

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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Jonah: Arise & Go

PART

3

TITLE

Calling To God In The Storm

SCRIPTURE

Jonah 2



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Well, if we haven't met yet my name is Ryan, and I'm one of our pastors here. Been able to serve here for over five years now, and I just love this church, love these people. I love this building if I could do that. Just thankful to be here. If this your first week at Providence or you've missed the last couple weeks, we've been going through the book of Jonah. Going through the series on Jonah. We're in chapter two today, so if you have a copy of God's Word go ahead and open up to Jonah. It's really tricky to find because it's a really small book. Kind of in the middle of Bible, but only two pages in mine, but if you have a ESV you can probably turn to page 774, it's probably where it is. If you don't have a Bible, there should be one in the racks in front of you. You can maybe grab one out of there, and we'll be on page 774, but Jonah chapter two is where we're going to be.

Let me just set up the context before we dive into Jonah chapter two. If you've missed the first couple weeks here's the setting: Jonah is ... first in chapter one he hears from God, and God tells him, "I want you to go, and take my salvation to the city called Nineveh." It's a really great city. Basically, the greatest city in the world at that time. Jonah tells us in chapter three it takes three days to walk through the city because it was so big. He's supposed to rise and go and take the gospel -- take salvation -- to Nineveh.

Now, there's a lot of irony in this book. A whole lot. So, instead of Jonah arising and going to Nineveh, it says, "He arise and went the other way." Like, he arises and runs and flees from God, but in the midst of that God's pursuing him. He's on this boat, he gets tossed overboard, and he's swallowed up by a fish which is where we start our story. It's a really interesting context that we find ourselves in in verse one, but this is all from the belly -- from the bowels -- of a fish that we read chapter two. So, just picture that as we read through this.

Starting in verse one it says, "Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish." Now, this has got to be one of the rarest places that you can pray to the Lord, right? I think Jonah's got us all beat. He's praying from the belly of the fish, and this is what he prays in verse two saying, "I called out to the Lord out of my distress and he answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol," or the grave, "I cried, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the floods surrounded me. All your waves and billows passed over me."

"Then I said, 'I'm driven away from your sight, yet, I shall look again upon your holy temple.' The waters closed in over me to take my life. The deep surrounded me. Weeds were wrapped around my head at the root of the mountains. I went down to a land whose bars closed up upon me forever. Yet, you brought my life up from the pit, Oh Lord my God. When my life was fainting away I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to you into your holy temple. Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love, but I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed, I will pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord." Verse 10 says, "And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land."

Let's pray. Take a moment right now to pray. No matter where you are in your spiritual life or you're a skeptic or a believer just take a moment right now and ask that God would speak to you this morning through his Word. Take a moment just to pray for me, that I would communicate God's beautiful truth clearly this morning. God, we thank you, that in your love, and in your mercy, and in your grace, you hear us when we pray. I pray now that you would just help us to see the beautiful things from your Word that help reveal to us who you are. Lord, you're not a God who is shrouded or distant, but, Lord, a God that is close and has given us your word that we would understand, and know, and love you more. So, this morning, open up our eyes to behold wondrous things from your Word. Amen.

All right, so growing up I used to go spend time with my grandparents, and whenever I went over there I noticed this decoration. It was always confusing to me because I looked at it, and I'm like, "There's just a bunch of sticks on this piece of wood. Like, what is this?" So, for a long time -- months, weeks, years go by -- and I see this and I just think, "Maybe it's a foreign language? Like, maybe it's Chinese and I just don't understand it. I don't know, but they really love sticks or love displaying sticks apparently." Months and weeks and years went by, and I still thought this was just a decoration of sticks. I don't know what happened, but at some point, it clicked, and I stopped looking at the sticks, and I started looking at the background. When I saw the background, I saw the name Jesus. You guys see it? Yeah.

