

.....
"Jonah saw God's will as punishment. Jesus saw God's will as nourishment."

[Warren Wiersby]

ENGAGE & CONNECT ||

Who in your group would be most likely to go hunt Jonah's big fish and mount it on their wall?

BEGIN WITH PRAYER ||

Lord, help us receive Your word and what we need to feed our souls today. We all have times when things go dark, when You're challenging our stubbornness. Help us to see You in the belly of the fish, still gracious, providing for us, and bringing us home all at the same time. Amen.

*"I called to the LORD in my distress,
and I cried to my God for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears."*

[Psalm 18:6]

BIG IDEA ||

Our relationship with God is all that really matters, and God will go to great lengths to bring us back into that relationship... no matter the price to Him or us.

PASSAGE & DISCUSSION || [Jonah 1:17-2:10](#)

1. In the sermon we heard, "[Jonah was awake but must be restored.](#)" What is the difference between being "awake" to God and being "restored" into relationship with Him? What are the steps along that path?
2. It isn't being at rock bottom that brings Jonah back, but it's PRAYING at rock bottom. What does rock bottom look like for you? What is a rock bottom prayer you've prayed?
3. This whole being in the belly of a fish... is it a good thing or a bad thing?
4. Matt mentioned that God is a jealous God for what's His. (You can read Exodus 34:14) Have you considered that God is jealous FOR you? How is that different from Him being jealous OF you?
5. Sometimes, when we're insensitive or unresponsive to God's presence, God turns off the lights, stops the music, and brings us into "belly of the fish" moments. What has that moment been for you?
6. What environment do you hear God best in? How do you usually hear God?

7. How can Jonah be like “I cried for help, and You heard my voice” and “You cast me into the deep” all in the same breath?
8. In Jonah’s prayer, he says, “As my life was fading away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to You.” When have you had a moment when you remembered the Lord?
9. In verse 8, it says that “those who cherish worthless idols abandon their faithful love.” What idols had Jonah been cherishing that made him abandon God so much?
10. Salvation belongs to the Lord. What are some ways we try to save ourselves when we get into impossible situations? What’s the difference between giving up and trying to save ourselves?

STEP OF OBEDIENCE ||

Jonah receives grace and acts in faith **before he is released from the fish.**

As you consider your next step, reflect on: 1) What situations have you been wanting to escape when you might need to experience grace IN that situation instead? 2) Where do you need restoration and grace?

Step of Faith Ideas

1. Matt listed several pieces to restoration: Repentance, humility, confidence, assurance, consecration (being made holy), and a fresh sense of God. Which of these do you need to ask the Lord for this week?
2. Ask the Lord to restore you into the blessing of His presence.

PRAYER FOCUS ||

The Miracle of Grace

The turning points in our lives aren’t our situations—they’re the miracle of grace in our hearts.

- If you’ve been running from something, be still.
- If you’ve been put into a “belly of a fish” situation, remember God.
- If there’s an idol that has been guiding your steps away from God, dethrone it.
- Close your time by reading this prayer together:
 - *“Those who cherish worthless idols abandon their faithful love, but as for us, we will sacrifice to You with a voice of thanksgiving. We will fulfill what we have vowed. Salvation belongs to the LORD.”*