



Week 2: Prayers From the Deep

Scripture: Jonah 2

"In my distress I called on the Lord, and He answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry." (v2)

- distress = _____ = something is mastering us that brings trouble that we cannot escape
- grave = _____ = realm of the dead

God was _____ working, even though Jonah was still in _____.

God, through each _____, leads us, teaches us, redirects us, guides us, heals us, corrects us, convicts us until He leads us to His _____ will.

Never to forget the "_____, _____," moments.

"Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs."
(v8)

- grace = _____ = a sense of love and loyalty that inspires merciful and compassionate behavior toward another person

There was nothing that he could do to _____ to his _____.

Whether you are on top of the world, or whether you are in the depths of despair, when you call on the Lord, He will answer you.

Start talking.

- Describe a time when you had a near death experience and the thoughts that went through your mind.?

Start thinking.

- Read Jonah's prayer in Jonah 2:1-10. What elements do you see in his prayer? Why is prayer often our last resort? Share one or two words that would best describe how you view prayer? On a scale of 1-10, rate your prayer life. What would make your prayer life more meaningful?
- "Salvation comes from the Lord!" In what ways do you think Jonah's deliverance by God changed him? How has God brought your life "up from the pit"? How did this change you and was the change permanent? Why do we often return to our old ways once the danger is past? Would you rather God save you from an outward circumstance or from an inward struggle with sin? At salvation, how does God permanently change us on the inside?

Start sharing.

- On a scale of 1-10, what level of distress do you have to reach before you cry out to God? God can deliver people of anything, in any way, and at any time. But He often does it in phases. Which phase of deliverance are you currently in? Describe what God is doing in this phase of your life? Why do you think God often waits till the last minute to deliver us? What do you think Jonah learned about God through his experience?
- What are some worthless idols we can cling to instead of putting our hope in God? Describe some ways we forfeit the grace of God when we trust in idols? What idols do you need to give up? How is God currently pursuing you with His lovingkindness (*hesed*)?
- Prayer should not be about getting God to do what we want. Instead, effective prayer is our coming into agreement with what He wants. How can we keep the focus of our prayers on God's will? What is your biggest prayer need? Take plenty of time to pray for each other.

Start praying. *Be bold and pray with power.*

I realize that just like Jonah, sometimes I don't obey. Or my obedience is delayed at best. God help me to follow you fully without hesitation. Help me to recognize the idols in my life and to stop clinging to them.

Start doing. *Commit to a step and live it out this week.*

- What worthless idols have you depended on to save you (keep you feeling secure, satisfied, significant)? What vows (commitments) have you made to God that you haven't kept? Surrender your idols and receive God's grace to make good on your vows.