It took me forever to see it, so if you don't see it right now don't worry, but if you look hard enough in the background it actually says the word Jesus. Leave it up there for a second for you guys to figure it out. There it is. The girl running our sound today was like, "I'm still looking at it and I don't see it," but I promise, Jesus is up there. The reason why I bring that out -- why do I share that with you -- is because I think we can look at the story, a story that we are familiar with, and we can look at Jonah, and we can look at the fish, and we can miss our Lord. We can focus in on those two things, and we can completely miss what the story's all about because, yes, there is a real fish and, yes, there is a real man, but ultimately both of these are pointing to who our Lord is.

As we walk through this passage what I say is I think there's three main themes that we see about our God in this text. Three main themes for one great God. The first thing I want us to see is that God hears us in his sovereign grace. God hears us in his sovereign grace. We all hate to be ignored. We all hate it, but we all know what it feels like to be in a circle of people who are not listening to what you have to say, or you say something and they ignore you, or maybe even with their eyes -- they don't say anything, but they never look at you when you talk, or they never respond to you when you talk. We all hate to be ignored, and yet there is this sense of feeling within our hearts of being ignored.

I think that's one of the reasons why social media is so popular today, because we want people to hear us, we want people to recognize us, and so we are going to send out all our information on all these different places: Facebook, and Twitter, and every other one just so everybody can see us, and know, and hear us, and so we are not forgotten or forsaken. I think there's something within us that desires for people to hear us and to know us, but the reality is we are ignored a lot of times with people. I think what we do is we take that feeling, and we transpose it into our relationship with God, and we think that God ignores us sometimes. We pray and we think, "God, I don't feel like my prayer's going past this ceiling. Are you ignoring me? Are you even paying attention to me?" or we've prayed for weeks, and months, and years for something, and we feel like God hasn't heard us. The reality is God always hears us. This feeling that we get of, "Is God ignoring us?"

This passage shows us that that feeling is not reality. That feeling is not the truth. We find in this passage that God always hears us when we pray and he always answers. It might be yes. It might be no. It might be later, but our God is always hearing and answering our prayers. Look at the first two verses of chapter two. Just a few things I want to point out, and this is backtracking a little bit, but first just the context of what's going on where Jonah is. Verse one he says that that, "Jonah prayed to the Lord his God." Now, right now in this situation of where Jonah is it's not a great situation. Like, if you are going to describe it, Jonah is a fugitive from the Lord. God has said, "Hey, I want you to do this," and Jonah's in rebellion. I mean, there's been mutiny on the ship and Jesus was the captain. He's like, "No, I don't want to follow that," and so he's done.

So, he's in the midst of the sin in the midst of this rebellion, and there's pride within Jonah's heart that's incredibly deep pride because it says that he's been in the belly of this fish for three days and three nights, and he's just now praying. Like, for me, if I fell into the water I'd have started praying to the Lord. Like, "Save me. I don't want to get eaten by a shark or something," but Jonah takes three days in his pride and his arrogance before he calls out to the Lord. Now, we can all agree that okay, God's going to hear a super faithful person, right? If you're faithful, and you're loyal, and you're following the Lord -- like, when we pray God's going to hear us, but then something within us says, "When we are sinning and we are running from God we have to first clean ourselves off, and clean ourselves up before we can go to God again." We've sinned today so, "I need at least two or three days to clean myself up before I can go and pray to God again."

This is not the gospel. This is not grace. Grace means that we can come before God and he hears us not because of us -- because of who he is. God hears us even when we are running from him, even in the midst of our sin, and so, church, don't think, "Well, I'm struggling with a sin. I got to wait to fix this before I can go to God." No. God hears us in the depths of our sin not because we are good but because he is good. Not because we are great and important so he should hear what we have to say, but rather because he is gracious to hear us. So, in the depths of our sin we pray and God still hears us, but look at the situation too. Anyplace God hears us. He's in the belly of a fish. This is not a clean, sterile place. This is not a great place to be praying from. This is a disgusting place.

