

# Christ's Prefiguration and Salvation for Sinners | Jonah 1:17-2:10

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, it's great to be here this morning with all of you. My name is Patrick Daly, Pastor Patrick, and I have the privilege of serving here as the pastor of Ontario Community Church.

If this is your first time or if this is your 100th time, I hope that you have been warmly welcome and greeted and just know that Jesus Christ loves you.

I want to open up this sermon with a question, and I want you to think about this question. It's on your notes, and here it is. Have you ever felt overwhelmed?

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by your sins? Have you ever felt overwhelmed by your sins like being swallowed up like Jonah was when he was swallowed up by the great fish?

Perhaps there was a time in your life where you felt like you were in isolation. Maybe there was a time that you felt that you were separate from God. Maybe there was a sense of uncertainty in your life.

[ 1 : 0 1 ] Maybe there was a time where you even felt depressed. And what I want you to do is to reflect on this this morning as we go through these feelings in mind as we go through these passages in scripture.

We will see that Jonah was swallowed up by the great fish. Remember, Jonah was called by God to preach to the city of Nineveh.

And did Jonah go? Well, no, he didn't. He ran off. He tried to flee to the city of Tarshish. He went to Jopah to go on a boat. And what happened?

He made it to Tarshish? No, he didn't. In fact, what it says is God hurled a storm. The storm came, and Jonah was asleep. Jonah had to, he was rebuked by the captain, and he had to give an account for what he is and the God that he believes in.

And so we see that last week. Well, we're going to see what's leading up to this critical point in the story, where Jonah is thrown overboard into the sea to be swallowed up by the great fish.

[ 2 : 1 0 ] And we will see what happens when Jonah is in that time in the fish. I cannot imagine such an experience to be thrown out into the water when there's a storm that's raging, to be in that situation where you're afraid for your life.

I can't imagine that happening. So today we're going to see how Jonah, there's three parallels we're going to learn today. The first is the story of Jonah.

The second is, how does Jonah have to do with the story or the passion of Christ? And the third is about salvation for sinners.

We will see today that there is this parallel in scripture. Why do we read and study parallels? It helps us grow in our faith.

It helps us to see the interwovenness, the connectedness from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the prophets to Christ. Because what's so amazing about Christianity, what's amazing about Jesus Christ is, yes, he is the way, the truth, and the life.

[ 3 : 20 ] But the more that we read, the more that we learn and study the Word of God, we will discover so much more from scripture. I'm titling the message for today, Christ's Prefiguration and Salvation for Sinners.

I know that's kind of a complicated one, but we will unpack that. So Christ's Prefiguration and Salvation for Sinners. But let's open in prayer, and then we will read from the Word of God.

Father, we come before you today as we are in our current circumstance or situation. No matter where we are at in life, if we're going through the times, the good, the bad, or even the ugly, we want to offer ourselves to you.

Just like that song was saying, take it to the Lord in prayer. And as we are praying, we want to offer our burdens to you. We want to offer our circumstance. We want to offer our situation to you.

We ask that you give us insight and that you give us wisdom, give us the knowledge, and motivation to act. It is in you that we live, and it is in you that we love.

[ 4 : 27 ] May you open our minds to understand you. May you open our hearts to love you. And may you lead us and guide us as you always have. As we learn about your son, how he died on the cross, how he was buried, and how he rose again.

So that we can have eternal life through faith, through belief. Your grace is enough, God. Your love is never ending. May we believe in you through faith and grow in you from that milk, like a child, to solid food.

We ask that you be with us today. It is in Jesus' name that we pray, and we all say together, amen. So I want us to read together. It's going to be in your ESV Bibles.

Feel free to open in page 920. We've been in page 924 while. If you're not using an ESV Bible, that is A-OK. We'll be going through Jonah chapter one, verse 17, through the end of chapter two, verse 10.

So I'm going to go ahead and read it, and feel free to follow along. The Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah.

[ 5 : 46 ] So what's going on here? Jonah was just thrown out into the sea, right? And he's getting swallowed up by the fish. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and for three nights.

