

A Desperate Prayer

Jonah Series

May 24, 2015

INTRODUCTION

The story of Jonah is relevant and applicable for us today, because there's a little bit of Jonah in all of us. And even though Jonah tried his best to run away, God did not leave or abandon him. Instead, He poured out His forgiveness and His grace in unexpected ways.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time in your life when you, or someone close to you was in distress? What was going on and how did you respond?
2. Read Jonah 2:1-2. Prior to this, there is no indication that Jonah prayed, even during the violent storm when his life was in danger. Why do you think that Jonah refused to pray until now? Why is it that we often seek prayer as a last resort?
3. Read Jonah 2:3-6. Jonah acknowledges the fact that God was the One responsible for the calamity they were in, and he sees it as God's way of disciplining him. Do you feel that God's discipline was too harsh? Why or why not? Why is discipline such a difficult thing to accept?
4. Read Jonah 2:7. The Hebrew word for "remember" that's used here in this verse is the word "*zakar*". For the Jews, this was usually the first step in having God's people turn away from their idolatry and sin, and having them turn back to the Yahweh God. How is this applicable for us today?
5. Read Jonah 2:8-10. Here we see a shift in Jonah's prayer. He says that those who pursue after worthless idols end up forfeiting the grace of God. How has this been true in your own life? What are some ways we forfeit the grace of God?
6. What can you learn from Jonah's experience? What is revealed about God in this chapter? How can we apply some of the things we learned to our own lives?

CONCLUSION

Our gracious Heavenly Father is ever faithful and He is full of forgiveness. Even though at times we may forfeit the grace of God, the amazing truth is He is still the God of second and third and even fourth chances: "*God's capacity to forgive is greater than our capacity to sin; while our sin reaches far, God's grace reaches farther. It's a message revealing the radical contrast between the sinful heart of mankind and the gracious heart of mankind's Creator.*" – Tullian Tchividjian.

But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the LORD." – Jonah 2:9