



## Jonah's Prayer: Back to God

Date: August 11

Text: Jonah 2

---

### BIG IDEA

Take some time before starting to talk about any highlights from the past week your group noticed!

Sometimes we take a second to look around and we see that we are not where we are supposed to be. God seems far away and nothing is working like it should be. We re-evaluate and realize we have taken God off of His rightful place and put an idol where the Lord should be. That is where we see Jonah in today's passage, trapped in a whale after choosing his own safety, comfort, and plan over God and His will. While Jonah is in the belly of the whale, he places God back at His rightful place and surrenders to the Lord's calling over his own preferences.

---

### *Conversation Starter*

- Have you ever felt far from God or intentionally ran from Him? Explain.
  - What does it look like for God to be at the rightful center of your life?
-

## COMMENTARY #1

**(Jonah 2:1-5)** When you go on a walk and you don't want to get lost there are two things you need to know, 1) where you are and 2) where you want to go. Jonah knows where he is right now, away from the Lord, cast from his sight, in the depths of Sheol. Jonah also knows where he wants to go - back into a relationship with God. This wanting is not a secret, Jonah confesses his need for relationship with God and calls for help.

---

### ***Discussion Questions***

1. Why does Jonah confess his need if God knows what he needs?
  2. Where do you see yourself on your walk with God? Close? Far? Explain.
  3. If you have ever been far in your faith, how did you realize you were far?
- 

## COMMENTARY #2

**(Jonah 2:6-10)** In our example of walking earlier, once you know where you are and know where you want to go, you then look over your path and take in obstacles. On the path we either avoid the obstacles or we address them, putting them in a proper place. In this section Jonah realized he had placed his own idol in place of God Himself. He recognizes that following his idol made him abandon his faith in God. He repents, sacrificing to God with a voice of thanksgiving. Once he has repented, God commands the

whale to spit Jonah up. God is back in his rightful place and Jonah is ready for Nineveh.

---

### ***Discussion Questions***

Idols are not necessarily inherently “bad,” but anything that takes the place of God in our hearts needs to be evaluated.

1. What are idols that our culture routinely places in God’s place? What idols does our church place in God’s place?
  2. Do you struggle with any of these? Explain.
  3. What does repentance from these idols look like?
  4. What steps can we take to place God as the King of our hearts and keep Him there?
- 

### **GOING DEEPER**

It is one thing to recognize that we have fallen away from God, it is another to not fall away in the first place.

1. What are safeguards and disciplines you know to not fall away?
  2. What scripture talks about persevering or consistent faith?
  3. What examples in scripture are there?
  4. Is it possible for us to not fall away?
- 

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

[How to Expose the Idols in Your Life \(thegospelcoalition.org\)](http://thegospelcoalition.org)-  
Article on Overcoming Idols

[Letting Go of Distractions](#) - Sermon from Craig Groeschel

---

## Group Activity

Last week we identified where God was moving. This week we want to look for where our Nineveh lies.

As a group, discuss the people or places already in your life that need the Lord. Consider your habits; is there a gas station you always stop at? A restaurant where you always ask for the same server? The gym? How could God be asking you to move in those areas you already frequent?

Take time this week to pray for clarity on where God wants to move. Note down anything that comes to mind, and be ready to share what God tells you if you feel comfortable with it.