

The revived prophet

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning. It's good to see you all having braved the elements and avoided illnesses. It's good to be able to be here together to worship God.

Tea and coffee are served at the end of the service. Everyone is welcome to that. Those who are visiting with us today, you're very welcome. And if you're able to stay behind at the end for tea and coffee, you're most welcome to that as well.

Evening service will be at 6 and that will be a gala service this evening and that will be conducted by Dolman McSween. There's an English fellowship at 8 o'clock as usual and I think that will be led by Duncan and Anthony this evening.

Ladies Bible study is, I understand, cancelled for tomorrow night in light of the weather forecast. So please take note of that. First group fellowship meets at half past seven on Tuesday in the Church of Scotland Hall.

Go to the recovery meeting also on Tuesday at 8 in the community centre here. Prayer meeting on Wednesday at half past seven in Kilda Cruises and discipleship explored continues in the restaurant of Hotel Hebrides on Thursday at 8.

[1 : 15] Anyone who was unable to come to the first meeting and who maybe thinks they can't come because they weren't at the first meeting would be encouraged to come along anyway.

You can pick up at any point in the course. And so if you want to know more about what it means to follow Christ, then you're welcome to come to that group. Services next Lord's Day, 7th February at 11 and 6 will, God willing, both be conducted by myself.

There'll be a fundraising event held on Saturday the 6th, that's this coming Saturday, at 7pm in the Harris Hotel to raise funds for the forthcoming youth fellowship trip to Nepal.

Donations of adult or children's clothes, footwear or accessories would be gratefully received and the nations can be left at Brownie's shop or given to Peggy, McLeod or Flora.

These, I think, are all the notices. So we begin our worship with a word of prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we do thank you that we are found here this morning.

[2 : 27] We thank you for the invitation that you give to us, the call that you give to us to come. And we thank you that the promise is that all who come in faith to Christ will be received.

Come to me, says Jesus, all who are weary and burdened, all who know their weakness and who know that they need strength. And Lord, we thank you that the promise that we are given is that we will be given rest.

And we ask, Lord, that we would know that Sabbath rest over the course, not just of this hour, but of this day. We thank you that this is your gift to us this day.

And we ask, Lord, that we would not take your day for granted, but that we would remember during this hour and over the course of the day and each day, help us to remember that Jesus, our Saviour, he lived and he died and he rose again and he lives.

And we pray that by the Spirit and through the Word of God, you may meet with us this morning. So bless us and lead us by your Spirit, we pray.

[3 : 36] Enable us as we sing to sing from our hearts, praise. And we ask, Lord, that you, yourself, by your Spirit, would inhabit the praises of your people.

Hear our prayers. Cleanse us from sin. Accept us in Christ, we pray. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We will sing to God's praise.

And we'll sing, first of all, from Psalm 130. Psalm 130. And I think we are singing the whole psalm.

Psalm 130 and the whole psalm. We come to Jonah chapter 2 in the service today. And we know the story of Jonah well, I expect most of us. Jonah chapter 2, he finds himself in the depths.

He finds himself in the belly of the great fish. And he cries out to God in prayer. And this is a psalm that speaks into that experience.

[4 : 35] Lord, from the depths, to thee I cry. My voice, Lord, do thou hear. Unto my supplications voice, give an attentive ear. We sing the whole psalm. We stand to sing.

Lord, from the depths, to thee I cry.

My voice, Lord, do thou hear. Unto my supplications voice, Get on the depths, to thee I cry.

Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, Should mark iniquity, But yet with thee, forgiveness, The fear thou mayest be.

I wait for God, my soul doth wait. My hope is in His word.

[6 : 18] More than thou, O Lord, for morning watch. My soul waits for the Lord.

I say, Lord, I say, Lord, I say, Lord, may thou do watch. The morning light to see.

Let Israel, O Lord, for with Him, For with Him, there's mercy, be.

On cleansing earth's redemption, Is ever found with Him.

And from all His glory, And from all His integrity, The Israel shall redeem.

[7 : 48] Again, let's unite their hearts in prayer for a moment. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come into your presence this morning, We are reminded as we sing the words of that psalm, That we are those who have no rightful place in your presence.

