

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

THE RESET BACK TO THE STARTING LINE

A reading plan through the story of Jonah — on running the wrong way, the mercy that sustains you in the belly of the whale, and what it looks like to rise and go when God calls you a second time.

Jonah 1-3 • The Reset

DEVOTIONAL

FIVE DAYS IN THE WORD

Read one day at a time. Sit with the Scripture before you read the devotional, and let the reflection questions be honest before you move to the practical application.

01

DAY

WHEN YOU RUN THE WRONG WAY

JONAH 1:1-3

God calls Jonah to go to Nineveh, but Jonah chooses to flee in the opposite direction rather than obey.

There are moments when God speaks a clear direction over our lives, and instead of moving toward it, we move away from it. Sometimes fear drives us. Sometimes the assignment seems too hard, too uncomfortable, or too costly. But running from God never leads to peace – it leads to a storm. The moment Jonah boarded that ship headed in the wrong direction, trouble followed. His disobedience did not just affect him; it affected everyone around him.

Reflect honestly today: is there an area of your life where God has spoken and you have been moving in the opposite direction? The good news is that God's call does not expire. He is still speaking. He is still waiting. The starting line has not moved.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What has God asked of you that you have been avoiding?
- What fear is driving your disobedience?
- What would it look like to take one step back toward God's original instruction today?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Write down one thing God has called you to do that you have been delaying. Commit it to prayer today and ask God for the courage to take the first step toward obedience.

02

DAY

IN THE BELLY OF THE WHALE

JONAH 2:1-2

Jonah prays to God from inside the fish, crying out in his distress, and God hears him.

The belly of the whale is not a punishment – it is a classroom. When we jump ahead of God, when we make plans without consulting Him, when we trust our own strength over His guidance, we often find ourselves swallowed up by the very mess we created. The whale's belly is dark, uncomfortable, and humbling. But notice what Jonah did in that place: he prayed. He did not scroll for distractions. He did not blame others. He turned his face toward God and cried out honestly. God heard him.

If you are in a difficult season right now, one that feels like the walls are closing in and the mess is overwhelming, know this â€” God's mercy is present with you in that place. You are not being digested. You are being prepared.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In what area of your life do you feel like you are currently in the belly of a whale?
- Have you been honest with God about how you feel in this season?
- What would it look like to thank God in the middle of your mess rather than only crying out for rescue?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Set aside five uninterrupted minutes today to pray honestly. Tell God exactly how you feel â€” your fear, your frustration, your confusion. Then thank Him for three specific things, even in the middle of your current struggle.

03

DAY

THE MERCY THAT SUSTAINS YOU

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

God's mercies are described as new every morning, a reminder that His faithfulness never fails even in the darkest seasons.

One of the most powerful truths in the story of Jonah is that he was not digested. He was uncomfortable, surrounded by darkness and debris, but he was alive. That is mercy. Mercy is not the absence of consequences â€” it is God's decision to sustain you through them. Many of us focus so much on the mess around us that we fail to recognize the mercy holding us together.

The enemy uses our mistakes to produce shame, and shame produces pride, and pride keeps us from asking for help. But God's mercy breaks that cycle. His mercies are new every single morning. No matter what yesterday looked like, today is a fresh opportunity to receive what God has already decided to give you â€” grace, forgiveness, and a way forward.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where in your life have you experienced God's mercy sustaining you even when you did not deserve it?
- Have you allowed shame or pride to keep you from being honest with God or others about your struggles?
- How does knowing that God's mercies are new every morning change the way you approach today?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Begin your morning tomorrow by declaring God's mercy over your life before you check your phone, your email, or your schedule. Speak it out loud. Let that truth be the first thing that frames your day.

04

DAY

OBEYING THE SECOND CALL

JONAH 3:1-3

God speaks to Jonah a second time with the same instruction, and this time Jonah rises and goes to Nineveh as God commanded.

God does not abandon His purpose for your life just because you went the wrong way the first time. He comes back. He speaks again. He reissues the call. This is the nature of a God who is not deterred by our failures. After Jonah was brought out of the whale, God did not give him a new assignment – He gave him the same one. The promise had not changed. The mission had not changed. What had changed was Jonah. The belly of the whale had done its work. Jonah was no longer the man who ran. He was now a man who rose and went.

God is not looking for perfect people. He is looking for people who, after being broken and restored, will rise and go. That is the reset. That is the return to the original state. The call is still the same. The question is whether you will answer it this time.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Is there a calling or assignment God has placed on your life that you walked away from but He keeps bringing back to your attention?

- What has the difficult season you have been through taught you that has prepared you to answer the call more faithfully this time?
- What does obedience look like for you in this specific season?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Identify one step of obedience you can take this week in response to what God has been calling you toward. Do not plan the entire outcome. Take one step and trust God with the rest.

05

DAY

WAITING AT THE STARTING LINE

ISAIAH 40:31

Those who wait on the Lord are promised renewed strength, described through the imagery of rising up on wings, running without weariness, and walking without growing faint.

After the reset, after the belly, after the second call, there is still a discipline required: waiting. Waiting on God is not passive – it is an act of active trust. It means standing at the starting line, refusing to move until He says go. It means resisting the urge to figure out the outcome before He reveals it. It means allowing your strength to be renewed in stillness rather than depleted in striving.

Many of us are in the mess we are in because we refused to wait. We saw the promise, got excited, and started building without the blueprint. But God is the architect. He holds the design. When you return to the starting line and wait for Him, He will not leave you there forever. He will speak. He will direct. He will send the provision, the connection, the open door at exactly the right moment. Your job is to be ready and in position when He does.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What area of your life do you find it most difficult to wait on God in?
- What does it look like practically for you to wait on God rather than move ahead in your own strength?
- How has God proven Himself faithful in past seasons of waiting that can encourage your trust in Him now?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Choose one situation in your life where you have been striving and straining in your own strength. Deliberately lay it down before God in prayer today. Commit to checking in with Him daily about that situation rather than acting independently. Practice the discipline of waiting and record what God begins to show you over the coming days.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

ISAIAH 40:31

This reading plan is designed to be used in sequence over five consecutive days, but it can also be revisited whenever you find yourself in a season of reset, redirection, or renewal. God's word is living and active, and He will meet you exactly where you are.

GO DEEPER THIS WEEK

Join us Wednesdays at 7:30 PM for Bible Study, or walk through this devotional with your small group.

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