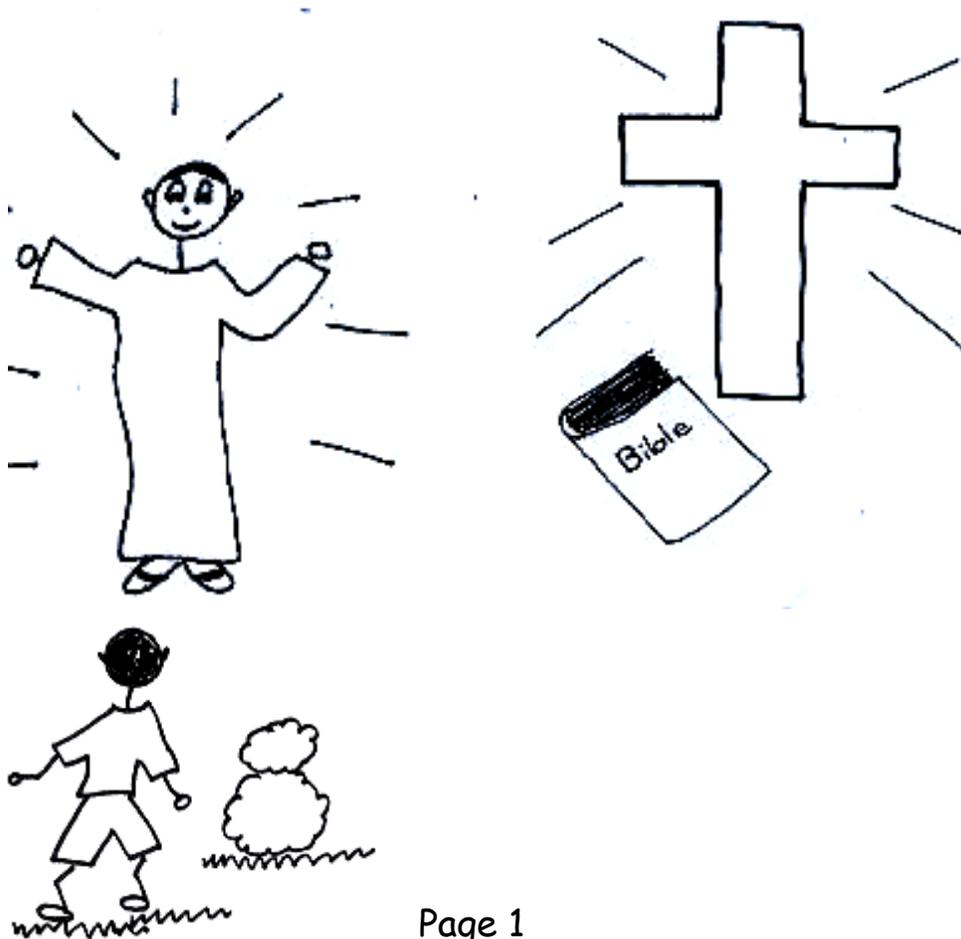


Jonah Part 1
FOCUS
On
COMMITMENT
To
JESUS CHRIST

Revised 4-17-2013

Jesus Christ: My dear child, _____, focus on Me. My thinking will bring you contentment and true happiness. Trust in Me to care for you! Commit to Me, your Savior, your Lord! Commit to Me and don't look back! God the Father has great things planned for you! The Holy Spirit is inside you; He will do the work, helping you all along the way. So, just look forward! The sweetest things are in front of you, not behind you!

Philippians 3:13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead...



Child: I want to focus on You, