

Do You Pray?

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[0 : 00] While you're finding your spot in Jonah, I'll just explain a little bit of how we're preaching through these books. So we've been going through the gospel according to John, the fourth gospel.

We've paused that now as we go into the summer months. I'm really excited to preach through the Psalms. So the plan is that every Sunday of the summer we'll tackle one psalm.

So next week we'll begin that with Psalm chapter 1, if you want to read that and study it this week.

And then we've been going to one Old Testament book about once a month. We're halfway through Jonah after today.

And we'll resume Jonah again in the fall, you know, with the book of John again. But we'll pause and look at Psalms. So we're going to start our reading a couple of verses before Jonah chapter 2.

And we'll end it a couple of verses after the end of chapter 2 as well. So turn back now to Jonah chapter 1, starting at verse 14.

[0 : 56] As I read from the book of Jonah, and as you follow along, remember this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.

This is God's very own word for you, his people. After we're done reading our sermon text for today, I'll say this is the word of the Lord, and we'll respond, thanks be to God. So Jonah chapter 1, starting at verse 14.

Therefore they, this is the pagan sailors, called out to the Lord, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood.

For you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you. So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

The Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

[2 : 06] Now notice what Jonah chapter 2 is. What is it? It's his prayer. All of chapter 2 is Jonah's prayer. So Jonah chapter 2, verse 1.

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. All your waves and billows passed over me. Then I said, I am driven away from your sight.

Yet I shall again look upon your holy temple. The waters closed in over me to take my life. The deep surrounded me. Weeds were wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever. Yet you brought up my life from the pit.

[3 : 12] 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. While I have vowed, I will pay, salvation belongs to the Lord.

Isn't that a great prayer? Then we're told, the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah up, out upon dry land. We'll read the first four verses of chapter three to see what happens.

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you. So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the Lord.

Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey, and he called out, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

[4 : 22] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Would you pray with me?

Oh Lord, teach us to hope in you.

Without hope we perish. When we put our hope on anything less, we are disappointed. Help us to put our hope in you alone, and hear from you through your word, to strengthen our hope once again today for your glory.

For Christ's sake we pray. Amen. Amen. Let me read this quote.

This is from J.C. Ryle in the 1800s in Liverpool, England, to his congregation at the time. Quote, I have a question to offer you.

[5 : 55] It is contained in three words. Do you pray? This question is one that none but you can answer. Do you pray?

There is no duty in religion so neglected as prayer. I ask whether you pray because prayer is absolutely needful to a man's salvation.

I cannot find that without prayer anybody will be saved. No man or woman can expect to be saved who does not pray.

Do you pray? Ryle goes on to argue that without prayer, not only can you not be saved without prayer, you cannot grow.

He writes, Diligence in prayer is vital for growth in holiness. There is a vast difference among true Christians. All Christians are in God's army.

[7 : 00] They are all fighting the same good fight, but how much more valiantly some fight than others. They are all doing the Lord's work, but how much more some do than others. They are all running the same race, but how much faster some get on than others.

They all love the same Lord and Savior, but how much more some love Him than others. Ryle asks, What accounts for such a difference among true Christians?

And his answer, prayer. Do you pray? Only Christians that pray, and keep praying through adversity, will be saved, and will grow.

Now, you remember in Jonah chapter 1, I know it was a while back, but do you remember where Jonah was? He was fleeing from the Lord.

He was going to the belly or the ribs of the ship, and he was asleep. And Jonah was, he was like an illustration of the state, the spiritual state of all of Israel.

[8 : 03] The waters are raging all around this little ship, and there is Jonah. He's not praying. He's escaping, and he's trying to escape into slumber. He's escaping God.

He's not a man of prayer. God's people in Israel, they had turned to these vain idols. Look at our sermon text for today, chapter 2, verse 8.

Those who pay regard to vain idols, they forsake their hope of steadfast love. You're going to throw your prayers toward an idol. You are going to have no hope. Now, in chapter 2, God teaches this man who flees God and who does not pray, He teaches this man to pray.

That's what happens in chapter 2. Jonah learns to pray. Look at chapter 2, verse 2. Jonah says, I cried out in my affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me.

