

# From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

Text: The Book of Jonah.

It is a losing race to run from God. If you doubt it, ask Jonah.

We can imagine Jonah, sitting in his self-content, suddenly hearing God's call to go to Nineveh. God calls him to go to a group of people whom he hates. Jonah says to himself, "How ridiculous is the call of God to speak to my enemies and cause them to receive my blessings. I must run."

Would you listen to our warning, Jonah? No, you are running too fast. The others, who already had tried to escape God, might have told him that it was foolish. They might have told him that God would meet him in a storm, or at the bottom of the ocean, or in a fish's stomach. But God is there.

You run, Jonah, as fast as you can, but in remorse and repentance, with no other alternative. You will bow down, and like a punished child walk back to do what God originally called you to do. But I see, Jonah, that you have to run it yourself. Having learned the futility of running from God, when the call came the second time, Jonah went to Nineveh. He walked all the way back to his prophetic task. To run from God is a losing race. But every day we find ourselves running, panting in order to keep running in an effort to escape God and His call.

The call comes to us, not necessarily to go to Nineveh, but to love God and our fellow man. But instead of doing it, we try to escape God by running to self-pity and self-concern.

God calls men to live out love right where they are. But we are inwardly afraid of the idea. For we know that to love means to become involved. We prefer not to be involved, and thus we put our love upon a few luxury items instead of upon people. We put it upon things that we think we can love, but where we will not get entangled. Each of us has sought to escape God at the point of love. No one can tell you this better than yourself. You know where you have held back the kind of love that commits itself and that would heal human relationships. We do not want to show love to Nineveh, and so we run not to Tarshish but to self-pity or to self-concern.

But we cannot escape God. As Jonah found God in the stomach of a fish, we may also discover that God is present even in our most selfish moments. We may be tied up in our own thoughts revolving about ourselves, with our vision becoming ever more near-sighted. But

## CIRCUIT MINISTER VISITS WITNESSES

MR. D. E. BENDEL, Circuit Minister for the Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, is presently visiting Clark County units of the denomination according to Mr. Harold E. Glover, presiding minister of the North Unit.

Following a visit to the Henderson congregation last week, Mr. Bendel is now ministering to the Las Vegas West Unit at Kingdom Hall on West Decatur Blvd. Next week he will be with the North Unit in North Las Vegas before spending a week with the Las Vegas East Unit. From there he travels to Boulder City for the final week of meetings in this area.

According to Mr. Glover, the North Unit will assemble at Kingdom Hall next Tuesday (Jan. 12) for a model Ministry School and Service Meeting to be conducted by Mr. Bendel. Members of the congregation will be assigned to work with the Circuit Minister through Jan. 17 in house-to-house ministries and Bible Study activities. On Saturday (Jan. 16) at 8 p.m., a Bible topic and instruction course will be offered. On Sunday (Jan. 17) at 3 p.m., Mr. Bendel will speak on "Do All Religions Lead to Eternal Life?" All meetings are open to the public.



REV. D. M. CLARK



DEADLINE for church news and photos is Friday noon preceding the next Thursday publication date at the Rev. Clark's home, 1676 North 'E' St., phone 642-1560. All items submitted must be accompanied by the sender's name, address and (if available) phone number.

### CHURCH of GOD in CHRIST

UPPER ROOM C. of G. in C.  
Bishop C. C. Cox, 385-1541  
1117 N. F St., Las Vegas

POWERHOUSE C. of G. in C.  
Supt. J. W. Logan, 382-6187  
1216 Adams Ave., Las Vegas

LIGHTHOUSE C. of G. in C.  
Eld. Willie Rawls, 384-5539  
E. Sahara Ave., Fourmyle

MOST HIGH C. of G. in C.  
Eld. J. Washington 642-5675  
Henderson

PRAYER HOUSE C. of G. in C.  
Eld. W. M. Shaw, 382-1743  
Blankenship St., Vegas Heights

PROGRESSIVE C. of G. in C.  
Eld. Jos. Prudhomme, 642-5556  
1155 Lawry Ave., Vegas Heights

(All Churches of God in Christ)

