

INVITATION: A PLAN FROM THE BOTTOM

When you can't reach God your way, He can reach you because He put you where you are.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ In the prayer Jesus taught His disciples are the words, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). The words sound simple, but living them out can be difficult. There is often a battle of wills.
- ❖ Deep down, people do not easily accept being told what to do, especially when it contradicts their instincts.
- ❖ The story of Jonah shows what can happen when our will conflicts with God's will.
- ❖ Instead of obeying the Lord's command to go to Nineveh, Jonah ran in the opposite direction (Jonah 1:3). His attempt to escape eventually led him into the depths of the sea. From that desperate place, Jonah began to pray.
- ❖ His prayer in Jonah chapter two shows how someone who has reached the bottom can repent and invite God to rescue them—not according to their own plans, but according to His.

Your distance from God isn't the same as God's distance from you.

- ❖ Jonah begins his prayer saying, "In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me" (Jon. 2:2).
- ❖ The situation is clear. Jonah had been swallowed by a great fish. The word distress speaks of adversity or affliction, but it literally carries the idea of tightness. Jonah was in a tight spot.
- ❖ Yet even there, when he cried out to God, the Lord answered. Jonah continues, "From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry" (Jon. 2:2).
- ❖ As he sank deeper into the sea, Jonah believed he was heading toward death. From his perspective everything was spiralling out of control. Yet God calmly listened to his prayer.
- ❖ To Jonah the situation felt desperate. To God it was entirely under control. While Jonah was focused on the crisis, God was focused on Jonah himself.
- ❖ When people face personal crises, judgment can become blurred. Problems appear larger than they really are, and reactions often move quickly toward worst-case outcomes. Yet God sees further than we do.
- ❖ The distance we feel from Him is not the same as His distance from us.

When you're lost to self you're not lost to God.

- ❖ Jonah describes what happened when he was thrown into the sea: "You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me" (Jon. 2:3).
- ❖ Earlier, we are told that Jonah was running from God because he did not want to obey Him (Jon. 1:3).
- ❖ When a violent storm threatened the ship, and when the sailors realized that Jonah was responsible, they reluctantly threw him overboard (Jon. 1:12-15).
- ❖ Although the sailors were the ones who had tossed him overboard, Jonah later says that it was God who had hurled him into the depths.
- ❖ What looked like abandonment was actually God's intervention.

KEY SCRIPTURE: Jonah 2:2-9

(all scripture in NIV unless otherwise noted)

- ❖ Jonah says in chapter two, "I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple" (v. 4).
 - ❖ He felt cast out and separated from God. Yet instead of continuing to run, he turned his attention back toward the Lord.
 - ❖ His description becomes even more intense: waters closed around him, seaweed wrapped around his head, and he sank to what he calls the roots of the mountains (v.v. 5-6).
 - ❖ Everything suggested final defeat. Yet even there, God was present.
 - ❖ When we feel lost, it may seem as though God has abandoned us. Jonah's prayer reminds us that when we are lost to ourselves, we are not lost to Him.
- When your way doesn't work, God's way does.**
- ❖ Jonah's situation had reached the point where rescue seemed impossible. But he declares, "But you, Lord my God, brought my life up from the pit" (v. 6).
 - ❖ His own plan—to run from God—had brought him to the bottom. Yet God was there the entire time.
 - ❖ Jonah continues, "When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you" (v. 7). This moment marks the turning point of the story.
 - ❖ Jonah remembered the Lord and prayed with a renewed willingness to obey. This is the heart of the message: invitation.
 - ❖ God had been present all along, but Jonah needed to turn back and invite Him in.
 - ❖ He concludes with praise: "With shouts of grateful praise I will sacrifice to you.... Salvation comes from the Lord" (v. 9).
 - ❖ Once Jonah surrendered to God's way, he stepped back into the calling God had given him. Jonah's prayer shows that even when someone reaches the bottom, God is still present.
 - ❖ When our plans fail and our own way does not work, God's way remains.
 - ❖ When we cannot reach God our way, He can still reach us—because He already knows where we are.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. "When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you" (Jon. 2:7).
 - i) Discuss this statement in light of Jonah's earlier attempt to run from God (Jon. 1:1-3, 12-17).
 - ii) What does this reveal about how God works in the lives of those who resist His will?
 - iii) Why do you think it sometimes takes a crisis for people to turn back to God?
 - iv) What can we learn from Jonah's response?

PRAYER TIME

Lord, help us to turn to You in every circumstance and to trust Your ways above our own. Amen.

WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

- ✓ (Reminds me/Confirms)
- 💡 (New idea)
- 🗨️ (Think about)
- 👉 (Do this)
- ❤️ (Speaks to my heart)
- ➡️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Start-up: Have you ever had a plan that didn't work out at all, but later realized it led you somewhere better?