You are the God who is holy. You're the God who is perfect. You're the God who has revealed yourself to us, In and through your word, And through Jesus, the Son.

And Lord, we know that you are the God who cannot look upon sin. And we know, as you search our hearts, That we are those who struggle day by day with sin, And often fail, and often fall.

And so we come at this point in the service, At the outset of this service, confessing our sin. We don't hide it from you. We don't seek to justify ourselves, Lord, because we can't.

But we come confessing our sin, Giving you thanks that you are the God who is merciful. You are the one who is quick to show us grace, When we confess our sin, and when we look in faith to Jesus.

[9 : 09] And so we pray that you would cleanse us afresh, In the blood of Christ. Even as we think back over these last few days, Since we last met here.

And as we think about the ways that we have fallen short, Sometimes the things that we have said, Sometimes the things that we have left unsaid. Sometimes the things that we have done, Sometimes the things that we have left undone.

Lord, as we think through our thoughts, That no one else sees, but you see. We confess our sin. And we pray that through the blood of Christ, We would be cleansed.

And that we may know that joy of forgiveness. That joy of knowing that in and through Jesus, We are forgiven and we are saved and we are redeemed.

So meet with us, Lord, we pray. Because our faith is in Jesus. And we ask, Lord, that in all that we do, And all that we say, And all that we think even in this place, And in the Sunday school, We ask that Jesus would be lifted up.

[10 : 24] And that we would come in faith to him. He with those who can't be here this morning, Bless them wherever they are. Minister to them in the power of the Spirit.

And Lord, may they know, Those especially who would wish to be here, But who can't. May they know that they are remembered by your people.

And may they know that they are remembered. And that they are being blessed by you above all. So hear our prayers. And accept us in Christ. And we pray this in Jesus name.

Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward please? How are you all today? Are you all feeling nice and warm? Dylan, you feeling nice and warm?

You should be. Take a wee stand up. Give us a wee twirl. There is a man who knows how to deal with the Harris Winter. I don't have anything to show you today.

[11 : 27] I thought about bringing a few things. But after the failure with the balloon last Sunday. I thought I would be safer just to tell you a story. And it is a story about how daft I am.

There are many stories I could tell you about that. But here is the story. Two and a half weeks ago I think it was. The day that Anna was going to hospital.

And the first time. We were driving to Stornoway. And do you know what happened in the car? A warning light came on. And the light said.

Anti-skid service required. You know what that means? It means the brakes are not working tip-top. But there is something going on in the brakes. And so when you get a warning in your car.

What should you always do? What do you think? What do you do Daneesh? Take it to the garage. Take it to the garage.

[12 : 31] Sensible answer. What did I do? Nothing. I thought well maybe if I just ignore the warning. Maybe it is just an electrical thing that will just go away.

And so the next day I switched on the car thinking. I hope that warning light has gone away. Had it gone away? No it hadn't. The day after. The warning light gone away? No it hadn't.

But I drove the car for a week. And it didn't make any difference really. It drove fine. Warning light was still on. But it drove fine. I just started driving the car more than I did.

And in the second week I was driving the car. And it was fine. Warning light still on. But the car is driving okay. Every time I'd switch it on.

Woo! Woo! Woo! Warning. Anti-skid service required. And then on Thursday. Mary was driving to school.

[13 : 31] With Anna and Grace and Louis. And you know what the car said? Woo! Woo! Woo! It said.

What was it said? What were the words that it said? It said. Brake failure. Stop cars safely. I don't know how you stop the car with no brakes. It did have brakes actually. Brake failure. Stop cars safely. I don't know how you stop the car with no brakes.

Brake failure. Stop cars safely. So Mary pulled the car over at the bottom of Buriga. And switched the engine off. And then she went to switch it back on.

And you know what happened? Nothing. And so she phoned me up. Said the car is not working right. And cut a longer story short. We got it to start again.

And we drove it to the garage. And it's been there ever since. Now. What should I have done?

[14 : 28] When I first heard that warning light going on. And that noise going on. Nish tells the answer again. Take it to the garage.