I love how the Geneva Bible of 1599 puts it. Out of the belly of hell, I cried out, and you heard my voice. Here's my proposition for you today from Jonah chapter 2.

[9 : 19] Distress. Distress drives you to see God's character more clearly. When you see God's character more clearly, you cry out to Him.

You pray. Pray. And He restores your hope. When you're trying to remember what was this sermon about, what was the point?

The point is, do you pray? In your distress, do you see the character of God? And by seeing His character, your hope in praying to this God is restored. It puts you on your knees to pray.

And in this passage that we read today, I want to walk us through eight reasons that we can pray with hope in God's character. Reason number one, pray with hope in God's justice.

We learned this from those pagan sailors. The sailors, they appeal to God in their prayer. They appeal to God's justice. Look at chapter 1, verse 14.

[10 : 18] Those pagan sailors cried unto the Lord, and they said, We beseech Thee, O Lord, we beseech Thee. Let us not perish for this man's life. So they're looking at Jonah, and the storm is raging all around.

They say, If this man is guilty, well, it would be unjust of you to punish us. He's the guilty one. But then they see the other side of it. They say, Lay not upon us innocent blood.

Now what if Jonah's innocent, and we're going to cast him over the seas? Don't hold us now, you know, guilty for killing an innocent man. Either way, God is just, and we're praying to you, God, in your justice, do the right thing.

We don't know. Only you know the heart of man. So we beseech Thee, we pray to you to show your justice now and not kill us over this wicked man, Jonah.

They confess, You have done as it pleased you. In chapter 1, verse 15, they took Jonah, they grabbed him, lifted him up, and they cast him forth into the sea.

[11:19] Now notice the justice of God being satisfied. What happens in chapter 1, verse 15? The sea ceased from her raging. The sea ceased from her raging as wicked Jonah's body splashes into the ocean.

The wrath of God is satisfied. His justice is appeased. Then, verse 16, the men feared the Lord exceedingly and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and made vows.

These pagan sailors learned, we can pray to this God and we can appeal to Him because He truly is just. He could have wiped us out. Instead, He was satisfied.

His justice was satisfied by taking Jonah and sparing us. They prayed to Him with hope in God's justice. The Bible talks of God's justice in every book.

Here's one example. Deuteronomy 23, verse 4. He, the same Lord and God, He is the rock. His work is perfect for all His ways are just.

[12:29] A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. When you think of God, think of His justice. Our distress, like these sailors, it drives us to see more clearly God's true character.

And when we see God's character, we cry out to Him. We appeal to His character like they appeal to His justice. And God restores our hope to pray. So in your distress, cry out to the Lord and pray knowing that He will hear you.

Remember God's character and pray with hope in His justice. Jeremy read for us Psalm 33, verse 22 of which says, Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, Your character, Your otherworldly love be upon us even as we hope in You.

Do you pray? Pray with hope in God's justice. Do you pray? Number two, pray with hope in God's providence.

Pray with hope in God's providence. Look at chapter 1, verse 17. Now the Lord had prepared, the Lord had appointed, the Lord had provided a great fish to swallow up Jonah.

[13:54] It was God's providence to spare Jonah using this great fish. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. It was God's providence to preserve Jonah in the belly of hell for three days and three nights.

Not one day more, not one day less. Jonah chapter 2, verse 1. Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. He says, I cried out in my affliction, in my distress, I cried out unto the Lord, and he heard me.

He heard me out of the belly of hell as I cried. You, O Lord, have heard my voice. In distress, Jonah saw God's providence.

Try to put yourself in Jonah's skin. These pagan sailors lift you up, bring you to the very edge.

The foam, the wind, the vapor of the sea, they throw you in. And then you go down. You splash.

[15:07] And you think, this is my death. And I'm glad for it to all be over. He was so miserable, trying to hide from the Lord God, the inescapable God. And as he's dying, suffocating, salt, salty water in his nostrils, thinking this is the end for sure.

The Lord prepared. The Lord appointed. The Lord provided for this great fish to swallow him. So he goes brushing past the teeth and the inner parts of the mouth of this great fish.

When he thought his last times to intake something through his nose and mouth, when he thought it was going to be salt water, he finds himself now having something to breathe. Somehow getting oxygen now preserved inside the stomach of this great fish.

