“Fleeing from God”

Jonah 1:3 (F)

One of the strange facts of human life is the fact that there is within every man an underlying urge to escape God. This is true not only of the rabid atheist, but also of the devout theist. We may not be aware of this in our conscious minds, but deep down within the hidden chambers of the subconscious there is the mad desire to flee from the presence of the Almighty God.

On the one hand, this attempt to escape God stems from man’s desire to hide his innermost nature. Every psychiatrist is familiar with the tremendous force of resistance in each personality against self-revelation. Nobody wants to be known, even when he knows that his health and salvation depend on it. Nobody wants to be known. There is something within all of us that we wish to hide, something that we wish to remain private. But when we stand in the presence of the Almighty God, that which is humanly private becomes divinely public. God looks with eyes that see everything. He peers into man’s ground and depth. Our entire inner life, our thoughts and desires, our feelings and imaginations, are known by God. Who does not hate a companion who is always present on every rock? Who does not want to break through the prison of such a perpetual companionship?

Another reason why man seeks to escape God is because he doesn’t want to follow the commands of God. God’s commands are exacting, final, and ultimate. Man in his finite, frail, and sinful nature seeks to escape these exacting demands.

Man’s perennial attempt to flee from God is pictured graphically in the book of Jonah.

Tell the story

AD CSKC Sermon file, folder 63, "Fleeing from God & When God Seems to Deceive Us"

“Fleeing from God,” Sermon outline

Text Jonah 1:3 (F)

I Intro — Modern man’s quest to flee from God

Tell the story

II Ways modern man has sought to flee God

1 Running to the city of science
   a But this not the way (The atomic bomb)

2 Going to the city of pleasure

3 Going to the city of moral relativism

3 Jonah 1:3 “But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa, and he found a ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.” The succeeding verses tell of Jonah’s flight from God’s command to go to the city of Nineveh to condemn its sinfulness, and his eventual submission to this task.
King poses with mothers and babies during a baby pageant at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in July 1956. Courtesy of Boston University.

[All of this has caused a storm. Whenever man seeks to flee from God a storm develops.]

Whenever God places responsibility upon man he can't escape it and the more he tries the more frustrated he becomes.

Quote the Psalmist, "If I ascend into the heavens . . . 4

God's will is inflexible. Even after Johnah had gone through all of these mishaps, God still stood before Johnah saying Go to Ninevah. 5

AD. CSKG: Sermon file, folder 63, "Fleeing from God & When God Seems to Deceive Us."