I was hoping. If I would just ignore the problem. It might just go away. Just got worse. Didn't it? And you know in the Bible. There are lots of things in the Bible.

And there's. Two things that. Come to my mind. That are in the Bible. A lot. One is there's warnings. And two is there's invitations.

You know what an invitation is? Invitation. You get these invitations. If you're going to go to a party. There's lots of invitations in the Bible. And there's also warnings in the Bible.

What does Jesus warn us about? What's the main thing that Jesus warns us about? Yes. Skidding. Skidding. Skidding.

[15 : 28] Skidding. Well. You got a verse for that. Ask your dad for the verse for that one.

What else does. What else does Jesus warn us about? Let's take the. Let's take the key out. And leave the eye in. And that gives us a clue. For one of the main things Jesus warns us about.

He warns us about. Tell us. Please. Sin. He warns us about sin. And you know sometimes. And sometimes. In life.

People. They. They read the Bible. And. We'll hear a passage. Or we'll hear a sermon preached. And we'll hear about the fact that we're all sinners. And some people will hear it and think.

Oh. I think I'll just ignore that. Maybe I'll just go away. And it won't bother me anymore. And I won't. I won't hear this.

[16 : 26] This warning in my. In my head anymore. Some people they hear about sin when they come to church. And you know what they do. They walk straight out of the door. See I'm never going back there again. Don't want to hear that warning.

Why does Jesus warn us about our sin? Do you think it's because. He wants to make us sad. Or do you think it's because he loves us? Bethany.

Because he loves us. And our sin. Needs to get taken away. Otherwise we can't know God. In this world. And we can't know God when we go from this world.

Into eternity. There's heaven and there's hell. And heaven is the place where we go. When we know God. And when we've asked him. To take away our sin.

Hell is the place. That we go. If we. Keep on ignoring the warnings. That Jesus gives to us. And so. What I want to say to you this morning.

[17 : 24] Boys and girls. It's just very simple. Don't ignore. Jesus warnings about your sin. And. Older boys and girls too.

Let's not ignore. The warnings that Jesus gives us about sin. Sin keeps us away from Jesus. But let's hear. Many, many, many, many, many.

Invitations. That he gives us. To come to him. And if we come to him. And ask for forgiveness. He will take our sin away.

And he will save us forever. So. Let's. Trust him on that. Now. Some of the sharper ones. You might be thinking.

He did a children's talk like that. Just the same. Just a few months ago. Wasn't about. A warning like. It was about a flat tire. Right. And you know what?

[18 : 21] I did. And you know what? That tells me. I'm slow to learn. And so I need to keep on being reminded. To heed the warnings that Jesus gives me.

And I need to keep on coming. To him. Let's pray about that. Lord God. We thank you.

That you love us. So much. That you. Tell us. The truth. About. Our lives. We thank you. That you love us. So much.

That you. You tell us. When we're in danger. And you've told us. That. The sin. That's in our hearts. Puts us in danger. We thank you. That you've not left us in danger.

But. Father. His son. Into this world. So that he would rescue us. From danger. And we thank you. That when we put. Our faith in him. When we come to him. And say.

[19 : 18] Lord Jesus. I'm sorry for my sin. Please take it away. We thank you. That you come. Lord Jesus. And you take our sin away. And you save us. Forever.

We thank you. That you. Are close with us. All the way through life. And when we are trusting in you. Even when we die. We've got nothing to fear. Because we know. That we are going to be with you.

In heaven forever. Thank you for. That amazing good news. Help us. To trust you on that. And help us. We pray. Not to ignore the warnings.

That you give us. In your word. We pray this. In Jesus name. Amen. We're going to sing again. And we're going to sing. From. Mission phrase.

628. And the words. That are on the screen. The story of Jesus. And.

[20 : 14] Him saving us from sin. It's not a new story. It's not a new story. It's an old. Old story. That we have to keep on hearing. Over. And over again. So that we will believe. Tell me the old.

Old story. Of unseen things above. Of Jesus. And his glory. Of Jesus. And his love. Tell me the story. Simply. As to a little child. For I am weak. And weary.

