

WHEN I CRY OUT IN PAIN, GOD RESCUES

JONAH 2 // PASTOR TODD DUGARD
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God stands ready to hear my prayer and rescue me from my hardship even when it is self-inflicted. So, I should...go to him in desperate prayer (2:1-2, 5-9), acknowledge his obvious sovereignty (2:3-4a), cling to hope (2:4b), and anticipate his perfect response (2:10).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Looking back over your life, what kind of helpless moments have you faced? How did you pray in those circumstances?
2. **If you have cried out to God from a painful situation, you know Jonah's fear. Read Jonah 2 and write down a phrase from his prayer that you can relate to.** How does it feel now to look back to that painful situation from the position you are in today? What is changing inside of you as result of the experience?
3. Does the fish part of this story make it seem unbelievable to you? Are you a person that can easily accept God's works on faith or do you have work at it? Why might this be the case for you?

"The most inexplicable thing that God has done is not that he used some kind of sea creature to save Jonah from drowning, but that he has saved you by sacrificing his own perfect Son. If you're looking for something about God that doesn't make sense, that is impossible to understand, that defies rational thought, it is not his physical miracles but his relentless mercy."

4. **When Jesus referred to the sign of Jonah, he testifies to the truth of the fish story and adds to it a new context for his followers. Read Matthew 12:40-41.** What relates Jonah's experience to Jesus' burial and resurrection?

5. **Given what we know about the wickedness in Nineveh, it is shocking to hear Jesus say that the believers from Nineveh, who responded to Jonah's preaching, will be able to condemn the self-righteous unbelievers from Jerusalem.** Why is it important to see that Jesus ministry in Jerusalem is greater than Jonah's ministry to Nineveh? Are you confident that you've responded to Jesus as you should?

6. **This message shines light on our private prayer life and the attitudes we have when we pray. When we are crying out to God, we may not bring the best perspectives forward in our words. What's important is that we finally bring ourselves to the Lord.** Read Romans 8:26. How has this message helped you see that God is more concerned with your humility than the words you say? What attitude(s) should be foremost when you pray?

7. **Read Jonah 2:10. Jonah's rescue from death began when the fish swallowed him and ended when the same fish left him in pile of vomit on the seashore. The passage shows us that rescue may not come about in the way we would choose.** Is there any way to accept being rescued and keep your pride fully intact?

8. Why might God's intervention in your life require a messy, traumatic, dramatic, rescue experience that you will never forget? State one or two reasons that could relate a renewed sense of purpose or redirection in your life.