

“Praying with Jonah”

Jonah 1.17-2.10

Opening Questions(s) – Chose one

- What’s the most out-of-control situation you’ve ever been in, and how did you respond?
- Have you ever found yourself repeating the words of a song, prayer, or Bible verse because you didn’t know what else to say? What was the situation?

Discussion Questions

1. When Jonah finds himself helpless in the belly of the fish, his response is to pray (Jonah 2:1). What does this reveal about where people often turn when they realize they are no longer in control? How do you typically respond when life feels out of your hands?
2. Jonah’s prayer is filled with language from the Psalms. Why do you think praying Scripture can be such a powerful practice? Have you ever tried praying through a Psalm?
3. Although Jonah’s prayer sounds very spiritual, he never confesses that his own disobedience led to his situation. Why do you think confession and repentance are essential parts of prayer? Are they easy or difficult for you?
4. Read Jonah 2:8. Jonah condemns idol worship while overlooking his own sin. Why is it often easier to recognize sin in others than in ourselves? What helps us honestly examine our own hearts?
5. Jonah celebrates God’s salvation when it benefits him (Jonah 2:9) but resents God’s mercy toward Nineveh (Jonah 4:1-4). Why is it sometimes difficult to rejoice when God shows grace to people we don’t think deserve it?
6. The book of Jonah ultimately challenges God’s people to have compassion on their enemies. Who are the “Ninevites” in our lives today, and what might it look like to show them Christ-like compassion?
7. Compare Luke 23:46 with Psalm 31:5 and Matthew 27:46 with Psalm 22:1. Both Jonah and Jesus prayed the Psalms, but their hearts were very different. What contrasts do you see between Jonah’s attitude and Jesus’ attitude toward His enemies? What can we learn from Jesus?
8. The book ends by showing God’s compassion not only toward Nineveh but also toward Jonah despite his hypocrisy and self-centeredness. How does God’s patience with Jonah encourage you in your own walk with Christ?