

# THE NECESSITY OF **OBEDIENCE** AND THE DANGER OF **RUNNING**

SERMON SERIES

## The Necessity of Obedience and the Danger of Running - pt 2

### "Lamentations In the Dark"

(Jonah 2:1-10)

Sunday, April 26, 2026

## 5-Day Devotional: Out of Darkness, Into His Light

### Day 1: When Running Leads to Darkness

**Reading:** Jonah 1:1-17

**Devotional:** Jonah's story begins with a simple command and a stubborn refusal. When God calls us to uncomfortable obedience, our natural response is often to run the opposite direction. Like Jonah boarding a ship to Tarshish, we convince ourselves that distance will bring peace. Instead, we find storms. The separation we feel from God in these moments isn't because He's moved—He never does. It's because we've chosen our comfort over His calling. How much unnecessary pain could we avoid if we simply turned to God at the first sign of conviction rather than waiting until we hit rock bottom? Today, examine where you might be running from God's voice. The storm you're experiencing may be His mercy, redirecting you back to His will before the darkness deepens.

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### Day 2: Prayer in the Depths

**Reading:** Jonah 2:1-6; Psalm 13

**Devotional:** Jonah didn't pray in the storm. He didn't pray when thrown overboard. He prayed when swallowed by darkness, sinking to what he believed was certain death. Sometimes we're just as stubborn. We exhaust every option, trying to fix things ourselves until we're completely engulfed. Yet even in the belly of the fish, God was present. The darkness that felt like punishment was actually preservation. When you feel separated from God, stop focusing on your problem and look around—He's there. David understood this rhythm: crying out "How long, O Lord?" then discovering "But I trust in Your unfailing love." Your darkest moment may become your greatest encounter with God's faithfulness. Don't wait until you're drowning to call out. He hears you now.

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### Day 3: Remembering Who God Is

**Reading:** Psalm 103:1-14; Galatians 4:4-7

**Devotional:** In his desperation, Jonah quoted Scripture eight times—reciting God's own words back to Him. He wasn't bargaining; he was remembering. When darkness threatens to define our reality, we must anchor ourselves in who God has always been. You are not a slave to your circumstances, your past, or your failures. You are a child of God and an heir to His kingdom. This isn't just future hope—it's present identity. God has never been anything less than what He promised to be, even when we've been everything less than what we promised Him. Today, speak God's promises over your situation. Remind yourself of His character: faithful, loving, present, powerful. Let Scripture reorient your perspective from your temporary struggle to His eternal faithfulness. Your feelings may scream separation, but His Word declares His constant presence.

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### Day 4: Praise in the Prison

**Reading:** Jonah 2:7-9; Philippians 1:20-21

**Devotional:** Jonah offered praise without expectation of rescue. He didn't barter with God or promise future obedience in exchange for deliverance. Instead, he simply acknowledged God's goodness while still trapped in darkness. This is the New Testament revelation Jonah discovered: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." When we reach the point where we can genuinely say, "God, whatever You do from here, I'm at peace because I know You," transformation happens. Praise isn't denying your pain; it's declaring God's supremacy over it. It's recognizing that even if circumstances don't change, His character remains constant. Today, practice praising God not for what He might do, but for who He is. Offer Him yourself—your fears, failures, and fractured plans. That sacrifice of praise may be the very thing that shifts you from darkness to light.

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### Day 5: Returning to Purpose

**Reading:** Jonah 2:10-3:3; Romans 8:28-39

**Devotional:** The same God who arranged the storm arranged the fish. The same God who allowed Jonah's descent orchestrated his deliverance. When the Lord commanded the fish to spit Jonah onto shore, it wasn't just physical rescue—it was restoration to purpose. Your detours don't disqualify you from God's calling. Nothing can separate you from His love or His plan. The darkness you've walked through has prepared you for the assignment ahead. Jonah emerged from the fish with a new perspective: God's salvation is His to give, not ours to withhold or determine. What vows have you made to God that

remain unfulfilled? What calling have you been running from? Today is your shore moment—the opportunity to return to God's will with fresh understanding of His relentless love. He's been pursuing you through every storm, every depth, every dark place. Now, will you go where He sends you?

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**Reflection Question for the Week:** Where in your life are you experiencing darkness, and how might God be using it to redirect you back to His purpose?