


# Jonah: Perplexing Prophet

## Part 3 Jonah Prays

# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

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## Questions for Community Group Discussion

- Pastor Doug told of two close Christian friends who had a falling out—and to this day neither is willing to budge. They're bitter and unwilling even to be in the same room! Read Hebrews 12:15-17.

According to v. 15a, what makes a person become "bitter" (v. 15b), "immoral" and "godless" (v. 16)?

How does **discipline** help us not "*come short of the grace of God*" (Hebrews 12:4-14)?

How does **prayer** help us not "*come short of the grace of God*" (Hebrews 4:16)?

- Jonah didn't pray until he was in distress (2:2; until then, he slept, oblivious to the danger—see 1:5)! Tell about a situation in which you went from oblivious to deeply distressed. What happened? **Why** do you think you were oblivious to the risk early on? **What** convinced you of the seriousness?

What role did prayer play in that event? How has that event impacted your prayer life **currently**?

- In Acts 12:1–5 we see the early church praying fervently because they were in grave danger. Then, we see God's miraculous deliverance (v. 6-11)—and the humorous conclusion (v. 12-16)! The prayer was fervent and united (v. 5 & 12)—but what did it **lack** (v. 14-16)?

Mark this "faith-o-meter" with a line at the level of faith that you think they displayed.



**To what** does James 1:6 **compare** the person who prays, yet without faith?

**In what two ways** does James 1:8 **label** the person who prays, yet without faith?

**What** does James 1:7 say the person should **expect**, who prays, yet without faith?

Mark the "faith-o-meter" with a **bold line** at **your** typical level of faith when praying. How could today's "Application-Challenge" help you move up on the "faith-o-meter"?

*Need someone to pray with you?*  
Just write to:

**BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com**

## Application-Challenge

- "Salvation is from the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). Have you turned from self to God?
- Are you **continuing to** turn from as much as you know of your sin, to give as much as you know of yourself, to as much as you know of your God?

## Sermon Summary (Key Text: Jonah 2)

Today we study a man at prayer. If you want to learn to pray, saturate your heart and mind with the prayers in the Bible—and you'll become instructed by the Spirit of God in the art of powerful praying. Jonah's prayer in chapter 2 breaks neatly into three parts:

**[1] The setting of Jonah's prayer** (v. 1). Jonah prayed from the stomach of the fish. Strange? Not really—you can pray anywhere! Now, some are asking, "Could this really happen? Is there a fish large enough to swallow a man?" Actually, it's not the size of the fish that matters so much, as the size of its throat. The Blue Whale is very big, but its throat can only accommodate a few fish at a time. The smaller Sperm Whale has an expandable throat. An intact 16 foot shark has been found there. Others will ask, "Could a person survive in the belly of a fish?" That very thing happened in 1891 on the whale ship "Star of the East". Boats were lowered to harpoon a whale, but a lash of the whale's tail crushed one of the boats and a seaman named James Bartley was lost. The whale was killed, hauled onto the deck, and when the stomach was removed, inside was found the missing sailor, doubled up and unconscious. Three weeks later he was fully recovered and resumed his duties. (There was one lasting effect: Barley's skin was bleached to a stark whiteness and took on the appearance of parchment.) One other question is much more important than those two: "Is there a big enough God to pull this whole thing off?" Truth is, the size of your God determines the size of your faith. When God says something, the believing heart accepts it. The "where" was the belly of the fish; the "when" is during Jonah's three-day incarceration in the fish (1:17—2:2). Jonah was desperate. God brings problems to get our attention (James 1:2-4). If you knew that for the next year you wouldn't have a single problem—how much would you pray? Do you pray "just as a last resort"?

**[2] The substance of Jonah's prayer** (v. 2-9). First, Jonah confessed and repented (v. 2-4). He recognized his sinful defiance of God which led to broken fellowship (4a), but he turned toward God ("Your holy temple") in repentance (4b; cf. 1 John 1:9). Jonah owned up to his sin. And in this prayer I want you to note that Jonah is confessing his sins and not someone else's. Oh, we love to confess other people's sins, don't we? God requires that we come clean on our sins. We can't be in fellowship with God if we are unwilling to try and reconcile a broken relationship. (cf. Matthew 5:23-24 and 6:14-15). There is nothing that will cripple and shrivel your soul like an unforgiving spirit—but in v. 6-8 we see Jonah full of praise. Jonah was exercising "the therapy of thanksgiving", and his depression lifted (v. 9). Repentance refers to a change of mind and a change of behavior. It involves a 180 degree turn, and that's just what Jonah did: God told him to go to Nineveh but he went in the exact opposite direction. Then he repented and moved in the right direction.

**[3] The sequel to Jonah's prayer** (v. 10). How considerate—back where he started! Oh the grace of God. Let me ask you a question. Have you ever learned, by your experience, the power of believing prayer (Mark 11:24)? One of my favorite passages on prayer is Acts 12:1-16. Sometimes we pray—but don't really expect God to answer. Of course, we shouldn't expect God to answer selfish prayers (James 4:3). But when we enroll in Christ's school of prayer, we learn how to pray, including confession, repentance, and forgive and praise. [Theologian J. I. Packer says that repentance means:](#)

- **turning from** as much as you know of **your sin**
- **to give** as much as you know of **yourself**
- **to** as much as you know of **your God**.

As our knowledge grows at these three points, so our practice of repentance will be enlarged.

# MEN! THE WAIT IS OVER!



## **PointMan** Breakfast at the fire pit!

- Saturday, March 13
- 9<sup>00</sup>-10<sup>30</sup>am
- Just \$10
- Bring a camp chair
- Chick-fil-a breakfast (gluten free option available)
- To register: [tcc.org](http://tcc.org)



Keyword: **PointMan**

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**"Five Question Bible Study"** (see page below) *is a simple way to study any passage. Prayer is a sort of **"FACT"** between God and man. Let's learn to pray powerfully...*

**Monday—P**ower: Read James 5:13–18

**Tuesday—A**doration: Read 1 Chronicles 29:11

**Wednesday—C**onfession: Read Proverbs 28:13

**Thursday—T**hanksgiving: Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Friday—S**upplication: Read Psalm 28:1–2

**Saturday—*In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord with your church family,***  
read Jonah chapter 3.

- Read today's passage.
- Observe how it supports that aspect of powerful prayer.
- Speak to your heavenly father in accordance with that truth.

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]