Now, I got two kids, and we've been reading through this story, and I don't know what it is but every kid's book pictures the inside of this fish or whale as like some giant, roomy place. It looks like my house would fit inside of this fish in all these pictures that I'm seeing, but in reality, it was probably pretty tight in there. It would give a whole new meaning to be still and know that I am God. Put yourself in that place. Jonah is sitting there soaking wet, looking around and seeing little bits of fish float around him, and it's probably hot -- 90° inside this fish. This is a disgusting, terrible place to be, and he cries out to the Lord. Now, God didn't say, "This is not the best place, and I'm a little too holy and a little too clean to hear you in this moment, so wait you get in a better situation and a better place, and then I'll hear your prayers." That's not what he says. He prays and God answers his prayer. God hears his prayer.

Honestly, I'm a little convicted with this because when I sit at home in my chair with an ice-cold glass of water, and my thermostat set at 72° I still struggle to pray, and here's Jonah in the midst of this hot, sticky, dark, damp situation and he realizes he can pray to God, and God hears him. So, God is hearing him in the midst of this gross situation. God's hearing him in the midst of his sinful rebellion, but God also hears him through all his emotions. Through all of our emotions God hears us as we pray to him.

Look at verse two. It says, "Out of my distress," he's calling to the Lord. I mean, if we could weigh this out, the stress that Jonah's been feeling with ... I mean, he's away from home. He's been on the ship that's got caught in a storm, and now he's not just caught in the storm but he's stuck in a fish, and so this is a lot of stress that he's dealing with. He even talks about he feels like his life is feigning away. Jonah is in this time of feeling depressed and down, and in the midst of this he calls to the Lord, and the Lord hears him.

He's not like, "Well, Jonah, wait till you're in a happy mood and then you can pray." No. In the midst of his depression, and his anxiety, and his stress he says pray to him. We see three different words used in verses one and two to talk about how Jonah's calling to the Lord, and I think that these three different words are showing how Jonah's emotionally distressed in this moment. The first one in verse one he says, "He prayed to the Lord." This is a conversation with God. "I'm just talking to God."

This is a normal word that they would use to talk about prayer in the Old Testament. Then in verse two you see, "He called out to the Lord." This is a shouting to God. "Okay, God, I need you to hear me." It's moved past dialogue to, "I'm shouting to you that you would hear me." Then he uses a different word and he says, "I cried." This is the second half of verse two. "I cried to the Lord out of the belly of Sheol." This is a word to talk about weeping or screaming to the Lord.

We see Jonah's distress poured out on these pages, and I love how he shows God's response. Look what it says in verse two. He says, "In my distress he answered me." "He answered me." Now, it could have been sufficient to just say, "God answered him," but he takes it a step further and says, "And you heard my voice." This is extremely personal of God to hear our voice when we pray to him. He could've said, "Well, an angel came to me with your message, and I answered your prayer." Which would have been sufficient, right? That would have been good enough that God still acted, but it shows how personal he is. In the midst of this moment he says, "You heard my voice calling out to you." God hears us. He responds in his sovereign grace.

Now, the reality is this, I think if we took a poll in this room this morning and we said, "Do you think that God hears us in any situation, in any location, in any emotion?" I think if we took a poll most of them would be like, "Yeah. I think God hears us." Well, it leads me to the question if we truly believe that the Almighty God, the creator of the ends of the earth that has the sovereign power to control all things -- the fish, the boat, the storm, the hearts of men -- why is it that we struggle to pray? Why is it so hard for us to pray when we know this is the God that we pray to? My argument is this, I don't think it's a mental block. I don't think it's a mental block that's keeping us from praying to God. I think it's a heart issue. Our heart is struggling to commit and to call out to God. It's struggling to do that.

This preacher used to use this illustration to talk about the difference between believing and knowing, and actually acting on it. He said what he would do is there was a girl he knew really well that was a single woman, and he would bring her up on the stage, and he'd say, "Do you believe in marriage?" and she'd say, "Yeah. I think marriage is a great thing." He'd say, "Okay. Well, if you believe marriage is a great thing why do you think it's great?" She would say, "Well, I think it's a great place to find companionship.

