

BELPRES CHURCH

Sermon Title: Loosen Your Grip

Opening Question: Looking back to last week's sermon and scripture... How did you live differently or practice what we talked about in your life this week? What did you do and how did it go?

This week's scripture: **Jonah 2**

From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. ² He said:

"In my distress I called to the LORD,
and he answered me.

From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,
and you listened to my cry.

³ You hurled me into the depths,
into the very heart of the seas,
and the currents swirled about me;
all your waves and breakers
swept over me.

⁴ I said, 'I have been banished
from your sight;
yet I will look again
toward your holy temple.'

⁵ The engulfing waters threatened me,^(b)
the deep surrounded me;
seaweed was wrapped around my head.

⁶ To the roots of the mountains I sank down;
the earth beneath barred me in forever.

But you, LORD my God,
brought my life up from the pit.

⁷ "When my life was ebbing away,
I remembered you, LORD,

and my prayer rose to you,
to your holy temple.

⁸ "Those who cling to worthless idols
turn away from God's love for them.

⁹ But I, with shouts of grateful praise,
will sacrifice to you.

What I have vowed I will make good.

I will say, 'Salvation comes from the LORD.'"

¹⁰ And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Scripture Reflection Questions: Read this week's scripture together and discuss the following (note: we use the same scripture reflection questions each week so that we can practice using the same tools over time as we examine different scriptures):

- What do we learn about God (e.g., traits, personality, what matters, priorities) in this passage?
- What do we learn about people, and ourselves in particular, this week?

Sermon Reflection Questions: Reflecting on this week's sermon, discuss the following:

- What do you see in this prayer: Thanksgiving? A call for help? Recommitment? Other?
- What do you make of the fact that Jonah prays "inside the fish" (v. 1)?
- How does Jonah view circumstances in this prayer?

Optional Question. Verse 8 is translated differently in different versions of the Bible. What do your versions say and how does each different translation shed light on the meaning of the verse?

Closing Question and Application: Given what we've discussed together today, how might God want you to apply these learnings to your life or in the life of your community this next week? Who might you share this with?

Closing group prayer: Spend a few minutes together in your group sharing prayer requests and then praying together for each other. Take the challenging parts of your conversation to Jesus. Thank God for the time together, the conversation shared, the other people in the group, and for encouragement in the week ahead.

**This week's Sabbath practice: PRACTICE
All together now!**

- Prepare
- Stop
- Rest

- Delight
- Worship