And helpless. And defiled. Tell me. The old. Old story. And his love. Again. We stand to sing. Well.

If you could turn in your Bibles. With me. Please. To Jonah. Chapter 2. Jonah. Chapter 2. It's not the easiest book.

In the Bible. To find. If I tell you. It's just between Micah. And Obadiah. It probably won't help too much. If you start.

[21 : 10] At the end. Of the Old Testament. And flip back. It's just. Five or six books. Back. So. Jonah. Chapter 2. And we.

Well. We read from. Chapter 1. In verse 17. Chapter 1. We read of the. Story of Jonah's. Um. It's going to say.

Slip. But. It's going to say. Slip. It's going to say. Slip. Slip. It's going to say. Slip. But actually. Maybe the better word.

To use. Can we. Skid. Into sin. And. Uh. We. Thought. Last. Sunday. About all.

The implications. Of that. Uh. Of that. At. He. And. Uh. He's. Plunging. Into.

[22 : 05] The depths. Of the ocean. It says. There. But the. The. The fish. Three days. And. Three nights. From.

Inside. The fish. He said, To the roots of the mountains I sank down. The earth beneath me barred me in forever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord, my God.

When my life was erring away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.

But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed, I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord. And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Amen. And may the Lord bless that reading of his word to us. Gordon, lead us in a word of praise, please. Let us bow in prayer.

[23 : 53] Lord, we do indeed come before you this morning and thank you for your goodness to us. And Lord, as we gather here as a church of your people, you know the hearts and the minds of each one of us.

And Heavenly Father, like the psalmist, we may come before you this morning and say, Lord, from the depths to thee I care. My voice, Lord, do thou heed. And to my supplications' voice, give an attentive ear.

And we thank you that as we come this morning, for that may be our prayer before you. That we come before a God that hears and answers prayer. And we thank you, Heavenly Father, that even as we read there, that you heard Jonah from the belly of the fish.

From the depths of the sea. And Heavenly Father, you answered his prayer. And Heavenly Father, we pray that each one of us, although we may feel lost and broken this morning, that we would indeed cry unto you.

Knowing, Heavenly Father, as we heard even for the young children this morning, the invitation is there to come. Come any that are weary and heavy late, and I will give you rest.

[25 : 11] And we pray, Heavenly Father, that as we gather in your presence this morning, as we sing your praise, as we reflect on the story that has been told many times, that, Heavenly Father, each one of us here would search our hearts before you.

We may hear it for the first time this morning. But, Heavenly Father, that we would see our need of you. And that we would call upon you. And that we would say thank you for the invitation that you have given to us.

And Lord, in recognising the depths that we cry to, that we cry from, Heavenly Father, we recognise that you are indeed a God that is high and lifted up.

And that you are worthy of all glory, honour and praise. And Heavenly Father, we pray that each one of us would turn to you this morning.

And seeing your need that can only be filled by you. And that, Heavenly Father, as a congregation here, that we would know the outpouring of your Spirit upon us. And, Heavenly Father, that each one of us would be blessed in gathering together here, around your word, in singing your praise and hearing your word there.

[26 : 30] that our hearts would indeed be still. And that we would know that it has been good for us to be here. Oh, Heavenly Father, we bring before you our many petitions.

Those that are sick and infirm at this time. Unable to be with us, Heavenly Father, that the desire would be here, to be here amongst your people. And that, Heavenly Father, fellowshiping together.

Those that are away on holiday, Heavenly Father, for rest and relaxation. Those, Heavenly Father, who may desire to be here, but just don't have the strength to take that step.

Those, Heavenly Father, that have heard that there is a place that they can come and worship you. Those that have heard that there is a God that calls to them.

Heavenly Father, we pray for those this morning that are indeed seeking in this world. And, Heavenly Father, that you would help us to reach out to them.

[27 : 36] That we would indeed know that word in season to give to our neighbour, our work colleague, our friend, to encourage them to come and to worship you. And, Heavenly Father, we pray further afield this morning.

