

Stop Resisting & Start Responding

July 5, 2026

STORIES
of
STRUGGLE

Four Ways We Move from God's Will:

- We _____ what God is asking.
- We _____ what we know is right.
- We _____ from conviction.
- We _____ in guilt and shame.

The longer I run, the _____ it gets.

Jonah 1:1-3 (NLT)

The LORD gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai:

“Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are.”

But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the LORD. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. He bought a ticket and went on board, hoping to escape from the LORD by sailing to Tarshish.

Four Responses When I Realize I'm Running from God:

1 _____ when I'm running.

Jonah 1:3-4 (NLT)

But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the LORD. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. He bought a ticket and went on board, hoping to escape from the LORD by sailing to Tarshish.

But the LORD hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart.

Three Excuses that Keep me Running:

- I _____ it.
- I _____, “It's not that serious.”
- I _____ I'll deal with it later.

Remember:

Avoidance doesn't resolve anything. It just _____ the inevitable.

Psalms 139:7-8 (NLT)

I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there.

Proverbs 28:13 (NLT)

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

The pathway back to God’s will starts with _____.

2 _____ God for help.

Jonah 2:1-7 (NLT)

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from inside the fish. He said,

“I cried out to the LORD in my great trouble, and he answered me. I called to you from the land of the dead, and LORD, you heard me! You threw me into the ocean depths, and I sank down to the heart of the sea. The mighty waters engulfed me; I was buried beneath your wild and stormy waves. Then I said, ‘O LORD, you have driven me from your presence. Yet I will look once more toward your holy Temple.’

I sank beneath the waves, and the waters closed over me. Seaweed wrapped itself around my head. I sank down to the very roots of the mountains. I was imprisoned in the earth, whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O LORD my God, snatched me from the jaws of death! As my life was slipping away, I remembered the LORD. And my earnest prayer went out to you in your holy Temple.

Jonah didn’t pray at the beginning, he prayed at the _____.

Psalms 34:17 (NLT)

The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles.

Two Realities:

- Sometimes God allows us to hit rock bottom so we finally _____.

“Rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life.”

– J.K. Rowling

- God will meet you in the pit if you’re willing to _____.

How to ask God for Help?

- _____ on Him.
- _____ Him.
- _____ Him.

3**_____ God's grace.****Jonah 3:1 (NLT)**

Then the Lord spoke to Jonah a second time...

Two Realities to Remember:

- **God didn't replace Jonah – He _____ him.**
- **Grace didn't ignore Jonah's failure – it _____ it.**

Joel 2:25 (NLT)

The LORD says, "I will give you back what you lost..."

Micah 7:18-19 (NLT)

Where is another God like you, who pardons the guilt of the remnant, overlooking the sins of his special people? You will not stay angry with your people forever, because you delight in showing unfailing love. Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean!

4**_____ God's love.****Jonah 4:1-2 (NLT)**

This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry. So he complained to the LORD about it: "Didn't I say before I left home that you would do this, LORD? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people."

Remember:

God's grace isn't just for me. It's meant to _____ me and _____ through me.

Jonah 3:10 (NLT)

When God saw what they had done and how they had put a stop to their evil ways, he changed his mind and did not carry out the destruction he had threatened.

Jonah 4:10-11 (NLT)

Then the LORD said, "You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly. But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?"

Two Ways God Shifts My Heart:

- **From comfort to _____**
- **From self to _____**

2 Corinthians 5:18 (NLT)

And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.

Matthew 5:14 (NLT)

“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.”

Matthew 12:40-41 (NLT)

“For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. The people of Nineveh will stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for they repented of their sins at the preaching of Jonah. Now someone greater than Jonah is here—but you refuse to repent.”

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Four Ways We Move from God's Will:

- We ignore what God is asking.
- We avoid what we know is right.
- We run from conviction.
- We hide in guilt and shame.

The longer I run, the heavier it gets.

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Three Excuses that Keep me Running:

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A s k God for help.

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How to ask God for Help?

- C a l l on Him.
- T r u s t Him.
- F o l l o w Him.

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A c c e p t God's grace.

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