

Jonah - Part 2

by Dai Patterson

Dai Patterson's sermon on Jonah emphasizes the transformative power of thanksgiving and the necessity of surrendering to God's will through personal struggles and suffering.

Topics: "New Life", "Surrender"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Jonah from the Bible. He highlights how Jonah was swallowed by a fish and taken down into a place of burial, seemingly the end of him. However, this was just the beginning of Jonah's journey towards newness of life. The preacher emphasizes the importance of walking in newness of life and giving thanks, even in difficult circumstances. He encourages young people to not delay in surrendering their lives to God and reminds everyone that no one has a guarantee of tomorrow.

Transcript

And I want to pick it up in the first chapter again, and just notice some things in the tenth verse and down to the end of the chapter. But before we do, I want just to say something to all the folks sitting in the room who have a struggle to open their mouths and say anything. I want to say something especially to you because, believe it or not, I've been in that position.

And you might think, what? You've got the gift of a gab day, you must talk in your sleep. Well, pay assures me I don't, I snore, I understand, but talking in my sleep, never. But there are some folks who really do find it difficult to open their mouths and express the freedom of something that's in their heart.

They can't do it. And no amount of embellishment makes this happen. They can't do it because they can't do it.

And that's the end of it. So something has got to happen whereby there comes a spontaneous something that breaks through the impossibility and breaks through perhaps years of silence and suddenly, Yes! How do you do that? Well, let me tell you something. And you may have noticed it in your reading of Jonah.

But have you noticed that when he came to an end of himself in the belly of the fish, then he gave thanks? Wow! Now then, there's the place where thanksgiving really gets hold of the heart. And you know, I've now got something to say thank you for. You can't give thanks if you've got nothing to give thanks for.

So if you're sitting in a meeting and you are completely closed up and unaware of your needs, and you might be the sort of person who can sit through meeting after meeting after meeting after meeting. You might be the sort of person who can be involved at a certain level. For example, on a musical level.

But if you put everything to one side and you say, right, now then, where can I really give thanks? Oh, if only the room would close in on me. If only the floor would open up. Anything but that.

But you know, if you've got, if you've received something that you never had before, then giving a thanks becomes wonderfully and gloriously easy. Because you've got something to say thank you for. And listen, if you're one of those people, when you sit in the meeting and you think, I know that when you hear some word of prophecy or some word of encouragement that says, you know, open your mouth and you sit there thinking, I can't.

Do you know, let me tell you a real funny thing that happened to me, I don't know, so many years ago. In the early days of my Christian life when I was in the fellowship in Exeter, because I was a student in Exeter doing biology and chemistry. I got kind of a scientific background.

A bit like, you're a mathematician, aren't you? Yeah. Well I did biology and chemistry. And I remember going down, from Devon down into Cornwall to a conference.

And the conference was on the prophetic ministry. And I was as green as grass, didn't know one end of the book from the other. And I went along to this conference and I remember this guy, a South African man I think, and he stood and he gave this fantastic talk on the prophetic ministry.

And then at the end of it he said, right, now what we're going to do is we're going to, we're going to begin to move together in this prophetic ministry. And I thought, gosh, it's great I'm in here, I'll have a go at this. And so, in the middle of this huge great room full of people, he was encouraging one and the other to stand and give some words from God.

And I look back on it now, what an absolute cheat. Who do any of us think that we are, that we should stand as God's representative and speak his word? What a tremendous honour it is. And dare anybody take it upon themselves.

But that was the way this kind of conference went. And so, some guy got up over here and he gave this word, and a girl got up over here and she gave this word. And I got to my feet and just as I opened my mouth, somebody else got up and they started.

And I was stuck in my mouth open and nothing came out. I'm finished. So I very quietly closed my mouth and I sat down again, and nobody heard a creep out of me for years.

But I discovered that when God did something in my heart, really did something in my heart, I had something to say thank you for. And the great thing that I wanted to do was to say thank you. And have you noticed, up until the moment in the end of chapter 2 of Jonah, all we've got from this man is complaint and complaint and complaint and complaint.

You shouldn't be doing this, you shouldn't be doing that, you shouldn't be sending me to Nineveh, and I'm not going anyway. And if you expect me to go amongst this heathen bunch, you can forget it. Ah, well I came to Scotland.

And I think to myself, boy, what a fellow. Nothing but complaint. But when God brings him to the end of himself, and he really brings him to the end of himself, the first thing that happens is this.

