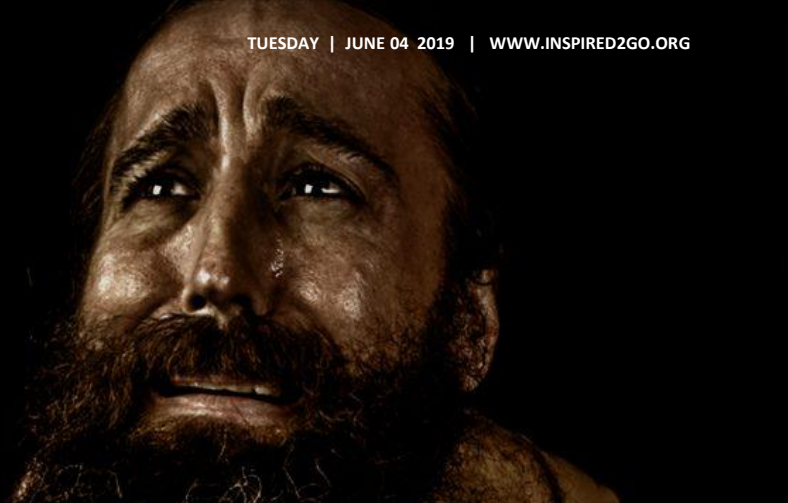


BY PASTOR WALE AFELUMO



JONAH'S JOURNEY: THE STRUGGLE

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

Jonah 1:1-17

ADDITIONAL STUDY

Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 26:36-46,
& Mark 10:29-30

REFLECTION

Are you fully pursuing what God has called you to do?
Is there something God has called you to do that you are struggling to do? If yes, what adjustments would you make to enable you heed God's voice?

But Jonah arose 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 from the presence of the Lord. Jonah 1:3

God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and Jonah went the opposite direction not wanting to go anywhere near Nineveh. Perhaps Jonah was afraid for his life; the Ninevites were a heathen nation and he may have feared if he would be safe with them, if he would be accepted, or if his message would even be received. Also, he had a weird reason for his struggle, Jonah 4:1-3 reveals that Jonah was reluctant to take God's message to the Ninevites because he envisioned that God's mercy would kick in immediately the Ninevites repented from their evil way. So, he felt it was pointless for him to go on that errand that won't yield his desired result.

Like Jonah, we often struggle with the idea of answering God's call on our lives. We think of the inconvenience, we are reluctant to leave the familiar for the unfamiliar, we contend with the fear of failure and of rejection. We worry about how we will survive, fend for ourselves and sponsor the 'vision.' For many different reasons, we often run away from God's call. Strange! For me, I struggled with thoughts of sustaining my family and keeping my children in school, when the call to start a ministry came.

It is okay to struggle with responding to God's call or assignment, for often, if the assignment doesn't scare you, maybe it is not of God or not big enough for you to pursue. It has to be big enough that you will need God to help you in fulfilling it. However, you can't dwell on your 'fears' for too long because that might make you abandon the call completely.

While Jonah struggled to go fulfill God's call, he was swallowed by a big fish and was deprived of voluntary movement. Sometimes, being stuck in/on a particular level in life may signal to you that God is trying to get you to attend to your 'call.' God will not give you another assignment or take you to the next level when you have not heeded His call to fulfill a previous assignment. What has God told you to do that you are running away from? Is it to lead a home cell in your local church? Change careers? Go back to school? Let go of a relationship that has a negative influence in your life so He can use you? Do away with bad habits? Start your own business or leave a lucrative business to start a ministry?

No matter what your struggle is, you must have it at the back of your mind that God is faithful and He is no man's debtor; whatever you give up to answer His call in your life, He will give you a hundred-fold in this life and in the life to come eternal life. Besides, He will not call you to do something He knows you are incapable of doing, or that He will not enable you to do. When He sends you, He also makes the provision available for you to fulfill the assignment. So, if He has called you to do something, you just have to trust Him, step up to the task and allow His will to be done through you. Don't wait for the 'big fish' to come.

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