

11/21/17

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Have ever been in a situation where you lost all control? Maybe you were driving down the highway and your car hit a very slippery spot and immediately began sliding and spinning. You quickly realize that no matter how much you pump the brakes or crank on the wheel, it doesn't matter. The situation is out of your control. Or perhaps you've been dealing with a health issue, and it seems that no matter what you do, it doesn't seem to make a difference. You faithfully take all your pills, eat a healthy diet, and even do your daily exercise. But the situation seems out of your control.

“In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry. You hurled me into the deep, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, ‘I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O LORD my God. “When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. “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 2:2-9

This must have been how Jonah felt. He was in the belly of a great fish, not knowing which way was up or down or how to get out. The situation was out of his control. So he did the only thing he could. He called out to the LORD in his distress, because he knew that “salvation comes from the LORD.” The LORD answered Jonah's prayer and commanded the fish to vomit the prophet safely on dry land.

When the religious leaders of Jesus' day asked him to prove that he was the promised Messiah, Jesus answered by saying, “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:40). Just as Jonah spent three days in the dark enclosed belly of a fish, so Jesus would spend three days in a tomb

to prove once and for all that “salvation comes from the LORD.” But here’s a major difference: God used the fish to discipline Jonah as he fled from the mission that God had given him to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh. Jesus never once wavered from the mission that God had given him, but he suffered death and the grave—not for his own rebellion, but for ours.

“Salvation comes from the LORD.” In a miracle, far greater than being rescued from the belly of a fish, God raised his Son Jesus from the dead not only to save him, but to show that salvation for all people comes through Jesus.

Do you feel like your life is out of control? Like Jonah, cry out to the LORD in your distress, because the LORD loves you and promises to listen to the prayers of his children. If he answers your prayer and grants you salvation from your earthly problem, like Jonah you can offer a song of thanksgiving. But even if he doesn’t, you can still offer a song of thanksgiving because you can be confident that LORD God who raised Jesus from the dead has promised to work all things to bring you eternal salvation.

Prayer: LORD, in my distress I call out to you. Hear my prayer and strengthen my faith in your promises. With shouts of grateful praise, I lift my voice, because salvation comes from you. Amen!

(WELS E-Devotion adapted)

...See you in church.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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