I will sacrifice to you. Notice where he is. He's still down in the fish, because it's not until verse 10 that the Lord spoke to the fish.

And the fish vomited Jonah onto dry land. So he's making sacrifice. I don't suppose he built a fire down there, do you? And made an altar and kind of laid something on it, the bones of some poor dead thing that the fish had eaten.

Did you? No, no, I'm sure he never did. But he gave sacrifice. And it says, I will sacrifice to you.

And what was the sacrifice that he was going to make down there? Himself. He had nothing else to sacrifice, did he? It was him. And he realised that death was what was due him, and he was still alive.

He was therefore a living sacrifice. And the consequence of being a living sacrifice was, I will sacrifice to you, how? With the voice of thanksgiving. And his voice was to be heard down in the belly of the fish.

And you know what? The fish took him right down into the deeps. And it was down there where he came to an end of himself, where he had no hope, except God did it. But there came a voice from the deeps.

And that's where the voice comes from, from right down inside you when you can't shut up anymore. Lord, thank you! You've saved my life from destruction. You've saved me! I wonder how many of us in this room have ever, ever really given him thanks.

Now listen, if you can't do it, if you can't do it, let me just say something to you folks who can't do it. Don't get worried about it. And if you get your dad or your mum or your granny or your grandfather, now come on dear, next time you open your mouth and say something in a meeting, don't listen to them.

Woo! Don't be false about it. Don't try and perform. Don't say something so that you impress somebody.

But let God deal with your life. Ask him, Lord, bring me to a place, an end, where out of my heart there will come the voice of thanksgiving. And I can't help myself.

And I tell you what, Jonah did it because he knew that for him it should have been death. And God gave him life for death. And he could not be quiet.

He just said, Lord, thank you. And he did it all wrapped up in the belly of this fish. He had no audience to impress.

He had nobody to demonstrate to his great spirituality. There was no one to listen except the God who put him there. And it was to that very God he responded and he said, thank you Lord, thank you.

I'll go to heaven in your place. I'll go. I'll be your man.

But Lord, I could never have come to this if you've not brought me to death. Brought me to an end. Now that's where I want to talk about coming to an end of everything.

Of all our abilities. Of all our natural strengths. Of all that makes us the kind of personalities that we are.

And I noticed as I sit back there, what an incredibly gifted bunch you are. It's musicians coming out of the window up here. They can't find any oil.

But they can sing. At least I'm told they can sing. I wondered if yoga might add a lousy voice.

And that's why the fish, probably not. But certainly not. But how wonderful when all that comes out of your inner most being is thanksgiving.

Lord, thank you. I've got nothing else to say to you, Lord, but thank you. Okay, Jonah had ministry.

God-given ministry to Nineveh. But that would have been, for Jonah, ineffective. And it was all secondary now to this.

Oh, thank you. I've got life. I've got life.

I'm alive. Thank you, Lord. My rebellion is broken.

My willfulness, broken. My running in the opposite direction has been altogether stopped. I'm about to turn about, Lord.

And if you put me up on that shore, it's to Nineveh I'm going to go. My heart and mind and will is set, Lord. Thank you.

Thank you. That's the miracle that God alone can work in somebody's heart. And listen, will you notice something with me in the second chapter? We will read some of chapter one, but now we're into chapter two.

Let's just notice, in the third verse of chapter two, Jonah is now in the belly of the whale and he's down in the deeps of the sea. Let me just point out before we get to verse three, in the opening verses, Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. Now, he still knew he was the Lord his God.

He didn't say, he's the Lord somebody else's God because he's abandoned me. And marvelous as it is, Jonah, in his rebellion, knew that God had put him there. Which is why in verse three, and I am in verse three, he said, you cast me into the deep.

But when you read the story, oh no it wasn't, who threw him in? The sailors. But he saw beyond and behind it. And you and I need to see beyond and behind everything and all the circumstances into which God puts us.

He's doing it for a purpose. And he said, you cast me into the sea. Look, you did it, you did it.

And he's not angry with him. He's not fighting him anymore. He's not inwardly rebellious any longer.

He says, Lord, you cast me into this. Isn't that wonderful? Now, how do you like the sound of that? Lord, will you please take hold of my life and cast me into this place of death. You bring me there.

Bring me to an end of everything that stands in opposition to your will. And bring me to an end of everything that I think I've got to achieve. What is your will for my life? I want to be brought there.