My friends, there is something that is significant about that. So it goes into chapter two. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, saying, I called out to the Lord out of my distress.

And he answered me out of the belly of Sheol. I cried, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me, and your waves and your billows passed over me.

Then I said, I am driven from your sight, yet I shall look again upon your holy temple. My friends, he is fearing for his life, but he still has hope in God. I am driven from your sight.

I feel away from you, but yet I shall again look upon your holy temple. That's so beautiful. The waters closed in over me to take my life. The deep surrounded me.

[ 6 : 49 ] Weeds were wrapped around my head and roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever. Yet you brought me up from, brought me my life from the what?

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.

And the Lord spoke to the Lord. And it is after that prayer. And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

As we read this, we're going to see these connections here. Like I mentioned, there are these three parallels from the story of Jonah, the story of Christ, and the salvation of sinners.

[ 8 : 01 ] So the first is the story of Jonah. Jonah is swallowed by the great fish because of his sin. It was because of Jonah running away from the Lord.

And we have to ask ourselves as Christians, or maybe people who don't know the Lord. We, as people, have to ask, how often do we run from the Lord?

How often do we run away from our problems? How often do we try to run away from situations or circumstances in which we are placed?

The storm was hurled to stop Jonah, and the fish swallowing Jonah placed Jonah in a situation where he can reflect, where he can pray, he can take time to think, and most importantly, he can confess his sins.

My friends, there are situations where we are separated from God, where we're in this isolation, if you will, to take time to think of what we have done so that we can pray to the Lord, so that we can take time to think, what wrong did I do?

[ 9 : 10 ] It's almost as though God is giving Jonah this time out. I know there are times with my own kids when they're doing wrong with my kids are not perfect. I've got five of them, OK?

They are not perfect in any way, shape, or form, right? I wish they were, but there are times. I've got to take them for a time out. And I have to say, you know what? You need a few minutes in here to think about it.

I like to think that that's how what God was doing with Jonah, taking some time to think about the wrong that he did, so that he can come back and say, I'm sorry.

And in this case, how you say sorry is the repentance of your sins. It's just like how we say, I'm sorry to our parents.

And sometimes when we run from God, we think we're getting away with it, don't we? Divine intervention as with the story of Jonah, it can leave us filled with guilt, shame, and a sense of separation from God.

[ 10 : 09 ] Remember, we've talked about this. When we sin, we are separate from the presence of the Lord. It is a part of the consequence of sin is that separation from God.

In the case of Jonah's story, we can see this play out. Jonah bolted out of there. He ran off. He thought he could escape God's will. A lot of us think that we can escape what God has planned for us, but can we?

Well, that's a very simple answer, no. But God intervened hurling the storm. And in this case, here's another part of the consequence. The swallowing of Jonah.

God appointed the great fish to swallow up Jonah so he could be isolated to take the time to think and reflect on what he did.

I cannot account for every time that we are sad, but I can certainly say that there are times where we do get sad or we feel isolated, that it might be a call, an opportunity for you to reconnect with the Lord.

[ 11 : 14 ] This could be through the reading of scripture. When's the last time you've opened your Bible? When is the last time you've prayed to the Lord? When is the last time you even gave God a thought?

I tell you, in our culture, we're seeing more and more the word, the words biblical illiteracy is becoming more real in this country, in America, unfortunately.

And it is we are encouraged by the Lord to read and study scripture and to be connected with God. This is a situation we often find ourselves in.

I know that in times when I have sinned, I felt like I could get away with it. Don't we all feel that way? Don't we all feel like, ah, I'm doing something wrong? It's like the classic, I think of the cookie from the cookie jar, right?

How often do we try to steal from the cookie? And we think that, oh, well, mom and dad weren't watching, so I'm OK. It's just like how we are with sin, right? We think we can get away with it.

[ 12 : 18 ] But can we really? No, we can't. And consider a time where you found yourself in that dark place after doing the wrong thing. Perhaps you felt a sense of guilt or a sense of shame.

Do you, maybe it's time for you to reflect on the sins. Do you feel the need to reflect on the sins that you've committed? Think about that.

