

Men, Are You Inside the Belly of a Fish?

In times of crisis, I have noticed a peculiar proclivity among many men, including myself. There is something that keeps us from asking God for help when we need it the most: guilt.

A voice inside your head says, “You deserve to be here. You disobeyed. What did you expect? You knew what you were doing was unwise, or just plain sinful, and look where it’s gotten you. And you want to ask God for help *now*?”

At the root of this thinking, however, is not some kind of thoughtful willingness to take responsibility for your own actions. It’s actually a refusal to apply the gospel to your life. You think, “I got myself into this mess. I am going to have to get myself out.” There is both a logical and a theological fallacy to this way of thinking.

Logically, if you weren’t wise enough to avoid the pitfall you find yourself in, what makes you think you’re wise enough to figure a way out? Ask someone bigger, smarter, stronger and more capable for help. Listen to what He says. Look in the Word, and watch for His Spirit’s leading.

Theologically, this is what the gospel is all about. We’re not righteous. Of course we feel guilty. Guilt, when deserved, is an honest emotion. It points out that we fall short (Rom. 3:23). But the gospel points us to a loving and gracious God who wants to save us. So rely on His grace and compassion.

What about you? Are you in the belly of a fish? Pray to the Lord your God. Even Jonah realized this was his only hope: “In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me” (Jonah 2:2).

What about men you know or lead? Don’t let them fall into the

trap of trying to save themselves. Point them toward their God so that He can answer them and their faith can grow.

"From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God." (Jonah 2:1)

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