I think it's a great place for you to raise a family, and so, yeah, I believe in it, and I think that it's good." He looks at her and he says, "Well, then you must be married?" and she says, "No. I'm not married." He's like, "Well, wait. You believe in it, and you know it's good, then why aren't you married?" She says, "Because I haven't committed yet. I haven't made those vows. I haven't said, 'I do to someone.' So, I haven't committed anything."

I think it's the same with our prayer lives. The reason why we struggle to pray, and the reason why we struggle to set times to pray is because we haven't committed ourselves to this belief. We know God hears us, but are we committed to set time, to sacrifice of our schedule, and to pray before the Lord? My application to this would be just at some point let us commit to start praying, or rather if you're praying faithfully like many of you are, just continue steadfastly in prayer. Prayer often times is one of the first things that we let go when our schedule gets busy, and it's one of the very first things that we need to keep our schedule together. So, be encouraged -- God hears your prayers anytime, anyplace, and he is answering your prayers.

The second big theme I think we need to see from this text is that God pursues us in perfect love. God pursues us in perfect love. Now, you might have been looking through the text and said, "I don't see love in here. You say he pursues us in love? Like, Jonah's in the bowels of a fish right now. How's that loving?" Well, if you were here the first week Brian Frost talked about it, and what he said is some people look at this and think, "This is God's wrath. Like, God is bringing wrath down on Jonah when in reality this is God's grace to Jonah." Because what God could have done is just wiped his hands clean of Jonah and be like, "Man, if you're going to from for me and not want to be near me then that's fine. You go that direction. I'm going to pick another prophet."

I mean, at this time he's got two more prophets that write books in the Bible. He's got Amos and Hosea. He could have said, "Hey, Hosea, I want you to go preach to the Ninevites. I want you to go share the gospel with them, to tell the salvation that they can receive," but he doesn't because that wouldn't be loving. God pursues us in his love. What would have been real wrath and real anger is if God would have looked at Jonah's rebellion and left him in his sins, and just said, "Jonah, that's fine. You stay in your sins, and you run for my presence, but you will not be satisfied there." Instead, God pursues him, and one of the ways he pursues him is through discipline. Jonah understands this -- if you look at verse three -- because he says, "For you cast me into the deep, and then all your waves and billows passed over me."

Now, it's interesting, Jonah's looking at God at this moment. Most of us probably would have been like, "Wait a second. What bad luck happened to me because the lots got cast on the ship, and it landed on me that I was the one that was causing this problem so they threw me overboard. Bad luck." Or he could have said, "Man, those sailors, they threw me over into this water. I can't believe they threw me over into this water," but he doesn't. Both of these times he saying, "It's the Lord." The Lord in his perfect love is the one that's disciplining him in this time. "You cast me into the deep. Your waves are crashing over me."

The reason why this is love is because God disciplines the ones that he loves. No one loves discipline, but it's a healthy thing for us. A verse that Jonah probably would've known -- Proverbs chapter three -- says it like this, "My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline, or be weary of his reproof. For the Lord reproves him he loves as a father the son in whom he delights." The New Testament says it like this, "For the Lord disciplines the one he loves." This is a pursuing after Jonah, and God does the same for us.

He pursues after us in love, and Jonah knew it was love which is why I think he prays verse eight. He says, "Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love." "They forsake their hope of steadfast love." Now, this word for love is not the love that we think about. I don't know if it's a love that we can experience between one another here because this is a love that they would use to speak of God's love for his people -- his covenant-keeping love. *Hesed* is the word.