We pray for those that work with new tribes missions out in Papua New Guinea, Heavenly Father, and for the trouble and the strife that they have seen within the villages there over these past few days.

Where different villages have risen up against one another and there have been lives taken, Heavenly Father. We pray for your protecting hand upon the missionaries that work there.

And, Heavenly Father, that you would guide and protect them. That your armour would be upon them and that your shield would be round about. And, Heavenly Father, we pray that as they ask for prayers and as they seek peace amongst the people there, that, Heavenly Father, even in this turmoil that you would indeed bring blessing and the work that has been done there, that, Heavenly Father, would indeed bear fruit.

We know, Heavenly Father, that even as we have read in the turmoil that we saw in Jonah's life, the blessings that you brought for the people of Nunnum, and we think of the people of Papua New Guinea this morning, that even in that turmoil, Heavenly Father, that you would indeed show blessing.

[29 : 07] And, Heavenly Father, we pray that as your word is broken down to us this morning, that our hearts would be receptive to it. And, Heavenly Father, that we would apply it to our own lives, not to the person on our left or on our right.

But, Heavenly Father, the food for us this morning is for each one of us. And that we would draw strength from it, we would draw correction from it, or direction from it, knowing, Heavenly Father, that we are walking within your world.

And that your rod and your staff do indeed comfort and guide us. We pray for David as he ministers over us here. And, Heavenly Father, that you would continue to uphold him in his study, in his visits, in his family life, Heavenly Father, that your hand would guide and direct him, strengthen him in all that he does for you.

And, Heavenly Father, that each one of us would continue to uphold him before you. And we pray for Mary and the girls and for your continued strengthening hand upon them.

And, Heavenly Father, that they would know your blessing as a family together in the ministry that you have called them to. And, Heavenly Father, that we would indeed each receive the blessing together.

[30 : 30] We pray for the work of this congregation. Heavenly Father, you know the vision that we have to have our own building and to have a manse for the family. And we pray, Heavenly Father, that you would guide us as we take steps forward in life.

that we would go forward in your will. And we would go forward with your blessing. And that the provision would indeed be made. Oh, Heavenly Father, we commit all things to you.

The small things in the grave. Knowing that you are a God that cares even for the birds and the feathers that they are given, Heavenly Father. The covers that they have.

Oh, Heavenly Father, you are a God that commands the sea and the care. Oh, we thank you, Heavenly Father, for your hand upon us. Guide us, we pray. And forgive us for our sins and our shortcomings.

In Jesus' precious name. Amen. We sing again to God's praise, this time from Psalm 42.

[31 : 40] And we sing in Gaelic. Psalm 42. Psalm 42. From verse 7 to verse 8.

This is one of the Psalms that Jonah quotes from or paraphrases from as he prays. These two stanzas in Gaelic.

Spiritually speaking, that is. And that's what we're going to look at in the time that we have this morning. But before we go there, I want to just pause and deal with one question that might be in the minds of some people who are here today.

And the question is, did Jonah really, seriously, literally get swallowed by a huge fish? I remember reading this passage before in another congregation.

[40 : 51] And in just reading the passage and preaching from chapter one, I think it was. And I preached it as it was in the text.

This is an account that is presented to us, not as mythology, not as allegory, but it's presented to us as history. And that's how I took it. And remember, a lovely, lovely old lady at the end coming to me, furious.

How dare you treat us like children? How dare you present that Sunday school story to us and expect that we would swallow that stuff?

And so we had a conversation about that. But the question that was in her mind, the question that she had decided and the answer to was, could God really have arranged for a big fish to swallow Jonah?

Some would say that's just nonsense. It's just fairy stories. Is such a thing possible? Well, the answer is yes. It is possible.

[42 : 00] With God, anything is possible. And if you doubt that, then your God is too small. If God is able to raise Jesus from the dead, if this is the God of the virgin birth, if he is the one who did all these miracles that we read through the Gospels, I would think we should be overly surprised that God could arrange for a great fish to swim along with his jaws open at just the right time.

But for those who might be sceptical still, here's a true story. February 1891. A large sperm whale was spotted just off the coast of the Falkland Islands.