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

PRAYER FOCUS: F. S. Outreach: Life Groups, personal witnessing, lifestyle evangelism, community work.

24-hour Prayer: Daily;

Daily Devotions: Monday - Friday @ 6:30 a.m. & 9:00 p.m.;

Departmental Prayer: Every **Thursday** (please check schedule)

Corporate Prayer: Every **Friday @ 7:00 p.m.** (and in person every second Friday @ 9:00 p.m. - 3:00 a.m.).

Zoom ID: 898 3191 5909 **Phone Access:** 647-374-4685

FAITH SANCTUARY DONATIONS

To donate online, please go to www.faithsanctuary.com/give

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

GROUP EVANGELISM

Date: Saturdays (with the exception of long weekends)

Please join us every Saturday at 11:00 a.m. in the upper chapel for Group Evangelism. For more information, please contact Sis. Maude Chalifour.

NORTH CENTRAL YOUTH CONVENTION (NCYC) & PARENT MEETING

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2026

Time: 1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Location: Upper Chapel

Contact: Pastor Lucy Peel or Sis. Naomi Kovach

FYYA NIGHT

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2026

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Location: Main Sanctuary

Contact: Pastor Dan Peel or Sis. Naomi Kovach

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BRUNCH

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2026

Time: 10:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Cost: \$47

Location: La Plume @ The Well

Registration on the Faith App is MANDATORY

Contact: Pastor Dan Peel or Sis. Shayanne Solomon

COUPLES' PRAYER BRUNCH

Couples are warmly invited to join us for a sweet time of fellowship, connection, and prayer.

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2026

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Registration deadline is Saturday, April 11th, 2026.

To register, contact Bob and Kim at stayconnectedmsg@gmail.com.

FAITH SANCTUARY WEEKLY SERVICES

Sunday Bible Study @ 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service @ 11:00 a.m.

(Listen via phone: 1-844-268-4848)

Monday Berean Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m.

(Zoom, Facebook, YouTube)

Wednesday Bible Study @ 7:30 p.m.

(In person and via Zoom)

Friday Evening Service @ 8:00 p.m.

(In person and via Zoom)

Life Group Meetings – individually scheduled
(see ushers for information)

FAITH FOUNDATIONS

GOD

We believe there is only one God: the eternal, holy, loving, all-knowing, all-powerful, omnipresent Spirit, creator of all (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; Leviticus 19:2; 1 John 4:8; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 23:24; John 4:24; Isaiah 44:24; Colossians 1:16).

GOD'S WORD

We believe the Holy Scriptures—The Bible—is God's true and complete Word to humanity, verified most notably through fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 41:21-23, 42:8-9, 46:9-10; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17).

GOD'S CREATION

We believe all people were created in the image of God for His pleasure, to be His children, His church and His bride, living in eternal love and fellowship with Him (Revelation 4:1; Genesis 1:27; John 1:12-13; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7).

HUMANITY'S FALL

We acknowledge that we have all sinned and failed to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives, through willful disobedience to the word of God and our own conscience. All sinful acts lead to separation and alienation from God's pure, holy presence, eventually resulting in both physical and spiritual death (Romans 3:23, 6:23a).

THE GOSPEL

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, fully divine and fully human (1 Timothy 3:16). He came to Earth and suffered death by crucifixion, willingly substituting Himself for us in receiving God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 53:5). But God raised Him from death (Acts 5:30), and He now offers eternal life to all who will believe in Him (John 3:14-17, 6:29; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 6:23b; Ephesians 2:4-9). Faith is sparked within us when we hear the gospel, the "good news" that Jesus died, was buried and rose from the dead for our benefit (Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

OUR FAITH RESPONSE

Hearing the gospel is intended to lead us to repentance, a divinely inspired change of heart that causes us to turn away from our sins and turn to God (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:24-26). Faith and repentance lead us to obey the scriptural command to be baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of our sins and to receive His gift of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit gives us the power to live a righteous, godly life, joyfully sharing the good news of our new life in Christ with others (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 4:12; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

CHRIST'S RETURN

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ will soon return to Earth to receive His people to Himself and establish His righteous, eternal kingdom (John 14:3; Matthew 25:34).

MARCH 15, 2026

Faith **SANCTUARY**

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~ 2026 ~

Pastor:
Rev. Adrian W. Peel

"When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple."

Jonah 2:7 (NIV)

1901 Jane St., Toronto, Ontario M9N 3T9

Phone: 416-244-4898

Email: mail@faithsanctuary.com

Website: www.faithsanctuary.com

Livestream: <https://faithsanctuarytoronto.online.church>