And in verse 1 of chapter 2, Jonah, he prays. I don't know. Do you think he used words when he was down in the fish's belly? I would doubt it.

I imagine this was all going on in his heart and his mind. I suppose he recorded this after it was all over. And he looked back and he reflected and he wrote it.

While he was in it, words so often are completely inadequate. But listen to this. He prays from the fish's belly.

The word belly in verse 1 is the word stomach. Alright? In the second verse, he says, I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction. And you might say, well, sirs, you're right.

You're there because of an old stupid old man. And I hope everybody in the room will say, yeah, so was I. That was me. Whatever you do, I hope no one is going tat tat tat tat.

You know, stupid man. He deserves to be afflicted. He says, I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction.

And he answers me. Isn't that wonderful? And if not a man, a woman, young or old in this room, if you will cry out, he will answer you. He may answer you out of the belly of the fish.

And it seems to me as I look at the life of this man, it was not until he was in those circumstances that he really cried out. It seems like it was perhaps all so easy beforehand. But now, in his circumstances, he has no control over.

He can do nothing about it. And he answered me, out of the belly of Sheol. Now that's a different word.

That's a word that means bowl. And if you will please look this way, and without being in any way vulgar, there's your belly and there's your bowls. And you go from there to there.

There's something deeper from the bowels of a man than from the belly of him. God put him in the belly of the fish, but somehow inwardly he knew he was taken deeper, down into the bowels of Sheol. He was going down into death.

That's what the word Sheol means. It's the Old Testament word for Hades, the place of death. And he said, Lord, you brought me there.

Why? What am I doing here? Yes, it's my own stupid fault, but Lord, I'm here. What are you going to do about it? Because I can't do anything about it. I'm absolutely entombed.

I'm in this place of death. And there's no escape unless you do it. That's wonderful.

And that's why Jonah says, out of the belly, the bowels of Sheol, I cried, and you heard my voice. Isn't it wonderful to note? You can't go deep enough that that voice of yours will never be heard. No matter how far down you've got to go, you can call on him and he will hear.

You did it. You cast me into the sea, Lord. You've done this.

And you've done it in order to bring me out into newness of life. But listen, my dear friend, there has to be a death before there can be a resurrection. The sense of it is so plain and obvious that nobody in the room can escape it.

But you and I will not live in newness of life, in resurrection life, unless we first of all enter into a death. Now, that leads us to something which we need to take just a little look at. And I want you please, if you

will, to turn into the sixth chapter of the book of the Romans.

And it may be that I touched on this the last time I was here. I don't know. But it all bears repeating.

Let's go to chapter six of the Roman epistle. And you may have noticed that right through this epistle, and in many of the writings of Paul, he is always asking questions. There is nothing like a question to stop you in your tracks and make you think.

And he is constantly asking questions. So, in the third verse of chapter six, he says, Now do you know? And the question immediately stops us and speaks to our hearts and minds as we have to say, Well, do I know this? Do I know what this man is talking about? Do you know, he says, that as many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death. Now there's baptism.

And baptism, in the setting in which Paul is now talking, is not water baptism. Water baptism becomes, and dare I say it, an irrelevance if you and I do not know this spiritual baptism. And spiritual baptism is not a baptism into power, it's not a baptism into holiness, it's not a baptism into church, it's not a baptism into doctrine, it's into death.

And it's into his death. Now why his death? What's so important about that? I need to be identified with Jesus Christ in his death. I need somehow to experience the power of his death.

And you may recall that when Paul preached, say, for example, to the Corinthians, he said, I came among you and I preached Christ. Is that right? No, it's not. And we need to be careful of the kind of doctrinal emphasis that says, oh, we preach Christ in our church, but if you preach Christ in your church, you'll get nowhere.

What? What? What? No, it's like, you, Paul said, we preach Christ down here? Yes! A crucified Christ. A Christ who's been into death. And when he went into death, his purpose was to take me into that death.

But you might say, that's impossible. He alone hung on a cross. No one else died on that cross with him.

And all those who were gathered around the foot of it could look up and say, now that's Jesus, and there he is, and I don't see Guy Patterson, I don't see Mickey Bright, I don't see Pete Smith. What are you talking about? And here we come to something that, I guess the only word to use is something mysterious. Something that's inexplicable, but nevertheless, that's the truth of the thing, is to be experienced.