Two boats went out in pursuit. One of the boats was called the Star of the East. Before long, they were in the place that the whale was spotted. And the first boat that arrived there was able to harpoon the whale.

The second boat was close behind it. And in attempting to attach a second harpoon, the boat got into difficulty. The boat capsized. One man drowned. Another man, by the name of James Bartley, disappeared.

Presumed lost. The crew of the boat continued to try to get hold of this whale. And it was drawn up alongside of the boat.

[43 : 27] The blubber was removed. And the following day, the stomach of the whale was hoisted on deck. And when the stomach was opened, what did they find in the stomach?

Well, they find the missing sailor. James Bartley. He was unconscious. When he woke, he was traumatized.

But he was still alive. And he loved to tell the tale. Could he really have survived? Jonah, in the belly of a whale.

Well, I did a wee bit of medical reading. And the medical experts tell us, yes. There would be air to breathe in a large fish like that.

The animal needs air to keep itself afloat and buoyant. It would be very uncomfortable. The temperature would be somewhere between 104 and 108 degrees Fahrenheit inside the belly.

[44 : 26] The gastric juices wouldn't attack the skin too badly. But it would make life very uncomfortable. But it would be possible, medically speaking, to stay there for a short stay.

So that's just there for the skeptics. There must be a skeptic or two in here today. But anyway, at the end of chapter 1, this is where we find Jonah. We find him in the belly of this great fish.

This is the spiritual recovery room for Jonah. This is the place that I'm sure he didn't want to be in. This is the place that for all the time that he was in, he wouldn't have enjoyed being in.

But it was the place that he needed to be. And in time, he would be thankful for it. Because from this point onwards, what we can track in Jonah's life for a short period anyway, is spiritual recovery.

Spiritual revival. So today, let's look at some of the marks of spiritual revival or awakening. We looked last week at the marks of spiritual backsliding and illness.

[45 : 35] Let's look at the marks of an emerging health, a revival, an awakening, as we see them in Jonah. And as we see them in Jonah, the question that we have to be asking is do we see them in ourselves?

As individuals and as a fellowship of God's people. The first point that I want to note is Jonah cries.

There's the cry. We sang from Psalm 130, Lord, from the depths to thee I cried. And that's what we see Jonah do.

That's what we hear Jonah do here. He cries out in prayer to God. Now if you step back a chapter and just scan through what we looked at last week, what's striking in that chapter, despite all the trauma and the turbulence of what Jonah went through, the thing that he did not do and he would not do is pray.

Even when the ship's been thrown about and they're in fear of their life, even as the crew who are pagan cried out to their own gods, verse 5 of chapter 1, their gods who cannot hear anything, Jonah remains silent.

[46 : 54] In fact, Jonah's unconscious with sleep. Jonah will not of his own volition, despite the severity of the circumstances, he won't pray.

And even when the pagan crew get hold of him and they shake him and they say, wake up, Jonah. Why don't you pray to your God? Still he won't pray.

We don't hear him pray. And it's not until he finds himself trapped in the belly of this great fish that eventually he cries out in prayer.

Not until he's in the depths of the ocean, in the depths of the being of this great fish, Jonah cries out to God.

Verse 1, From inside the fish, Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. He said, In my distress, I called to the Lord and he answered. From deep in the realm of the dead, I called for help and you listened to my cry.

[48 : 04] And that's the moment that we can mark in this chapter where things began to change. That's the moment when Jonah's sickness at last finds treatment and recovery begins.

Jonah cries out to God. He prays. Do you pray? Do you pray? See, an absence of prayer or a reluctance to pray indicates soul sickness.

We can be very busy as Christians. We can be very busy as a fellowship. But if there is a resistance to or a reluctance to come to God in prayer, something's wrong.

Jonah shows us that. But he also shows us that as we turn to God in prayer, as we cry out to him, sometimes from the depths of circumstances that we would never wish to be in, the Lord hears.

He listens to our cry and that's when recovery and revival begins. There's many revival accounts that I know many of you are familiar with.