And it's the most miserable picture of a man we can imagine. He's sitting in what would feel like vomit and decaying fish bits and seaweed and stomach acid.

Turning all of the hairs on his body white. That's why he describes this as the belly of hell. And he thinks he's going to die.

[16:28] This is the end. But notice what he does. From that pit, he cries out to the Lord. Because he sees, I could have died in the ocean.

But God provided for me. He's providing oxygen for me to breathe. Think about that. Even to cry out to God, it takes having some air in his lungs. There's no air in the bottom of the ocean.

Even the air for him to cry out was provided for him by God inside this great fish that the Lord appointed to preserve Jonah. Our Orthodox catechism asks this question, what do you understand by providence?

And the answer is this, providence is the almighty and ever-present power of God by which he upholds as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures.

And so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty. All things, in fact, come to us, not by chance, but from his fatherly hand.

[17:40] By his providence, Jonah cries out to God. God. God gets our attention in distress.

And God makes you, he shakes you and says, are you a believer or not? What assurance do you have in your life to claim to be a true believer?

I don't see a lot of evidence in Jonah's life of whether or not he was a believer up to this point in the story. Do you? Do you think Jonah was a believer? Well, there's one thing Jonah does is he prays. He prays. He cries out to the Lord. Notice how J.C. Ryle makes this connection. Practice of prayer is one of the surest marks of a true Christian.

Just as the first sign of the life of an infant when born into this world is the act of breathing, so the first act of men and women when they are born again is praying.

[18:46] God teaches Jonah to pray. And if he's praying in this time of distress, that can be a comfort to him that God hears him and that God saves.

Distress drives you to see the character of God more clearly. Jonah would never have gotten to see God's providence to this extreme if it weren't for this distress that the Lord threw him into.

And when you see God's character, you cry out to him because his character, his providence, restores your hope to pray. In your distress, do like Jonah.

No matter how bad your situation is, it cannot be worse than his. You do like him and you cry out to the Lord and you pray. And you pray knowing that he will hear you.

Not because of your merit, but because of God's character. And you pray with hope in who God is. And we can pray, Lord, let not your steadfast love forsake us.

[19:52] Be upon us once again, Lord, with your steadfast love, even as we hope in you. So you pray with hope in God's providence. Do you pray? Do you pray?

Pray. Number three, pray with hope in God's sovereignty. Sovereignty means that nothing happens except through God and by his will.

Not only does he use secondary means and provide for you that way, that's his providence. It was his will to use those means over you. Look at verse three, chapter two, verse three.

For you have cast me into the deep. Who was it that cast Jonah into the deep? It was God, the sovereign God, the creator, Lord of all. In the midst of the seas and the floods that encompass me about, I'm going to read this in the King James, all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

Whose billows were they? Thine. Whose waves passed over Jonah? God's waves. It was God's decree for Jonah's life that these undulating masses of water would bury him.

[21:07] And it was God's will that these waves would pile on, pushing him lower and lower and lower. That was God's decree for Jonah. God was teaching Jonah a high view of God's sovereignty.

Second London Confession of 1689 states it this way, what the Bible teaches, that God has decreed in himself from all eternity by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever come to pass.

All Christians go through distress in this life by God's decree, by God's sovereign will. But only Christians who pray, who cry out to God from that distress will grow from it.

We sing this truth from an orthodox catechism. What is your only hope in life and in death? And the answer is that I am not my own, but I belong body and soul to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. Listen to God's sovereignty. He watches over me in such a way that not a hair, not even a white stomach acid dyed hair can fall from Jonah's head without the will of the Father in heaven.

[22 : 33] And he cares for you as his child. And he puts his Holy Spirit in you to assure you of eternal life. And that Holy Spirit makes you willing and ready wholeheartedly from now on to live for him.

Notice how it's the sovereignty of God that drove Jonah to that pit of hell and it's the sovereignty of God that will restore him and make him willing and ready from now on to live for God.

That's a high view of God's sovereignty. Our distress, it makes us run empty. We see we got nothing. We turn to the sovereign God. Our distress makes us cry out to God and pray with hope in his character.

He is a God who is sovereign. We remember his character and we pray with confidence in who he is. And we ask, let your steadfast love, O sovereign Lord, be upon us even as we hope in you.