I was going to say something about that. What did he say? I worship you, O Lord, in spirit and in truth. What does the word truth mean when you sing it? You all sung it, did you? What does that mean to you? I worship you in spirit and in truth.

What does truth mean? Did you know that there's another word that you can use instead of truth, and it's the word reality. I worship you, O Lord, in spirit and in reality. It's real.

I've experienced something that is so fundamentally real that it just makes everything about you, Lord, wonderful. And you're not up there, out there, you're in here, making it real. Now then, reality.

Well, how do I experience this death? What am I supposed to do? Am I supposed to kind of, you know, go into a meditation sort of now? I'm going to project my mind back 2,000 years. Do you know you can read books that advise this kind of stuff, you know? You take, just imagine, use your imagination. You hold Jesus by the hand, you know, and you go on a little journey, you know, there's literature you can read that

kind of suggests that you do that sort of thing.

Is that what you've got to do? No, let me tell you what you've got to do. You've got to be baptized into that death. Well, who does that? Well, let me just answer the question.

Who is the baptizer? Yep, Jesus. And what does he baptize you into? Into Holy Spirit. And he said, when he, the Holy Spirit, comes, he will take of the things which are mine.

Did he not? Have you read it? Everybody read it? Yep, not once. Have you read it? Yes, you've read it. He will take of the things which are mine, and he will reveal them to you.

He'll make them real. Now, let me just take one of the things which is Christ's. Oh, register, let me take two.

His death, number one. His resurrection, number two. How am I to experience this? This death.

And Paul read it. Did you notice it? Do you not know that so many of us were baptized into Christ, into the person? Into a person, we're baptized into his death. So, I could die if I get baptized into that death.

If I don't, I am struggling to die. And let me make an emphasis. I beg you, please take this to your heart.

This is why Job has said, you've done it! Now listen, he knew he had to die. In chapter one of the book, the sailors have got hold of him. And they said, something's wrong here.

That this storm is because of somebody on board this ship. And he said, yes fellas, it's me. And they said, well what have you done? And he said, well I'm a Hebrew and I worship the Lord God and I'm running away from him.

And they said, it's all your fault then. And he said, or rather they said, well what are we going to do? Do you know what he said? He said, I've got to die. And if I don't die, you're going to die.

But if I die, you'll be saved. Wow! By one man's death, salvation comes. So what did he do? Oh he jumped overboard.

No he did not. Listen, you cannot kill yourself. You cannot bring yourself to death.

You might know, Lord, that's what I need. I need an end of me. I'm a pain in the neck.

Not only to me, but to everybody else. And you are, aren't you? So don't be unkind. I wear quite nice.

And you've got no right to come and speak like that. You keep that for the nasty people in Wales. Those horrible Celts down there.

For you're the biggest problem you've got. And the only solution to your problem and mine is to die. So why didn't Jonah jump overboard? And, you know, make a dramatic exit.

Here I am, Lord. I'm the man. But he didn't, did he? Why didn't he? Because he knows.

He's seen the truth. And he's declared it. And this marvellous little book had it written down for us.

Lord, you've done it. And if you don't do it, it's never going to be done. I can't do it.

And that's one of the greatest places to come to in life. Well, you know, I can't do it, Lord. I've tried.

I've tried. I'm fed up with this. I want to die tonight.

And you can't do it. And you can't do it. And you can't do it, can you? You can't.

And you despair of yourself. And you think, oh God, please do it. And I want to tell you something.

I think that's the greatest miracle that can ever happen to a man. That he can be baptised into no death. And he can die.

But that's, of course, only half the story. Because the very next statement that Paul makes is this. Therefore, we were buried with him.

That is, with Christ. Through baptism into death. And you'll know that Jonah was buried.

He was entombed in the belly of the fish. He was carved down into the deeps. He was swallowed and taken down into a place of burial.

He was gone. He was out of sight. He was out of mind.

As far as the saints above him were concerned, it was the end of him. But it was just the beginning. And what a beginning.

To become a man who was to walk in newness of life. And that's what we read in verse 5. Sorry, verse 4. Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death. That just as Christ was raised from the dead.

Let me replace the word by saying, just as Jonah was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. Even so, we also should walk in newness of life. Walk in it.

And please let me impress upon every young man and woman, every granddad. I'm one too. That it's a walk in newness of life.