[49 : 42] Some close to home here. Some in Uist. Some in Wales. There's many revival accounts that we can read and they can vary in their different circumstances.

But the one consistent thing that we find in all these revival accounts is that they are saturated in prayer. and usually they begin with a wee group of ladies or men who are burdened to pray and to cry out to God for their own souls and for the souls of those who are around them.

So that's the first point there is the cry. The second point and there's four points this morning is the clarity that Jonah receives. Try and put yourself in the situation Jonah was in.

It's hard for us to do that because it's so far from our experience. But imagine how Jonah must have felt in his own mind as he went through all this. Imagine how disoriented he must have been.

One moment he's on the deck. I mean if I get woken up from a snooze on a Sunday afternoon not that I get one these days but when I would get woken up from a snooze on a Sunday afternoon in the middle of the day you wake up you don't know where you are who you are is it day is it night who are the people around you're so disorientated.

[51 : 18] Jonah he's woken up on this boat the boat's getting thrown around then he's confronted he's shaken by these sailors they're in desperate straits before he knows it he's over the side he's plunging into the depths of the ocean he thinks he's dead and then he wakes up in the belly of this great fish one would expect Jonah to be in a state of utter confusion one would expect him to think that he's having a nightmare and he just needs to be woken up but actually the opposite is true as Jonah prays from inside the belly of this fish he seems to be given a crystal clarity now sin when we allow sin to get a hold of us when we start to skid into sin we lose that clarity we lose our judgment we lose our discernment we end up doing things and being in places in our mind and in circumstance that we thought we would never do yet Jonah here as he prays as he begins to repent he's given this crystal clarity not only does Jonah now understand where he is he understands why he's there and more than that he understands who put him there now if a local newspaper were to have reported in this story they would say the fishermen threw Jonah overboard that's why he was in the sea and the whale just happened to be swimming along at the right time or the wrong time depending on how you look at the situation that's the facts but Jonah has clarity beyond the facts he sees more than the facts he understands who's behind us look at verse 3

Jonah in praying says you hurled me into the deep into the very heart of the seas and the currents swirled about me all your wings and breakers swept over me Jonah understands now that God is sovereign he understands that God is in control he understands that even though he might go to the farthest ends of the sea still God is with him and still God is the master engineer Jonah now understands God is disciplining him he's teaching him he's redirecting him through all of this and it's as if in the burial of this great fish the scales fall from his eyes and Jonah for the first time in a while he sees his sin and he sees the consequences of his sin you know it's always painful when God shows us our sin but it's always necessary too when we see our sin it is the work of God the Holy

Spirit in us John chapter 16 makes that clear and it's another mark albeit a painful one of a spiritual awakening and revival when we see our sin it's painful but it's encouraging it's evidence that God is at work regenerating us reviving our hearts and so there's that clarity Jonah cries and as he cries he is given that clarity thirdly what we see what we hear in the life of Jonah's confession now what is confession confession very simply is when we agree with the Lord as he presses us and shows us our sin rebellion is when we shake our fists and say it's not our fault rebellion is when we start to try to justify our actions rebellion is when we walk out the door and say

I don't want to hear any more of that confession is when we see our sin and when we come to God in prayer and when we agree with him that we are guilty confession is when we admit that we have been wrong confession is when all our excuses stop all our self justification ceases confessions when we stop arguing with God is when we stop hiding from God will we just come clean and we admit our guilt and we tell him about our disobedience God will we do it on the prodigal son my mind was going there again in preparation Luke 15 prodigal son like Jonah he plunges into ruinous depths of sin and like Jonah the prodigal son when he's in the depths of that sin he comes to his senses it says in the text and as he comes to his senses as he has that clarity he determines that he will go to his father and he will say to his father

I have sinned the prodigal in the pigsty realizes that the tragedy of the distance that he has allowed to form between him and his father and he determines that he will change direction that he will confess his sin and he will return to his father and that's what we hear from Jonah verse 4 Jonah says in prayer I have been banished from your sight that's what sin does we lose that sense of the presence of God we lose that vision of God I have been banished from your sight yet I will look again toward your holy temple the engulfing waters threatened me the deep surrounded me seaweed was wrapped around my head to the roots of the mountain

