spent some time at Bible Baptist in Bonner Springs. It was an emotional ride for us over there. You're talking about God brought me here. I learned how to run a church correctly through watching these guys. And then God brought me over there and taught me how exactly not to run a church. I don't want to get up here and chew on anybody, but it was a roller coaster of a goofy ride.

That's where I was. I had to come to the realization that, you know what? I was in a teaching position there and I can't go on. I can't do this without my Bible. I was still at the stage where I'm still like this. I go meet Bob once a week and I can't tell you, I still wake up at night going, "Context, get the context." He beats that in my head and I need that. And I wasn't getting that before. So I was struggling with my Bible. I come to a point to where I had to say my prayers. I had to get myself right. Not just for the Lord, but get myself right with Bob so I could, me and Bob could kindle our relationship. That's New Year's Eve night for me. If you all remember that. That's New Year's Eve night.

This is me now, right here. This will never be me. Because I understand where I'm at. And he didn't understand where he was at when he got here. That's what I want. I want moms and dads, where are you at on this board? Are you here? Is God pulling at your heart? Are you running? Do me a favor, recognize it before He brings you a whale. Because that whale could be a loss of a child, a job. Thank the Lord. I've got, not that I have any despair, but I've got five kids. Plenty of opportunity for one of them to come up missing just to get my attention.

Where are you at on this board? Are you here? Are you running? Is He tugging at your heart? If you've been saved, you've been in this church. I know Bob says five years, but really, if you've been in this church two years, you've got enough of the Bible to where this is you. We just need to make a decision. Now I had to go through this for me. I wish I didn't because of the emotional roller coaster of us crying and being confused and not knowing what's going on. But I'm glad I went through it because I learned a lot. I wouldn't be here if I didn't go through the junk I went through. I wouldn't be teaching the children.

When I first started preaching, there was no way I would have... I'm Michael. I'm two. I got a big head anyways. I can't preach to kids. I need to preach to adults. I had to go to Bob's for counseling on that because I didn't... How do I preach to kids? With the help of Bob and the Lord, this is where I'm at today. But it's because I've been able to look back and look at Jonah and apply that to my life. That makes it more of a heart story for me.

## VIII. Closing and Prayer

I appreciate everybody's attention. I love the kids. Real quick to the kids, do you all have any questions? Yes, sir. Can I have that? Yes! You all don't have your Bibles, do you? These all got their Bibles. That's awesome, Joe. Look at his... Hey, that's it right there, though. That's it.

All right. We're going to dismiss. You're a good man. You're a good man. Are you all... Okay, the ones that have got their Bible today... Can you all find your verses pretty quick? Yeah? You're going to take this home, aren't you, man? All right. Let's everybody... Whoever has their Bibles, get your Bibles out. We'll do this again sometime. Just remember to bring your Bibles, okay? All right. Who can find... Everybody got a Bible? Find John 3:16.

*John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Amen. Amen. All right. I don't know if for some reason I will draw everybody one if you want one, but I'm going to give it to this young man tonight, okay? Do you want my drawing? Okay. All right. Yeah. All right. We're going to dismiss in a prayer, guys, okay? All right. We're going to bow our heads and we're going to say a prayer right now.

Dear Heavenly Father, our Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ, thank You, Father, for us to have the opportunity to teach these kids and to reach these young ones, Father. We know they're important to You as they are important to us. I know as a saved Father, my greatest glory for me is going to be giving all of my children back to You because they are Your reward. We love You, Jesus, and Christ our Savior. Amen.