It is not something of an experience that you live on that happened five years ago or yesterday. It's today walking in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of resurrection.

Oh, joy. I can walk in newness of life. I can become a new man.

But Lord, how can I enter into this death? Because I want that resurrection life. And I think if I came round the room and I said, do you want resurrection life? You'd say, I hope you say, I've got it brother. But if you say, yes I do.

Well you can't have it. Not unless there's a death first. Can't have it.

And that's what we probably all instinctively know. I want to walk in that, Lord. That's the way to live a Christian life.

To walk in newness of life. How can I live that way? For to die is part to die. Isn't that good news? Isn't that good news? Lord, yes! That's what I want.

Because you've got to come to a position like Jonah came to. Now the circumstances that Jonah ended up in, I can't imagine any of us ending up in, can you? I sure hope not, for your sake. If you do, don't come too near me, will you? After you've been vomited up.

I'd rather sort of, you know, keep my distance if you don't mind. But the circumstances will be different. But I hope everybody in this room identifies with the truth of it, Lord.

I've got nothing to touch about as I look at the life of Jonah. I see if I'm going to be a man who's going to preach in the power of the Spirit, if I'm going to live my life in the power of the Spirit, if I'm going to live in the power of the Spirit in my college, in my university, in my workshop amongst blaspheming, swearing, dirty-minded men and women, Lord, I'll never do it unless I've got a resurrection life. Can I come to an end of myself? And Jonah, glory to his name, I don't mean glory to Jonah's name, I mean glory to the name of the Lord, says, don't you do it, you've done it, you've done it, you've done it, you've done it, you've put me in.

Lord, it's wonderful. Now I don't think, I don't think at the very start of his experience as he was kind of swallowed and taken down and down into the deeps, I don't think probably he was too thrilled about it, do you? And I don't think he kind of started, hallelujah, as he was gradually submerged into the deeps, when he realised he was all on his own, on his profit, into something, he was a dead man. And I think as he got down there, and we read it, I cried out to you, Lord, you know, for a long time, a long time, I have, I've struggled with that kind of language, I cried out to you, Lord.

I don't know why that, that is a common thing in church life these days. When did you last hear somebody cry out of the very depths of Sheol, out of the very deepest place, and they cried, and you heard the cry, and everything in you kind of listened to the voice, and there was a cry that came from somewhere, deeper than anything that you can imagine, but here was a man almost wanting something that was so absolutely revolutionary in their life. And I think to myself, oh Lord, oh that we would hear the cry in our day, the cry of men and women wanting to come to an end of all that they are, and all of their religious ideals, and whatever.

And listen, I tell you what, right down in the valley of that fish, do you know what, Jonah couldn't have cared whether he was a prophet or whether he wasn't. And you already know from last night, he was a successful prophet, wasn't he? Oh yes, God had used him within Israel, God had elevated him to a place of statesmanship, and he moved amongst kings, and he spoke God's word, and it came to pass, even as he prophesied. Do you think he cared puffers about it down there? Did anything matter to him anymore? Nothing.

And that's the kind of condition that we need to come to, Lord. Nothing matters now, except this, that I have this life, and that I can go and fulfill my calling to that million, half million, however many it was, all the land in the universe. Paul, let me go back to Romans chapter 6. If we have, in verse 5, been united together, the idea that's being expressed in that language, and it's a strange picture, but listen, it's a great one, is the word marriage.

United together. Inseparable. Where together, Lord, in life and in death, or better, in death and in life, if we have been united together with Christ in that death, now then, Lord, that's what I see to be the need of my heart, to be united to you in that death.

Therefore, Lord, if you can baptise me into that death, then that's what I see to be the most fundamental need of my life. Because I cannot walk in units of life until that's happened. And there's the language of

this great man of God, who understood that all his religious commitment, and I guess if you were able to talk to Paul before his coming to Christ, what a man he was.

His religious commitment was equal to none. He excelled within Israel amongst those of his peers. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees.

He was absolutely devoted. And if you said to him, Paul, do you love God? He would have said yes. And you know what he would have done? He would have been wrong to say it, but he would have said it, because his absolute commitment and devotion to the cause of Judaism and of God who revealed himself through it was genuine and real.

But what he did, he did in ignorance. He did it in ignorance and God had mercy on him. I'm not so sure how ignorant Jonah was, but isn't it wonderful that mercy extends to those who are not so ignorant as others too.