Do you pray to this sovereign God? Do you pray? Number four, pray with hope in God's grace.

[23 : 43] Yes, God is just. God is sovereign. God is showing his providence to his children, but God is a God of grace through it all.

Look at verse four. Chapter two, verse four. From the mouth of Jonah, then I said, I am cast out of thy sight. Jonah is saying, from the belly of hell, I could not be further from your will.

I am a rebel. I deserve the banishment I got. Yet, yet, I will look again toward thy holy temple.

Jonah is learning God's grace. In the face of death, the only place I want to think of again, Jonah says, is your presence, your holy temple, the meeting point between the holy God and sinners on earth.

That's all I want to think about. I want to be at the temple and I want to see the high priest on behalf of all the people, including me, put his hands and put my sin on that scapegoat.

[24 : 52] And I want him to see him shed the blood of that lamb because that ceremonial law is how God has agreed to have a covenant with sinners like me. And I want to picture my sin being washed away and my conscience made clean.

I want to be at your holy temple. I can't bear for my soul to feel this way. I need your grace. I need to be back at the place where you promised to show your grace to me.

Look at verse 5. The waters compassed me about even to my soul. The depth closed me round about. The weeds were wrapped about my head.

What's going on to Jonah physically is perfectly describing the state of his inner man. He says, it's my head. It's my soul that are drowning, that are wrapped in the weeds of the ocean and the stomach of this great fish.

In verse 6, he says, I went down to the bottoms, to the roots of the mountains. The earth with the bars, with her bars, was about me forever. Yet you brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.

[26 : 09] Verse 7, When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord and my prayer came unto thee, into, into the very presence of your holy temple.

When a person dies, what do we do with their body? We dig a hole under the grass, sometimes next to a tree. We place them down there.

We pile on dirt on top. The roots of the trees, the roots of the grass have their way. Jonah says, I'm so far below the surface of the earth.

I'm down to the roots of the mountains, under the water, the very picture of chaos and death. And I'm behind the bars like a prisoner. And I'm here forever.

He's describing the state of his soul and his mind. But yet, look at how he trusts in God's grace.

Look at verse 7. Even as my soul is fainting within me, I'm hopeless.

[27 : 08] I remember the Lord. I remember the grace of the sovereign Lord. And I can see so much grace in God that I could not describe my helplessness and my hopelessness in stronger terms.

Yet, even from that state, my prayer goes all the way inside the holy temple of God. And God hears me. That's a beautiful description of God's grace.

From the Second London Confession of 1689 again. God, before the foundation of the world was laid according to his eternal and immutable purpose and the secret counsel of his good pleasure, of his will, he has chosen in Christ a people.

He chose Jonah, the most miserable, pathetic, ugly person on the face of the earth. That's of grace.

Jonah gets zero credit for any grace he's going to receive. It's worse than that. He has demerited.

He's in the negative. And God chose and predestined and purchased and brought into everlasting glory out of God's free grace and love without any other thing in the creature as a condition or

cause that would move God to show that kind of grace.

[28 : 36] God is sovereign and God is gracious. And his grace to you is a sovereign grace. We sang that when darkness veils his lovely face.

See, that's always who God is. He's always lovely. He's always gracious. But the darkness of my distress sometimes veils that from my eyes. And when darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace in every high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.

It's the distress that drives us to cry out to this gracious God. We pray knowing that he is a God of grace. Your prayer goes all the way inside of his holy temple.

It's his character that makes him hear your prayer when you cry out to him. And we can pray let your steadfast gracious love, O Lord, be upon us even as we hope in you.

Do you pray to this gracious God? Do you pray? Number five, pray with hope in God's salvation.

[29 : 53] Not only is he gracious and capable of showing grace, he is the God who saves.

Salvation is of the Lord. Pray with hope in God's salvation.

Look at verse 8, chapter 2, verse 8. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. They forsake the steadfast love of God who turned to idols.

That's the nation of Israel. They're missing out on the loving kindness of God. Jonah is getting it from the pit of hell. And Israel, the nation, is missing out.

Verse 9, he says, I will sacrifice unto you with the voice of thanksgiving. What God desires is the heart and the mind of Jonah, to be filled with gratitude and to cry out with prayers of thanksgiving.