Think of how you can turn it around. One could also say that the belly of the fish, it symbolizes a place of isolation not only from God, because God knows where Jonah is, but also from everyone.

It's a place of despair, but it's also a place of reflection. I bring these things up because I think that it's very real that when we sin, we often feel separated from people.

Take that as an opportunity to get right with God. So then it goes into Jonah praying his prayer. Jonah is praying to the Lord. Jonah is inside of the fish. And despite him being in a place of isolation, he still prays to the Lord.

[ 13 : 24 ] When you feel separated from God, do you pray to Him? Or do you just sit there? Think of being on time out. I know at first we're going to cross our arms, and we're just going to be like, I don't want to be in this time out, but eventually, it's like, OK, take some time here.

So Jonah is being in that place of isolation. He does what he calls upon the Lord. He prays to Him. He's thinking in the prayer in chapter 2 about how God saved him, despite the fact that he was thrown out into the sea.

He could have died there. That would have been a very different ending. But yet God appointed the great fish to save him, despite the fact he was thrown overboard in the storm.

It says here he's fearing for his life, but he held on to hope for the Lord, which is a great reminder for us that when we are in times of crisis, when we have those trials and tribulations and the testing of our faith, where is your hope?

It should be in God, no matter what season of life you're in. Whether you are young and you're learning about who you are, whether you're in middle age and you're starting your family, or whether you are in an older age, you seek the Lord in every season of your life.

[ 14 : 44 ] Jonah feared for his life, and he mentions the temple. Well, this has to do with being restored once again, because Jonah is saying that he will go to the temple again to worship God.

That's like saying, I'm in this pit. I'm stuck in a mine. I'm stuck in here. I'm trapped. But I know one day I will go back to church one day. That would be a modern rendition of that.

Jonah remembers the Lord by praying to him in that time of crisis. He mentions that those who worship false idols, they forsake their hope instead fast love.

What's so interesting about that is when you go to that verse, when they're forsaking their hope for steadfast love, Jonah is saying that those who are worshiping idols are wasting their time, their effort, and energy in worshiping something that is created compared to worshiping the Creator.

So it's kind of like when I'm so focused and dedicated on, and I'm obsessed, and I'm worshiping my phone, for example. Oh, there's a lot of us that that's a modern day idol, isn't it?

[ 15 : 53 ] They're worshiping their phone. They're worshiping that which was created instead of the Creator. And it's just to keep us in check. There's nothing wrong with having phones. There's nothing wrong with having game systems.

There's nothing wrong with having a lot of these things. It's when it consumes you, when it becomes an obsession, when it goes beyond the scope of what it's intended for, something for fun, right?

We like having fun, but when it becomes that obsession. So what Jonah's saying here, false gods have no real power. And these idol worshipers, they turn their back on God and they lose the opportunity to have and experience the real love that comes from God.

And I pray, my friends, that we do not fall into idolatry to worship false gods or the things that are created. Think of the golden calf.

It is created. It is not the creator. Think of the cell phone. It is created, not creator. We worship the Creator. We worship the living God.

[ 16 : 51 ] We worship the God who created the heavens and the earth, who sent his son, Jesus Christ, and who lived, performed miracles, died, and was buried and rose again so that we could have salvation in him.

Let us worship the one living in true God, who created this world everlasting to everlasting. Jonah thanks God, and he is ready to make a commitment to the Lord once again by saying, salvation belongs to the Lord.

When he says that towards the end of this prayer, it's this commitment to God. He's saying, I am committing to you. Look, I know the wrong that I did, and I want to turn it around.

Remember the kid on timeout? He's ready to say sorry to his parents or his caretakers or whatever. Just like how we, when we feel sorry for our sins, we pray to God and we confess our sins.

We repent. It is after the prayer and the commitment that the fish, that God speaks to the fish. That's very interesting language. That God is speaking to the fish and the fish just like, all right, let's let him out of here and let's him out onto the dry land.

