

Questions for further study
July 11 – Jonah 2

1. "From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry." v2

While inside the whale, Jonah realized his mistake of disobeying God and running away from him. He had tried to do things his way instead of God's way and nearly died had it not been for God's mercy. After repenting to God, he promised to "make good" what he vowed. Do you ever find yourself promising things to God when you're in a difficult situation, which you later back track on? What helps us stay faithful to God?

2. "But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord my God." v6
Why do you think it often takes dire circumstances to cause a person to cry out for God's mercy and love?

God wanted Jonah to have mercy and love for the Ninevites, even though they were wicked, just like God had mercy on Jonah when he rebelled. How do you think Jonah's experience in the whale brought this home to him? Do you relate to this?

3. "my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple." v7

In the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9-14), Jesus describes two different men who went to God in prayer. How did the Pharisee's attitude prevent God from answering any prayers he offered? How does pride hinder our prayers? Why does God require humility of us when we pray?

4. "But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you." v9

Why do you think joy and thanksgiving are considered sacrifices to God? God wants us to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). What do you think this means?

God wants to use each of us to further his kingdom on the earth, but he can only use us if we humble ourselves, let go of our own desires, and allow him to move in us, giving us the strength to do the work he called us to. When we are down, we can cry out to God in a state of brokenness; he will lift us "up from the pit" and restore life to our dry bones. As we allow him to have his way in us, we will change and God will be glorified!

God tells us, "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).