

Family TableTalk

Conversation 35

Newfound Wonder

read

Jonah 1:11 - 2:10

think

When Jonah was thrown into the ocean, he thought he was going to die. After all, he disobeyed the Lord's direct command to go to Ninevah and warn them of his judgment. Instead, he went down to Joppa, and got on a boat to go all the way down to Tarshish, as far from Ninevah as he could go. He went down to the belly of the ship awakened by the captain when a storm so powerful caused all of the sailors to cry out to sleep, but was to their gods to have mercy on them. Jonah knew. He knew that the Lord had sent this storm as a disciplinary measure against his running. And so even though the sailors clearly didn't want to, for the sake of their lives, they threw him into the sea. Jonah thought his life was over, but God appointed a fish to swallow him up to rescue and save him.

This isn't real, right? This must be some kind of allegory right? After all, if I heard about a man who fell off a cruise ship and then witnesses saw him be swallowed up by a fish, I'm not going to assume he got saved, I'm going to assume that he died a very unfortunate death! But Jesus makes a commentary on this story. He says in Matthew 12:40, "For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Jesus makes the parallel between himself and Jonah: his death will seem like defeat, but it will result in life. Jonah's rescue initially looked like death, but he would emerge from the sea with a newfound appreciation for the salvation of the Lord. Jesus' death on the cross looked like the final word, but he would resurrect from the tomb, forever stripping death of its power over God's people.

This season feels like the death of so many things in our life, but from this, the Lord can bring a newfound wonder and appreciation for life as well. What we once did not appreciate, we long for. So let's trust in the Lord during this time, and ask him to bring new growth and life in this season of death and waiting, and the wisdom to know when we emerge from all of this, just how much he's transformed us.

apply

- What newfound appreciation have you had for things in your life?
- Jonah would eventually go on to preach to the Ninevites and they would end up repenting. How do you think God can redeem this time for us as a family right now?
- Jonah would also end up angry at God because he did not have compassion for the Ninevites, and in fact, the book ends with God asking Jonah an important question. How does this season bring up compassion for those who are suffering?

pray

Lord, give us encouragement and hope during this time. Grant us your gifts of patience, grace and compassion as we continue to endure this global pandemic. Thank you for interrupting our patterns of life to help us realize and appreciate what we have lost, please give us enduring hope and glimpses of your goodness and grace.

by Kevin Yi

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