[ 18 : 04 ] And so there's parallels in here. I'd like to go ahead and share some amazing things in the verses in scripture. And the first thing we find of course, is the story of Jonah and the great fish, or Jonah and the whale.

I know some people are bothered by, I'm not calling it a whale, but scripture calls it the great fish, right? So we also see, and can you guys see this? So Jonah and the great fish.

So the first point is, it is the swallowing of Jonah, right? As referenced in Jonah 1.17. Three days and three nights, it led to Jonah's what?

Prayer and repentance, right? So he prays to the Lord and he's asking for forgiveness. He wants to be restored. The vomiting of Jonah onto dry land.

So these are the key points, the swallowing, the prayer and repentance, and the vomiting. Okay, you have that in your notes everyone? Okay, so we can see that as in chapter one, verse 17, right?

[ 19 : 10 ] He was in the belly of the fish for three days. Three days and three nights. It is a reminder of us of like how Christ was, he was crucified, he was buried in the tomb for how long, 14 days?

Three days, right? And on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. Makes me think about that the story of Jonah here is foreshadowing Christ.

It is what you would call prefiguring Christ, right? And what that means is before the figure of Christ or before the person of Christ.

It is a foreshadowing, it is a foretelling, it is basically scripture, God having his way in scripture. This helps me personally in my faith because when I read this, I think, wow, this is directly pointing to Christ.

I'm amazed by that. That helps me realize, it helps solidify my faith and I hope it does with you as well. So Christ's prefiguration refers to before the figure of Christ.

[ 20 : 20 ] And another example of when Christ is prefigured is when Abraham is being asked to sacrifice Isaac to God. You guys remember that story, right? Where God provides a sacrifice, right?

There was that faith and when you read it, you're like, oh my gosh, Abraham's actually gonna sacrifice his son as an offering to God. But when you think about it, when God provides the sacrifice, it's just like how God is going to provide the sacrificial lamb, like how God is going to provide Jesus Christ who's going to die on the cross for our sins.

God will provide a sacrifice, not just in the context of what's happening with Abraham and Isaac, but it's foretelling, it's prefiguring what is going to happen with Jesus Christ later on in scripture, my friends.

That's one of the really cool things about scripture. It's like, whoa, there's something to this book here. There's something that's really amazing here. So we find the passion of Christ.

So the swallowing, let's go to that next slide. The swallowing equals Christ's death, right? So how Jonah was swallowed into the whale or the great fish was like symbolism for Jonah being isolated, separated from God.

[ 21 : 45 ] And we see this in the New Testament with Christ's death. It symbolizes the event of Christ's death on the cross. It is a reminder of Christ's sacrificial love for us.

We know that Jesus paid it all on the cross so that we can live. My friends, there's a lot of verses on there on your notes that you can refer to, but a lot of it has to do with Christ's death, just like how Jesus on the cross said it is finished.

That's such a powerful point in scripture. We find that the three days and nights in the great fish is Christ's burial, right? We know that Christ died and he was buried and on the third day.

So there's that time period where Christ is buried, just like how there's a time period where Jonah's in the whale. And then finally, well, just remember, three days and three nights, right?

It symbolizes the period of Christ's death. So that third point is the vomiting. I never liked that word, the spit it out, right? But I guess it's very graphic, if you will, right? It's like, I think of like, imagine you're eating something and you don't like it and you spit it out.

[ 22 : 59 ] It's kind of like what's going on with the great fish here. So the vomiting of Jonah onto dry land by the great fish, it symbolizes Christ's resurrection because Jonah is being restored back to his mission in which God had sent him to.

So that is one parallel in of itself. Christ's resurrection is victory over death and sin. It is the promise of eternal life in him.

We have hope and of redemption and salvation. This leads us to the next connection. It's the next connection that we find in the word of God.

We know that the swallowing is much like how we are swallowed or consumed by sin before we know the Lord. In fact, if we're living in sin, it's almost like we get swallowed up again.

Before we know the Lord, we are lost. Think about the time before you became a Christian. Think about the time when you didn't know the Lord or think about a time when you were living in sin.

