

NAVIGATING A TURNAROUND

NAVIGATING A TURNAROUND, PART 1: WRONG WAY

We've all experienced situations where things weren't going well and we needed a turnaround. From one of the most infamous stories in the Bible, we'll discover the key to navigating a successful turnaround, regardless of what we're facing.

BIG IDEA: God allows turnarounds for everyone going the wrong way.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been in a situation where you realized you were heading in the wrong direction? What did it take to turn things around?
2. What types of things make it hard for us to admit what's really going on when things aren't going well?
3. In the book of Jonah, all creation responds to the Word of the Lord except Jonah. Why do you think we have such a hard time responding to the Word of the Lord? What is it that makes people so unwilling to obey the Creator, when the rest of Creation (nature, animals, etc.) obeys immediately?
4. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 1:1-3](#).*

¹ The LORD gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai: ² "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are." ³ 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. [Jonah 1:1-3 \(NLT\)](#)

5. Why did God tell Jonah to go and preach His judgment to the Ninevites? How do you think Jonah felt about the Ninevites? Why do you think he refused to take God's message to them?
6. Jonah knew what God wanted, but he intentionally chose to disobey. Have you ever known the right thing to do but still chose your own way? What happened?
7. **God will often ask you to do things you don't want to do.** What are some things that God asks us to do, in the Bible, that seem unreasonable or difficult to obey?
8. In his mind, Jonah had legitimate reasons for not wanting to preach to the Ninevites. Describe a time when you disobeyed God's direction and faced the consequences. Who or what is currently the Nineveh in your life?
9. **You can always find a boat sailing in the wrong direction.** In your spiritual life, which direction are you running: towards God, away from God, with God, or behind God?
10. Jonah tried escaping on a boat. **When we run from God, we run to some very unstable places.** What was a thrill has become an addiction. What was just so much fun has become nothing but debt. What was a great relationship has ended up in divorce court. Name some unstable places you have ran from God.
11. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 1:4-6](#).*

⁴ But the LORD hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart. ⁵ Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. But all this time Jonah was sound asleep down in the hold. ⁶ So the captain went down after him. "How can you sleep at a time like this?" he shouted. "Get up and pray to your god! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives." [Jonah 1:4-6 \(NLT\)](#)

12. **God may send a storm to grab your attention to turnaround.** The captain woke up Jonah and told him to look up and pray and gave us the first steps to a turnaround. *Wake up, Look Up, and Own Up.*
13. What's an area in your life where you need a wake up call?

14. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Jonah 1:7-16](#).

⁷ Then the crew cast lots to see which of them had offended the gods and caused the terrible storm. When they did this, the lots identified Jonah as the culprit. ⁸ “Why has this awful storm come down on us?” they demanded. “Who are you? What is your line of work? What country are you from? What is your nationality?” ⁹ Jonah answered, “I am a Hebrew, and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land.” ¹⁰ The sailors were terrified when they heard this, for he had already told them he was running away from the LORD. “Oh, why did you do it?” they groaned. ¹¹ And since the storm was getting worse all the time, they asked him, “What should we do to you to stop this storm?” ¹² “Throw me into the sea,” Jonah said, “and it will become calm again. I know that this terrible storm is all my fault.” ¹³ Instead, the sailors rowed even harder to get the ship to the land. But the stormy sea was too violent for them, and they couldn’t make it. ¹⁴ Then they cried out to the LORD, Jonah’s God. “O LORD,” they pleaded, “don’t make us die for this man’s sin. And don’t hold us responsible for his death. O LORD, you have sent this storm upon him for your own good reasons.” ¹⁵ Then the sailors picked Jonah up and threw him into the raging sea, and the storm stopped at once! ¹⁶ The sailors were awestruck by the LORD’s great power, and they offered him a sacrifice and vowed to serve him. [Jonah 1:7-16 \(NLT\)](#)

15. Why is it so hard to own up to our mistakes and disobedience? How does honesty open the door to a turnaround?
16. Even in Jonah’s rebellion, God used him to impact the sailors’ faith. What does this reveal about God’s ability to work through us—even when we’re not cooperating? Have you ever seen God bring good out of your mistakes?
17. Do you have a safe person to confide in when you find yourself heading in the wrong direction? If so, who is it? If not, why do you think that’s the case and what can you do about it?

THINK ABOUT IT

God allows turnarounds for everyone going the wrong way. It’s never too late to reverse course and choose life with Him. Start by waking up to what’s really going on, looking up to God for help, and owning up to what needs to change. You can’t fix it alone—but God can lead you into a brand-new direction.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Wake Up, Look Up, Own Up. Which of these steps do you most need to take in your life right now? What’s one small, practical step you can take this week to begin? How can this group help you make a turnaround?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the LORD.

Jonah 1:3