So, love that never failed. It never changed. It didn't move up and down on different days. It was consistent and it was rock-solid. This is the kind of love that he's talking about right here. He saying, "Our hope is in this steadfast love because God never changes." Now, the reason why I say I don't know if we can experience it with one another is because our emotions change, our moods change, people's love for us changes based upon our performance. I mean, how many of you have had friends where you've said something, and then you wish you could take it back and you've lost the friendship? We all hate to have love and friendship broken, and that can happen with human relationships, but not with God's relationship with us. His love is this steadfast love. Your Bible might have mercy, but it's a love that never changes and never fades. It will never leave us nor forsake us. It's always steadily pursuing us and running after us.

I've got two kids right now and one on the way. I've got a five-year-old and a two-year-old, and my little girl is five and my boy's two. I'm learning them as they grow. It's so funny because when I come home from work, most days this is how it goes: my son is using building blocks and he's building something in order to destroy it, so he's building something up, sees me come in and runs and gives me a hug. Now, my daughter on the other hand, hears me pull in the driveway and she runs from me because she loves to play hide and seek. So, she'll run and she'll hide from me, and I'm thankful for my wife because she gives me understanding with this. Very wise woman. She says, "Women love to be pursued." So, I pursue my wife, and now I'm understanding how to pursue my daughter well, but what's great is she loves it so much and she has so much fun in it, I can normally find her pretty quickly because she's laughing. She's in the closet hiding from me, and she's just laughing with joy because it's so fun to her.

So, that's why my daughter runs from me and hides, and that's the truth in that situation, but as I think about this situation and why Jonah's running and I ask of myself, "Why is it that I run from God at times?" I think it's this: I think there's something within our hearts that looks at sin and thinks, "That's really fun," when in reality it forsakes us and it's deceitful. Our hearts long for this very thing that will leave us and forsake us, so that's why Jonah here is making this confession. "I've lived for myself. I have run from God, and as I've run from God what I see," he says in verse eight, "is that these vain idols, if you pursue them they forsake you. They forsake your hope, but steadfast love is found in the Lord."

Our idols are so cloaked in our culture because it's not necessarily a physical carved image that we worship, but we long for the approval of man, and we seek it out, and what we find is we come up lacking every time. Even if we grasp it, it's like the wind, it just slips through our fingers, and here we stand longing for approval again, or we work our fingers to the bone in our jobs because we love to work, and then one day we look back and we realize we had to retire. Like, all these idols -- all these things we live for -- they forsake us, but our hope is in this: the love of our Father. The love of the one that pursues us by his great grace. So, this is my encouragement to you guys: be encouraged that we can never wander too far from God's love. It can always reach us. We can never be too deep in our sins that God can't save us. God is a loving God seeking and pursuing us.

A Christian artist, Matt Papa, wrote a song, and one of the lines in the song says this, it speaks of this, he says, “My seeker finds me where I hide.” This is speaking of God. His seeker finds him where he hides, “In the corner of guilt and under my pride. His grace is chasing down this heart. I run away, but I never get far.” We can’t outrun God’s love for us. He’s always pursuing us and seeking us in his great love, so be encouraged by that.

The third thing I think we need to see from this text is that God rescues us in his matchless might. God rescues us in his matchless might. Look at verse nine again. The very end of it. There’s five words right here that are huge. One theologian says, “This one verse, this one sentence describes all of the Bible,” and he says this at the end of verse nine, “Salvation belongs to the Lord.” “Salvation belongs to the Lord.” Now, I want to pause here for a second because we have to understand what we are being saved from in order to appreciate this, right? If I am out swimming in the ocean and I think I’m doing fine, I don’t need help, and a boat comes by and they throw me a life preserver, “Hey, here you go.” Well, I’m swimming. I don’t need that, right? I’m not drowning, but if reality I’m drowning and I realize I’m drowning in the salvation of a life preserver is great, and I’m grateful, and I cling to that. It’s true with us too.