[ 24 : 08 ] There's that sense of isolation and separation from God. Perhaps during the challenging days, a stressful situation. Without God, we often try to handle things on our own.

It's like what I was going over last week when the sailors were trying to row against the storm. We can't row upstream, can we? We might for a little bit, but to no avail.

We struggle upstream without God's guidance. Sometimes we row against the storm. We can't fight Mother Nature, can we? We just simply can't.

It would be so cool if we could row upstream and we could just get on our way up. But the forces of nature, the power of our God, that the power in which God set into motion in His creation is incredible.

I mean, you look at the mountains sometime. Go for a drive sometime and look at all the trees. Makes you realize how small you are. Compared to the mountains or the ocean.

[ 25 : 15 ] It's just incredible. We are lost without God, but with God, we are set on a better path for our lives and for a promise of heaven.

Salvation belongs to the Lord. We are sinners in need of a savior. It is about recognizing who God is and accepting that we as people are not perfect.

There is no one who is perfect except for God. God is beyond our understanding and I do not believe that we can fully grasp or understand with our limited knowledge and understanding the essence, the attributes of who God is.

He is so big. Look at a telescope sometime and you see how far the stars in the sky are. That's just a piece of what the power of our God is.

He gives us life and He presents us with a choice to follow Him or to not follow Him. Do you want to be close to Him or do you want to remain apart from Him?

[ 26 : 15 ] It is the question of what you will decide. We are consumed by our sin until we decide to have Jesus in our hearts. It is the surrender. It is the realizing that yes, I cannot do it on my own.

I cannot do it alone. I need God in my life. I need Christ at the center of my life and it is in Him. It is in Christ alone that we are saved.

My friends, we are saved by grace through faith and I do not wish to be swallowed up by sin forever. I wish to be vomited out.

If you will. Right? You never thought you'd hear a pastor say that. I wish to be vomited out out of the whale, out of the great fish. I want to be on dry land.

I don't want to be consumed by my sin. It's like how Romans is saying that God gave them up to their sins. That's like a swallowing right there. So the swallowing equals consumed by sin.

[ 27 : 13 ] Just as Jonah was swallowed by the great fish, we too find ourselves consumed by our sins before we know the Lord. It's like we have sinned. It's completely overwhelming us.

We are separated from God and there's that spiritual death there. This is the third parallel. Then there's the prayer and the repentance which is the what?

The confessing of our sins. Just like Jonah. Jonah offered a prayer of repentance from within the sin. From within the fish.

We too are called to confess and repent of our sins. It is the act of confession that is a crucial step towards reconciliation with God and it leads to forgiveness and restoration with him.

I would like to be fully restored. I don't know about you, but I hope that you wish to be close to God because God is holy, because God is light, because God provides us truth in this fog of confusion that exists in our world and in our culture.

[ 28 : 18 ] I like things when they're simple. I like things when they're constant and God is our constant in this ever-changing world. We can go on and on about all the things that are changing in this world, but we don't have to.

The one thing we should be reminded is that God is our constant. Everlasting to everlasting, God does not change. Sometimes we change.

How often do we change? But God is still there for us. The vomiting is the cleansing of our sins. Just as Jonah was vomited from the great fish on dry land, we too can be cleansed of our sins and restored into fellowship with God.

This cleansing transforms us and sets us free from sin. We have new life in him. We are a new creation.

We will be connected or in some instances reconnected from the Lord. Do you feel separate from God these days? Perhaps this is a call for you to connect with God or to reconnect with God.

[ 29 : 27 ] I pray that you see and you hear from today, not from my words, but from the word of God, that there is a connection here, that we see that Jesus Christ, he died for our sins, right?

There was the death, the burial, and the resurrections. There was the swallowing of Jonah. There was the prayer and the vomiting, just like how we are swallowed by sin. And there's that opportunity for us to pray and to get right with God.

And there's the restoration. It's these three steps, if you will. It's these three parts of the story. There's that connection.

And I wanna remind us, my friends, I cannot emphasize this enough. When we make a decision from Christ, we are free from sin and not free to sin.