Bible Band: Tuesday, 8 pm  
\*Young People: Wednesday, 8 pm  
Consecration: Friday, 8 pm  
Sunday School: Sunday, 10 am  
Morning Service: Sunday, 12 noon  
YPW: Sunday, 8 pm  
(\*Inspirational at Progressive)

### METHODIST

ZION METHODIST CHURCH  
Rev. M. D. Bennett, 382-9900  
911 N. G St., Las Vegas

### PENTECOSTAL

CHURCH of the LORD JESUS  
Eld. Hosea Coleman, 642-8741  
1260 Bartlett St., Vegas Heights

as our sight is narrowed, the more desperate we will feel and the more meaningless life will become until life will be like the walls of the fish's stomach, closing us in. Then in desperation we will cry to God for some release. And God will answer. He will be there. To our surprise we will find that we never really escaped Him. He will lead us out, right back to our Nineveh, to the place and to the people where we are to express and live out deep Christian love which commits itself in concern to others.

What a wasted trip! You ran all that way trying to escape God. You thought you had escaped God, but you didn't. How much better it would have been if you had realized that you cannot escape God! It would have been better to have accepted the call to love.

It is a losing race to try to escape from God. The call of God also comes to us to commit our possessions to Him. But how we love those things, and so we run. We run all the way to the storehouse of things, a retreat called pride of possessions.

Man's favorite retreat from God is into the world of things. We will think we have escaped. But eventually these possessions will begin to bind us in. They give no permanence or meaning to life. Closed in like Jonah in the stomach of a fish, we finally cry to God, "I need something more." And strangely enough, He hears, for He is right there; we had never really escaped. Patiently God walks with us, away from

### BAPTIST

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. I. W. Wilson, 382-2632  
C & Washington Sts., Las Vegas

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. Mary Carroll  
712 W. Owens Ave., Las Vegas

EVERGREEN BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. A. B. Carr, 382-5682  
1113 N. H St., Las Vegas

GRACE EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. C. L. Alexander, 384-7413  
815 Bartlett St., Vegas Heights

GREATER FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. P. S. Walker, 384-1248  
Balzar St., Vegas Heights

NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. F. N. Addison  
D & Jefferson Sts., Las Vegas

PILGRIM REST BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. E. C. Kline, 382-7263  
101 N. A St., Las Vegas

PLEASANT GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. J. L. Kemp, 642-5708  
1189 Hassell St., Vegas Heights

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. V. C. L. Coleman, 384-3131  
1209 N. E St., Las Vegas

ST. JAMES BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. J. L. Simmons, 382-2748  
311 Madison Ave., Las Vegas

ST. PETER BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. Leo A. Johnson, 642-2559  
C & Washington Sts., Las Vegas

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. A. J. Thompson, 642-4001  
1305 N. E St., Las Vegas

### CATHOLIC

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH  
Msgr. William J. Devlin, 382-9953  
704 W. McWilliams Ave., Las Vegas

Sunday Masses: 11 am and 5 pm  
Weekday Masses: 7:30 am; Saturday, 9 am  
Holyday Masses: 9:30 am and 7:30 pm  
Confessions: Saturday, 4-4:30 and 7:30-8 pm  
Adult Classes: Monday and Friday, 7:30 pm  
Child Classes: Monday, 4-5 pm; Saturday, 9-10:30 am  
Rosary: Daily, 7:30 pm except Sundays

our retreat, all the way back to Nineveh, to the place where we are called upon to present our possessions to God.

What a wasted trip! You thought you had escaped God, but you didn't. For in your moment of selfish hoarding, God is still there, waiting until the misery of self-possession will awaken your senses.

It is a losing race to try to escape God. I call you to be an evangelist, a missionary. We can accept this as long as the phrase is kept general. But when God starts to talk specifically about reaching out to new people in the neighborhood, about telling somebody else about our faith, then we begin to run. We run all the way to a retreat called self-content. This may even be a place within the church itself.

What a wasted journey to think that we could escape God. How much better it would have been never to run but to obey the call to be evangelists, anxious to tell the story, the truth about Christ!