And he says, I will pay what I have vowed. Out of my gratitude, I will obey. And he declares, salvation is of the Lord. Jonah, he knew, he's behind the bars of death forever.

[31 : 04] But salvation is of the Lord. If he's to be saved, it will be from God. He cannot save himself. You won't get to experience God's salvation until God gets you to that point.

I cannot save myself. Salvation is of the Lord alone. Verse 10, God not only promises salvation, he makes it happen in history. He actually saves, he actually redeems.

In verse 10, the Lord spoke to the fish and the fish vomited out Jonah upon dry land. Jonah was cast from the ship into the sea to satisfy God's justice.

Jonah was buried for three days inside the belly of hell. And now God saves. God saves.

This same man now stands on the beach breathing fresh air, the sand coming up between his toes, a living ugly man, stinky.

[32 : 14] He's alive though. Jonah was saved. God actually saved him in history. This is no mythology. This is no story or tale.

Our Lord Jesus himself, listen to how he describes this in Matthew chapter 12 verse 40. Jesus said, John Gill commented, Jonah's deliverance was a shadow of our Lord's resurrection from the dead. What God did to Jonah, it was a pledge, a promise, a guarantee. It was a hope-building picture for you and for me. Of our resurrection, with Christ one day.

If God can do this, which he did, of course, God can raise the dead. That's why we can pray with hope in the God who actually saves.

And we can call to one another to trust in this God of salvation. Salvation belongs to him. We sing, come, oh sinner, come and mourn. For he, Jesus Christ, calls your sin his own.

[33 : 32] Do you feel the weight of justice served? He, Jesus Christ, suffered the wrath that you deserved. Jonah was cast into the ocean and the wrath of God was satisfied, but that was for Jonah's own sin.

Jesus Christ was cast into the belly of hell and he was there for three days and three nights, yet he was sinless. Why did he do that? He did that to atone for your sin because God is just and God is a God of salvation and this is God showing you I came to save you.

You can sing now, for my life Jesus bled and died. For my life justice has been satisfied and we have the hope now we will be raised with him to endless life.

Why? Because it is the Lord himself from beginning to end who holds you fast and he will hold you fast through your distress.

He will use that distress to break you down to make you turn to him alone again for salvation so you will cry out to him trusting in God's character with hope that he is the God who saves and you will pray let your steadfast love oh Lord once again be upon me even as I put my hope in you the God of salvation do you pray to the God of salvation do you pray number six pray with hope in God's word pray with hope in God's word look at Jonah chapter 3 verse 1 and the word of the Lord came

to Jonah the second time the word of the Lord came to Jonah this time around when he hears the word of the Lord look what he does in verse 2 the word of the Lord says arise Jonah go to Nineveh that great city and preach unto it preach what

[35 : 36] I will bid thee to preach so there's Jonah standing at the beach and there's the Mediterranean sea I believe the great fish vomited him up right there on the beach somewhere the hypothesis that that great fish would have taken him all the way to Nineveh it would have taken months unless the Lord made it go extra fast but logically it was just right there three days three nights and now he's standing on the sand and the word of the Lord comes as if echoing across the ocean waters notice how Psalm 29 3 says the voice of the Lord is upon the waters the God of glory thunders the Lord is upon many waters the voice of the Lord is powerful the voice of the Lord is full of majesty and the Lord sits upon the flood yea the Lord sits as king forever to the landlocked

Israelites the ocean the waters was a picture of death and fear and chaos it's the waters of judgment yet the Lord sits enthroned over the waters and the word of the Lord comes to Jonah even if it came as a whisper he's picturing death itself in these oceans and he looks back across now on the land and he sees all of Israel and to get to Nineveh where the word of the Lord is telling him to go he has to travel all the way across this land of Israel I wonder if this is even how he's composing this beautiful poem and prayer if that's where we get you know the seeds of Jonah chapter 2 is him marching from the coast all the way across Israel to Nineveh pray with hope in God's word we hope in God's promises that he gives us in his word so when you pray to the Lord you're praying not your own thoughts or your own ideas you're taking what