You understand the difference? Free from sins is acknowledging that Jesus paid it all on the cross that does not give us a ticket to ride. If you guys know that song, right? You gotta take it to ride, you gotta take it to sin.

[ 30 : 28 ] No, no, no, no, no. And unfortunately, what happens is there are some Christians that think that. I'm saved by grace through faith, so I can do what I want. I can go see you, I can go live a sinful life.

Absolutely not. I think you kinda missed the point here. So I wanna emphasize this here, though. When we make that decision for Christ, we are free from sin and not free to sin.

For sin, it swallows us up when we do not have Jesus in our hearts. It is in Christ that we are set free from sin. It requires us to make that decision to receive the free gift of salvation, to accept Jesus Christ in our hearts by believing in Christ through faith.

I am reminded, one of my favorite stories in scripture is the thief on the cross, who he asks Jesus to remember him. And what does Christ say?

Did I never know you? No. He says, amen, you will be with me today. You will be with me in paradise. That's just a wonderful encouragement.

[ 31 : 34 ] We have the opportunity to make a decision for Christ and to be, or to be restored with Christ. John 3.16 tells us that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life.



Believe in the Lord, confess your sins, and be placed on a path towards the light. Today, we have gone through the story of Jonah.

We have seen, my friends, three parallels is incredible. I hope it solidifies your faith. I hope that it helps you in your journey with Christ. We've seen the parallels with the story of Jonah, with the passion of the Christ, and salvation for sinners.

They echo each other, if you will. Jonah was consumed by the great fish, and we too are consumed by our sins. But it is through the accepting of Christ.

It is through confession and repentance that we can be cleansed and restored to have that relationship to be close with God, to have that fellowship with God.

[ 32 : 37 ] Just as Jonah was vomited out by the fish, we see that Christ was resurrected. And I pray that we can get right with God from wherever we're at.

Whether you don't know the Lord, or you've known the Lord, and maybe you've been like Jonah, and running away from him, I encourage you to get right with the Lord.

So the closing question here is, how can we apply Jonah's lesson of repentance and redemption to our lives? You don't have to fill that in and turn that in, okay?

It's this isn't Sunday school, but by all means, it's something that I want you to think about as we are closing today. I'd like to invite the musicians to go ahead and come up.

As we close our time today, I want us to take a moment to reflect on the journey of Jonah. This echoes the journey that we have with the Lord.

[ 33 : 35 ] We're swallowed by sin, and we need to repent. We need to pray and get right with God. And we ultimately, by doing so, we will be cleansed and reconciled.

Just like Jonah in the belly of the great fish, perhaps you find yourself consumed by guilt, shame, or a sense of separation from the Lord. Remember, God didn't leave Jonah in the sin to die.

Instead, he appointed a time where he can think and reflect on what he had done. I pray that you get right with God. In the same way, God doesn't want to leave you in your sin.

Christ came, died, and was resurrected so that we might have life. Just as the fish vomited Jonah onto dry land, symbolizing cleansing and restoration, Christ's resurrection promises victory over sin and death.

If you feel that the Holy Spirit is tugging at your heart or you're ready to confess your sins, to repent and to follow Jesus as your Lord and Savior, I would like to invite you to come forward now.

[ 34 : 47 ] Whether this is your first time accepting the Lord or you're returning to him after being away, come. Remember that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Let us make the decision today to not just be hearers of the word, but doers as well. Don't leave this place without making peace with God.

If this message today has touched your heart and you'd like to respond, I'd like to invite you to come to the altar today. And I'd like to have maybe some of our board up to pray with anyone who needs prayer, maybe a couple.

May the sovereign God who made the heavens and the earth be with us as we go today. May you give us clarity, may you give us peace, may you give us guidance to realize that we are sinners in need of you, we are in need of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Without you, we are nothing, but through you, you give us so much. Because of you, you give us so much. And we just pray as we go today that we may be connected with you.

[ 36 : 05 ] You are the God of connection, you are the God of truth and life. Be with us as we go from this place. May we be one with you, may we be connected with you, may we be restored with you, may we be at peace with you.

It is in Jesus Christ.