



## Jesus' Favorite Easter Story

Matthew 12:38–42 (ESV)

*Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." <sup>39</sup> But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup> The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. <sup>42</sup> The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.*

### I. Jonah and Jesus:

1. Both sent to a place they would rather not go.
2. Both sacrificed themselves for others.

Jonah 1:15 (NIV)

*Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm.*

Romans 5:8-10 (NIV)

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! <sup>10</sup> For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*

3. Both were left for dead for three days.
4. Both came back with a message of salvation.

### II. What to do if your life is ebbing away: (Jonah 2:7-10)

Jonah 3:1-10 (NIV)

*Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: <sup>2</sup> "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." <sup>3</sup> Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. <sup>4</sup> Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." <sup>5</sup> The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. <sup>6</sup> When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. <sup>7</sup> This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. <sup>8</sup> But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. <sup>9</sup> Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." <sup>10</sup> When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.*

1. Remember the Lord.
2. Cry out to the Lord.
3. Trade seats with the Lord.
4. Trust the Lord enough to obey when you don't want to.

### III. Easter is the only hope for:

1. Any Christian who's heading in the opposite direction.
2. Those who find themselves in the enemy's camp.