We could talk about the Lord’s salvation, but if we don’t understand what he’s saving us from then how could there be a joy from the salvation that we have? What God is saving us from is the greatest evil that our world has ever seen or known and it is sin. It’s your sin and it’s my sin. He’s redeeming us and saving us from that, and the reason why sin is so bad is because it separates us from all that is good. Everything that is good comes from God. Everything, and if we don’t know God then we are separated from all that is good, and one day we’ll be separated from all eternity if we don’t know and trust Jesus Christ. So, when it talks about right here, “Salvation belongs to the Lord,” this is salvation for all of eternity. This is eternal life that we found in God, and what I love is the salvation is for the righteous and the unrighteous.

If you look at this story, Jonah needs the salvation of the Lord because he’s deep in sin, but at the same time, God has called him to go to Nineveh to preach to a people who are deep in their sins and far from God. Jonah knows who the Lord is, these people don’t, but at the same time they both need the salvation of the Lord, and it is both found in him. I’m so thankful that it says salvation belongs to the Lord and not to us. Salvation belongs to the Lord and not to us. I’m thankful and grateful for a few reasons. One because if salvation belonged to me, I’m a terrible rescuer.

The only time in my life that I’ve had a chance to rescue someone was when I was youth pastor. We took a white-water rafting retreat, okay? But during this time, it was a drought season, and so it really wasn’t white-water rapids. It was more just like water rapids that we were on, and as we’re out there they said, “Because the water’s low you’re going to see a lot more rocks poking out through the water, so if somebody falls out of your boat get them back in the boat quick so they don’t hit one of these rocks or get hurt.” So, I’m ready. They’ve taught us how to do this. They said, “What you’re going to do if somebody falls out of the boat, you’re going to grab their vest, and then you’re going to dunk them in the water a little bit, and pull back up because the buoy will allow them to give you a little force to get them back in the boat.”

So, I learned it. I know it. I'm like, "Great. I'm going to implement this."

We get out on the water, and one of the girls from our boat falls in the water. Like, "This is my chance. This is my chance to rescue somebody." I leaned over to help this girl get in the boat, and I grabbed the vest and I push her down into the water. Apparently, I didn't give enough oomph, so I push her down and I pull her back up, and all I did was baptize her. I didn't even get her back in the boat. It just like, "Oh, sorry. Let me try this again," and so I go down to push her in again, and this time I'm going to pull really hard to make sure I get her in the boat, and so I pull really hard and she gets in the boat, but at the same time I fall backwards and knock my wife out of the boat on the other side. Like, "Great. If salvation was in my hands," I mean, like it's butter fingers. We'd be doing terrible, and the same is true with us.

If salvation depended upon us we would lose it. We would mess it up. But it doesn't, and that's what's glorious about it. Your salvation is not based upon you keeping God's commands, but instead trusting in the one that keeps your salvation in his hand. God is the author and finisher of your faith, and so trust, and rest, and knowing that God is the one who's keeping your salvation. He is the one that's protecting you. At the same time, because salvation belongs to the Lord, not only do we have hope in our salvation being secure in him, but we have hope when we get to share the gospel because it doesn't solely rely on us.

You know, there's sometimes we want to share the gospel with people, and we're so worried we are getting the words wrong, or if we are not going to know the right answers to their questions, and so there's a sense of fear of like, "I don't know if I can share salvation, so we'll just wait and have somebody else do that. Have a professional like a pastor do it." The reality is salvation doesn't belong to you, and it doesn't belong to me. It doesn't belong to Jonah who doesn't want to go and share the gospel with these people. It belongs to the Lord. It is in his hand. Now, this should really encourage us to share the gospel because it doesn't rely solely on you. God is working in people's hearts and in people's minds even when we aren't around.

This book, the book of Jonah, encouraged me to share the gospel almost more than any other book in the Bible and this is why: we'll read in chapter three and chapter four Jonah doesn't want to go to Nineveh. He doesn't want to go share the gospel with these people. Like, he's angry even after this scene, after God gets him out of the fish. He just doesn't want to do it. So, I'm just guessing, I'm picturing Jonah's going to Nineveh and sharing the gospel a little bit like this, "Hey, everybody, there's this God, and he's loving. Should probably forgive you if you, like, you confess your sins." I don't picture a whole lot of passion behind Jonah because he doesn't want the people to believe anyway, and yet what you see is the people hear Jonah's word and they repent before God.