And mercy reaches him right down there. And this is his all alone. And there's something about that that I find is difficult for me.

I'm a very gregarious kind of a person. I don't like being on my own much. I find a thought of being on my own a real tough one.

I don't know about you, but he's all on his own. He's got nobody. He can't go and ask the elders to pray for him.

He can't go and consult his fellow prophet Maitre, because he was around all at the same time. He can't. He's got no one on his own.

And you know what a lovely place it is to be in, but it's not an easy place. But oh, when God has brought us there, when there's just him and me. Now Lord, I want you please to bring me right through this death and up into life.

Now there is the language of this great apostle Paul. Oh boy, it's amazing how the time goes by when you're having fun. That's not quite the right way of putting it, but you're not fast.

Now, how wonderful. You know, while Jonah remained struggling, and let me just kind of just mention something about struggling. If you're in this room and you know you're struggling with things, struggling with inner conflicts, struggling, struggling.

You've got arguments and fights and debates. If you're a young man or young woman, you might say, hang on a minute, I don't mind coming to this when I'm an old, sort of, I'm going to say fogey, but I don't know about the language. But when I get to your age, I don't mind, but hang on a minute.

What about all my future? All my plans? What about my university degree? What about my, what about, what about, what about? Hang on a minute. When I've done all that, and I've got to your age, I'll think about it. My friend, oh, God opened all our eyes to see not one of us has got a guarantee of tomorrow, not one of us.

So how are you going to live your life? How are you going to live it? Trying to dodge the will of God, trying to struggle, escape it, trying to escape the storm, but this storm will not cease for Jomner, and Jomner puts at risk an incredible number of people by his rebelliousness. You stop and think about that for just

one moment, will you? That your life will have consequences upon other people that perhaps at this moment you know nothing about, but they will, and if Jomner had not gone the way of death in my direction, he would have brought, possibly upon many, many people, a tremendous destruction that God wanted to use him for in order to avoid it. Not one of us in this room, not one of our lives can be lived without having an effect upon other people, perhaps many other people.

So Jomner had to come to a place of yieldedness where he said, I know I'm the cause of the problem, now I yield. And he came to the place where he wanted to die. How about that? He wanted to die, he wanted to go into that water, he wanted to be immersed in that depth because he knew that would be life to those who were on board that ship.

Now that's a great place to come to. Most of us live our lives protecting ourselves, protecting our wills, protecting our rights, wanting our ways, demanding them, and we don't care what effect it has upon other people. But Jomner came to the moment where he said, Lord, it's got to be this way.

Oh, I think, Lord, that's marvellous! Marvellous! Can you bring somebody there? Can you bring me there? With all my willfulness and stubbornness and indifference and dullness and carelessness. Yeah? Can he bring you there? Can he? Have you not asked him to? Careful now, hang on. Whoa! Careful now.

Because if you ask him to, you know what could happen, don't you? He jolly well will. He will. And he might even if you don't want him to.

Yeah, he will. He will. I don't think Jomner wanted to bring him there, do you? He was running away.

Oh, God said, I want Jomner. I'm after you, son. You're my man for Nineveh.

And I don't want him or them or that or this. I want you. I'm after you.

Pointing the finger is extremely rude. But it can be very effective sometimes. He's after you, he's after me.

In verse 4 of chapter 1 and then in chapters 3 and in chapter 4, three times God prepared something. Five times you read of God organising, preparing something. This rule, not one of our lives can be lived without having an effect upon other people.

Perhaps many other people. So, Jomner had to come to a place of yieldedness where he said, I know I'm the cause of the problem. Now I yield.

And he came to the place where he wanted to die. How about that? He wanted to die. He wanted to go into that water.

He wanted to be immersed in that depth because he knew that would be life to those who were on board that ship. Now that's a great place to come to. Most of us live our lives protecting ourselves, protecting our wills, protecting our rights, wanting our ways, demanding them and we don't care what effect it has upon other people.

But Jomner came to the moment when he said, Lord, it's got to be this way. Oh, I think, Lord, that's marvellous. Marvellous! Can you bring somebody there? Can you bring me there with all my willfulness and stubbornness and indifference and dullness and carelessness? Yes.

Can he bring you there? Can he? Have you not asked him to? Careful now, hang on. Careful now. Because if you ask him to, you know what could happen, don't you? He jolly well will.

He will. And he will even if you don't want him to. He will.

