

Grace for the Broken

Jonah 1:7-2:10 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 29 August 2021

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: Do you have a time on a vacation where you “got in a jam,” which turned out to be a fun story?

Worship: [Psalm 147](#) (*Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?*)

Sermon Summary for [Jonah 1:7 - 2:10](#) (*Read the passage aloud before reading the sermon summary.*)

Most of us loathe broken circumstances. We're willing to do just about anything to avoid them. But God isn't like that. He even embraces brokenness for Himself: allowing the relationships within the Trinity to be stretched, then somehow broken as Christ died on the cross, abandoned and forsaken by His Father. Communion, the central act in Christian worship, is a remembrance and celebration of this brokenness.

God's chief glory is in His brokenness. And He is willing to deal brokenness into the hands of our lives as well. Like Jonah, God will place us in storms, under crashing waves, and inside dark places in order to break us. He ordains these broken spaces for His glory and for our good. Why? Because of where He takes us in these times: to deep reservoirs of His grace. He does not delight in broken circumstances in themselves; that would be sheer cruelty. Rather, He delights in what brokenness can do in us and through us. Looking more deeply at this, we see that God delights in our brokenness...

Because of how it touches others // Biblical brokenness is when crushing circumstances crush our hardened hearts before God. Brokenheartedness is what God is after, what He loves to see in us, and what He draws near to. Such Gospel brokenness is potent; it has a power in the lives of others. Jonah's repentance is diluted at best. All he could manage was to admit he was a worshipper of God and that he was running from Him. But this is enough for God to use, for He loves how our brokenness touches others deeply, even in small, diluted forms. When we stop running and move toward God – even a little bit – when we look to Him for welcome and love when we least deserve it... that is a powerful witness. Because it's not our greatness or strength that the world needs from us. It is our brokenness, our living by the hope of God's mercy and grace.

Because of how it touches us // Brokenness strikes the central note of the Gospel: living by sheer grace, for others as well as ourselves. When Jonah least deserved God's mercy – under judgement, sinking, drowning, that's when he cries for a grace deep enough to reach him. This is why God sews broken circumstances into our lives – to help us realize, again and again, that only His grace can save and renew us. These troubling moments are where God hems us in to give us more of His healing presence. Prayer is what Jonah is left with in the belly of the fish. And prayer becomes a sweet means of grace for him, as it will for us in such times.

Because of how it touches Him // God is touched, God is delighted, and God is pleased when we look to Him alone for grace, and when we live alone by mercy. This exalts God in His proper place as Lord and Almighty Creator. Those who worship vain idols forsake the hope of His steadfast love. Salvation belongs to the Lord! After three days in the belly of a fish, languishing in the deep, God brings Jonah from death to life. Jonah is spared from what his sins deserved, and he is called once more to the purpose God gives him. Only Jesus can do this for us, restoring us to wholeness, bringing us back to life. This is why the most important thing we can do as Christians – for God, for ourselves, and for others – is to look to God for grace amid our broken life, as broken sinners filled with hope.

Discussion Questions (You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)

God delights in our brokenness because of how it touches others.

- Reread [Jonah 1](#). Who actually fears the Lord in this story? Jonah? The sailors? Both? (see verses: 5,9,10,16)
 - What does it mean to “fear the Lord”? What does it look like for us today?
- Do you have an experience where someone else’s brokenness affected your relationship with Christ?
 - Has anyone ever told you that your own brokenness served as an example of hope and grace?

God delights in our brokenness because of how it touches us.

- What are your thoughts / reactions to the statement *“God will place us in storms, under crashing waves, and inside dark places in order to break us”*?
 - How is God placing us into difficult, trying or frightening circumstances not an act of cruelty?
 - How can these events be a comfort to us? How can we take heart in this reality?
- How has brokenness been a part of your journey as a Christian?
 - Do you have experience(s) where you see God’s hand at work?
 - Are there passages of the Bible that brought you comfort or spoke to your experience?

God delights in our brokenness because of how it touches Him.

- How does God model brokenness for us? What can we learn about our own brokenness from the brokenness that God embraced when Jesus died on the cross and was forsaken by the Father?
 - What does it look like for hardship and brokenness to draw us closer to God? How does it bring us to more deeply understand that He alone is the sovereign source of salvation?
 - How do you feel knowing that God delights when we live alone by His mercy?
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Prayer: How could Jonah’s prayer ([2:2-9](#)) be a prayer for you and your group today?

The weekly prayer guide for group or personal use is found [HERE](#).

Engage & Experience: Generous Service: We are focusing on [Generous Service](#) and partnering with Hope for LA for the 4th quarter of our 2021 Generosity Focus. Generous Serving is a means of turning outward toward the world and serving those in need – not out of compulsion but from hearts seeking to reflect God’s love.

As a group, spend time discussing what it would look like to be generous with your time, hospitality, prayer and care for the “least of these” ([Matthew 25:40](#)). Work together to put actions to your thoughts on Generous Service.

Additional Resource: [Serving the City](#) - Tim Keller Sermon (30minutes)