



Jonah Moments ~ Part 2

Description

Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs. But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord. (Jonah 2:8-9)

Jonah Moments ~ Part 1

Jonah wasn't in the water long, before God provided a big fish to swallow him. For three days and three nights, Jonah spent his time in that fish. At first, he didn't even know where he was. It took him all three days and three nights to repent. How long does it take us at times to admit we are wrong, that we have been judgmental, unkind, unloving, etc? In Jonah 2, a beautiful prayer unfolds. Jonah comes running back to God. We can do this too! It only takes a moment! Have you taken a moment to pray today? Have you had a conversation with the One who loves you and created you? If not, stop and take time to exalt His name on high.

The last part of Jonah's prayer really sticks out to me. Jonah compares himself to the sailors on board the ship. The sailors turned to their gods when the storm hit the ship, but their gods didn't come through. It was at that time that they turned to the One, True, Living God. They only knew God for a moment, but they turned and made vows to Him. Jonah knew God for a lot longer, but he ran from Him. Jonah looked back on this whole situation and decided to make things right with God. He told God he would make right what he vowed to Him. He originally vowed to be a spokesman, to follow God wherever God led him even when it didn't suit his interest. Jonah surrendered! Immediately after this confession of repentance, Jonah was vomited up on dry land. God heard Jonah's prayer and He responded!

Our obedience leads to God's response!

This stands out to me because honestly God has shown me some worthless idols in my life. I'm a little more like the sailors than I thought. I've found that my determination to be strong and get through anything has forfeited me the grace that comes through God alone. There are many times when I have been broken and hurting, but I keep going because I'm determined I will be strong enough. I will

do it on my own. I will get through it! I got this! I tend to place myself in this box of strength. I remember this last year when I was going through some stuff, I would come to church late and sneak out early. I thought I was doing myself a favor to not let anyone know that I was hurting. I was going to be strong. I was going tough it out. I didn't want anyone to have to carry my burdens. The thing is, I totally messed up. I forfeited the grace that God had for me through the Body of Christ. I didn't allow them to carry my burdens with me. I didn't allow them to be my strength. I didn't allow them to journey with me through my pain. Have you ever done this? Have you ever let your pride keep you from the grace God wants you to receive through those around you?

I'm learning even now that my strength is a portion of my pride that I have to squash. I can be strong, yes, of course. But I need to recognize that ultimately all strength comes from God alone.

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

It's in those weak moments that Christ's strength, His power is made perfect in me. I'm learning this! It's a daily process! What are you learning? What is the idol that stands in your way of receiving God's grace? Is it pride! Is it the need for more money, your car, your family, your relationships, how people perceive you/your character, your awards, your service, your need to be right, your lack of forgiveness, etc. Allow God to show you what stands in the way of receiving His grace in your life! Don't live another moment without receiving the fullness of God's grace! It's waiting for you just around the corner! **Challenge:** Read Jonah 2 **Apply the Word:** Is there an area of disobedience you need to confess to God? How have you been forfeiting God's grace in your life? Will you cling to God's Truth? **Memory Verse:** Jonah 2:8

Dear Father God, I'm sorry for messing up this last year. I know that I forfeited the grace I could have had through You and the Body of Christ. I praise You for bringing me through my storms and setting my feet back on the Rock. Please teach me how to depend on Your strength alone and allow others to journey with me during the times that I'm in pain! May I respond to Your grace, Your mercy, and Your unending love. I'm so grateful You never give up on me!

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