He will. I don't think Jomner wanted to bring him there, do you? He was running away. But God said, I want Jomner.

I'm after you, son. You're my man for Nineveh. I don't want him or them or that or this.

I want you. I'm after you. Pointing the finger is extremely rude.

But it can be very effective sometimes. He's after you, he's after me. Isn't that wonderful? Jomner, what are you doing there, man? What are you doing? I'm running.

But oh, God in his mercy brings him to the place where he says, Lord, now I want to die. I want to. Notice, and let me read it to you.

Verse 12 of chapter 1. Did he get into chapter 1, do you think? He says this. He says to them that Jomner to the sailors, pick me up, throw me into the sea. The word throw in verse 12 is the word hurl.

Get hold of me and hurl me in. And that's the very same word that is used in verse 4. It says that the Lord hurled out a great wind on the sea. Do you know that in this book, there are five occasions when God prepared something.

In verse 4 of chapter 1, and then in chapters 3 and in chapter 4, three times God prepared something. Five times you read of God organizing, preparing something. That's a wonderful just kind of, something to notice.

Five is always in scripture the number of grace. It's grace, and it was God's grace to this man. And it was God's grace to the sailors.

And it was God's grace to Nineveh. That he did what he did. But he said, pick me up, throw me into the sea.

Then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me. I have pain to have to face.

I'm the cause of this. It's my fault. Now what's the remedy? The remedy is my death.

I've got to die. And it's the only hope you've got. So he says, pick me up and throw me in.

And then you'll notice in verse, well I know I can finish, in verse 13, nevertheless the men rode. Now notice, they were not yet ready to throw him in. They wanted to find an alternative.

And they always do. Is there no other way to? And let me tell you something. Here's more good news for you.

There's no other way. No shortcut. Surely there must be.

Can't I duck and dodge and dive and weave? Can't I escape this? Oh I can't. No way around it. It's got to be this way.

So he says, so the men rode hard to return to land. Notice, oh and they put their backs into it. Let's find an alternative.

We don't want this man to go this way. But children, it's the only way. God, it was the only way.

Man tries to avoid it. And they could not. Isn't that lovely? They could do it.

You can't do it. Go on, try a bit harder lads. Go on, put your backs into it.

Go on. Can't do it. And so the sea continued to grow even more tempestuous against them.

And you might have thought to yourself, well now that Joe has identified that he's the problem, surely it's a bit drastic now, isn't it, to go this way of death? I mean, come on. Lord, he's admitted his problem. He's admitted it's him.

He's the boss. Well why don't you just sort of stop the storm now? That would have destroyed the truth, wouldn't it? It would have destroyed the picture of the very truth that we see and have just read in Romans chapter 6. It's got to be death. And so they cried out to the Lord and said, we pray, O Lord, please do not let us perish for this man's life.

They had a conscience, these pagans. And do not charge up with innocent blood for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you. So they picked up Jonah and they threw him into the sea and the sea ceased from its raging.

But listen, not only was physical safety guaranteed, but notice this, then the men feared Jehovah and the word is Jehovah, Yahweh. They feared the Lord. You notice in the earlier part of the chapter they had called on their God.

In verse 5, they cried out, every mariner cried out to his God, little G. They were pagans. They were calling on whatever God they happened to be brought up to believe in. Now, what an incredible thing happens.

These men call upon the Lord. They feared him and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and took vows. Now what those vows were, I can't tell you, but I can just imagine.

They were vows of conviction now to the God of Jonah, to the living God. They had seen him in a moment still the storm. They were utterly changed and there's a consequence.

In the sense that they were converted away from paganism and they came to trust in a true and living God. Not only was there physical deliverance, but there was spiritual deliverance too. And their lives were changed.

They were never going to be the same again. Why? Because one man died. One man.

And Jesus Christ has died in order that I should be united to him in his death. All I want is life, but I can't have any life unless I'm united to him in death. And the baptism of the Spirit is this.

You and I are put into that death. We are taken as it were by the very Christ and we are plunged into that spirit of life in whom is death and we die. But, and I'll come back to this maybe tomorrow, we've got to die

daily.

It is not some automatic thing. Now I'm the greatest saint who ever lived. I've been put into this death.

Here I am. No, no, no, Paul said I die daily. Day in and day out and day in and day out and day in and day out.

And there's a power operating now to bring about a death and a resurrection. Amen. Let's pray.

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