God's word himself has given you his promises flow to you and when you take his word and you're taking his word to hold on to his promises it's like drinking from his crystal stream the promises of God and in your distress you cry out to the Lord you cry out to the God who has not been silent or distant he's brought himself near by his word and you don't need to wonder who God is you have his word who reveals God to you you pray that God will help us to grasp the heights from his word of his plans for us like we sing he teaches us truths unchanged from the dawn of time that will echo down through eternity and it's through his word that we know of the grace in which we stand on his promises so you pray with hope in God and your hope is anchored on his word what he has revealed number seven you pray with hope in

God's power you pray with hope you put your hope you get your hopes up you set his powerful he is powerful to either judge and overthrow a great empire like Assyria or God is powerful that his word calling them to repent will humble them and break them down either way you trust the power of God so chapter 3 verse 3 Jonah arose and went into Nineveh according to the word of the Lord now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city if you start walking on one side notice Jonah travels one day's worth into it so he's getting right to the hub right to the heart of Nineveh and when he gets into the city he enters into it he opens up his mouth and cries out the word that God gave him in verse 4 he says yet forty days and

Nineveh shall be overthrown there's no longer that fear of this great city look what he's already come through to this point his thoughts are of God alone it's the fear of God that has filled him and he declares to Nineveh what God gave him to declare no more no less the word of the God who he fears and who he thinks about and who he has exalted now and all these glorious attributes that's what fills his mind and that's what melts away his fear of man God had been powerful to Jonah over the waves over the wind over the great fish now God would show his power over Nineveh over the Assyrian empire over the Israelite nation God is powerful to his promise he's powerful to his word and all of his promises find their yes and amen in Jesus Christ so when we pray trusting in the power of

[40 : 45] God we pray in the powerful name of Jesus the word of God J.C. Ryle said there are exceeding great and precious promises to those who pray what did the Lord Jesus mean when he spoke such words as these ask and it shall be given to you seek and you shall find knock and the door shall be opened unto you for everyone that asks receives and to the powerful name of

Jesus Christ name above all names so in your distress you cry out to God you cry out in the name of Jesus Christ for Christ's sake alone you cry out to God and you pray trusting that the full character of God has been revealed to us in the person of Jesus Christ in Jesus Christ we see the justice of God in Jesus Christ we see the greatest display of God's providence in Jesus Christ we see the sovereignty of God there's no better picture for us of the grace of God but in the person and work of our Lord Jesus in Jesus Christ we see the salvation that God alone provides in Jesus Christ

we see the word of God made flesh and in Jesus Christ we see the power of God so my last one number eight is pray with hope that in the name of Jesus Christ God will hear you too pray with hope that

God will hear you when you pray when you cry out to him not only will he hear you he will come near to you by his Holy Spirit and sanctify you through that distress as you pray pray in your affliction pray in turmoil there's no new verses but I want to point out to you the fact that God hears you with two verses look at chapter 2 verse 2 Jonah says I cried out in my affliction unto the Lord and what comes next he heard me you pray to a God who will hear you too out of the belly I cried out he says in verse 2 and thou heard my voice out the belly of hell now look at verse 7 chapter 2 verse 7 when my soul fainted within me some of you might be feeling this way today your soul is fainting within you I remembered the Lord and my prayer came unto thee into thy holy temple Jonah prayed with hope in God's character trusting God's word he prayed with hope that God will hear him God not only heard him but God sanctified him and you can pray with hope in God's character too you trust Christ you trust God's word and you pray not only the promise of salvation but you pray knowing that your salvation is complete in Christ do you pray distress drives you to see the character of God more clearly and when you see God's character you cry out to him because his character is what restores your hope to pray and you pray Lord let your steadfast love oh Lord be upon me even as I put my hope in you hear the words of Jesus in the hymn that we sing when through the deep waters I call thee to go the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow for I will be with thee thy troubles to bless and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress pray to the Lord with confidence in his character salvation is of God let's pray oh Lord let your steadfast love be upon us even when it feels like you are in that distance even when it feels like we are so sinful that we don't have any merit we look to Christ Lord help us to put our trust fully in him we thank you Lord that you are close you are with us you are a present help you are steadfast you are love help us to put our hope in nothing less all other ground is sinking sand but [45 : 57] Christ is our solid rock teach us now Lord in our affliction in our distress to put our trust in him alone for Christ's name sake we pray amen