[58 : 04] I sank down the earth beneath barred me and forever but you lord my god brought my life up from the pit when my life was ebbing away I remembered you lord and my prayer rose to you to your holy temple and so here we have a picture of what it looks like we have a prayer that enables us to hear what it sounds like to confess our sin and to change direction to repent and it's something that every one of us need to do before we can become Christians we need to confess our sin we need to turn from our sin we need to turn in faith to the god who is merciful and who is gracious and you know this is also something that we have to do long after we become

Christians day by day we are to confess our sin day by day we are to repent and to turn from our sin and to turn in faith to the god who is gracious and merciful and patient with us Martin Luther said when our lord and master Jesus Christ said repent he intended that the entire life of believers should be repentance David Mathis the commentator says all of the Christian life is repentance repentance is to be the Christian's continual posture see god will never put us at ease in our sin god will never accept us as long as we determine to remain in our sin but he warns us as he warned

Jonah of the danger of persisting in our sin so let's not ignore the warning we give you a warning here and an invitation here's the warning and the invitation in the same verse for the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord if we determine that we will stick in our sin if we determine that we will ignore the warnings that God flashes up in our life in terms of providence if we determine that we will set aside his word and what he tells us about the sin that is killing us then the

Bible is very clear that there is punishment that there is judgment that there is eternal death that is hell Jesus spoke about that more than anyone and Jesus has loved us more than anyone if we ignore the warnings we are in such danger companionship in this world there is one who says

I will never leave you everyone else might but I will never leave you I will never forsake you if we confess our sin 1 John 1 9 he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness Jonah confesses Jonah finds forgiveness will you confess will you confess today final point here we see is consecration Jonah confesses his sin and Jonah now consecrates his life to God I thought about singing this one to conclude but I've gone for a different one but there's a hymn written by

[63 : 44] Francis Ridley Habergam and he writes these words in the hymn take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to thee that was a song that Jonah could not sing or more accurately he would not sing in chapter one but now he can sing it in chapter one Jonah is shouting I will do it my way chapter two Jonah has come to realise it has to be God's way in chapter one we listen but we hear nothing in terms of praise of God in chapter two Jonah shouts grateful praise verse nine from inside the belly of a great fish in chapter one Jonah couldn't care less about those who cling to worthless idols in fact Jonah himself was clinging to worthless idols the idols being himself his ego his comfort his security his reputation

Ninevites couldn't care less crew of the ship is the ships going down is he preaching to them he's not even willing to admit that he's a teacher anymore but in chapter two we see that Jonah has a renewed concern for those who turn away from God's love for them and Jonah now seems ready to go and tell the Ninevites that salvation comes from the Lord so what happens next well the Lord commanded the fish verse 10 and it vomited Jonah onto the dry land so there's Jonah chapter two quite a turn around in just a few verses from spiritual sickness to spiritual health from back sliding to pressing on in obedience from spiritual ruin to revival revival in him and as we'll see in chapters three and four revival through him but that's another sermon for another day so let's pray heavenly father we thank you for this story this historical account of Jonah your servant and we thank you that as you have inspired him to write we see in real terms the life of one who was called by you and yet one who was a sinner and who struggles in the same way that all of us do we thank you that even though we are sinners as we turn in confession and repentance you will forgive us and we thank you that even though we are far from perfect as we seek to live for you you will use us for your glory and bless us in your service so enable us we pray as we go from here not to ignore the warnings and not to turn away from your loving invitations we help us we pray to hear and to respond in repentance and faith we pray that every one of us as we go from here would know that we are not headed for eternal death but we pray that we would know that we have received the gift of eternal life we pray this in

Jesus name Amen we sing to conclude a careful searching hymn search me O God and know my heart today try me O Lord and know my thoughts I pray see if there be some wicked way in me cleanse me from every sin and set me free verse 4 O Holy Ghost revival comes from thee send the revival start the work in me thy word declares thy will supply me for blessing thy O Lord I hug you feet we stand for sin and now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all both now and forever more Amen God to

You You What God