In chapter 4 it gets weird. They even talk with animals repenting of their sins. I don't know what that looks like. Maybe Brian will answer that in a couple weeks, but the animals are in their sackcloth and ashes confessing their sins, but it's because salvation belongs to the Lord. It doesn't belong to us, so we don't have to trust in ourselves to get salvation. We don't have the trust in ourselves as we share salvation, and the glory in that is this that this is like a battering ram to our pride. It is a battering ram to our pride because it doesn't rely on us. It relies on God, so let us trust in that with humility. Where's the application I would give is this is let us have assurance in our salvation. At the same time, let us have hope as we share this salvation because it belongs to the Lord. It belongs to the Lord and not to us.

As we close, we can think on these three truths that we see in the book of Jonah that God hears when we cry to him, that God lovingly pursues us, that God rescues us with his great might, and we see a glimmer of this in the book of Jonah. How God is all three of these things, but the pinnacle of this we see at the cross. The pinnacle of God's love and his salvation is found in Christ on the cross, and so this morning as we take the Lord's supper, what this is is a time for us to remember these truths about God in a very tangible, practical way. We take this to confess. We believe these things. We believe that Christ died and rose again, and so if you're a Christian we would ask you, we'd encourage you to take the Lord's supper this morning to remember what God has done. To remember that he's a loving, faithful God to us. That he's pursuing us, but also, we look for with hope.

Jesus said to continue to take the Lord's supper until he comes again. Church, Jesus is coming back again, and he's going to make all things new. He's going to fix all these broken things that we struggle with, and he's going to make them perfect again. If you're not a believer and you're here today I'd just ask that you would let this pass by you, because what we are doing is we take this as really remembering and then confessing that we believe the gospel. Maybe you're a parent and you have kids here, I would just encourage them not to take the Lord's supper today, and maybe use that as a chance to share the gospel on your drive home of why you take it and why they are not taking it yet. This is a chance for us to share the gospel with our kids. This is a chance for us to share the gospel with one another. Let's take a time now, and let's pray and take the Lord's supper.

Father, we thank you for this tangible reminder. Lord, you know that we are forgetful people. In the busyness of life, and in the running from day-to-day we often times forget you, and so in this moment I just pray that we will remember who you are, and at the same time remember who we are. That, Lord, we are sinful and we are separated from you, and only by your blood and your body being broken on the cross do we have hope of salvation. It's only because you went into the belly of the tomb for three days and three nights like Jonah did the whale, do we have hope in a resurrection one day. So, Lord, right now as we take this, as we confess we believe these things, I just pray that you would soften our hearts, show us sin in our lives. And for those that don't know Christ, but want to believe in Christ today, Lord, I pray that during this moment you would just stir their heart to pray to you, confessing that salvation belongs to you and they need you. It's in Christ's name we ask. Amen. (singing).

On the night that Christ was betrayed he gave thanks, and then he looked at his disciples, and he said, "This is my body which is given for you. Take and eat in remembrance of me." Then he took the cup, and he said, "This is a symbol of my blood. The new covenant for you. Take and drink in the remembrance of me." God, we thank you. We can't thank you enough. There's not enough gratitude in our hearts that could fill the great grace that you give. Lord, you in your faithfulness and love have sought us out, and has not left us in our sin, but has redeemed us through the death and the resurrection.

Lord, we confess today we are not trusting in our good works, we are not trusting in the Lord's supper. Lord, what we are doing is we are trusting in you because we know, we believe, that salvation belongs to you, that salvation is from your hand and your hand alone. So, thank you God that you are so good and loving to pour out your salvation on us through Christ's death and his resurrection. It's in his great name we pray. Amen.



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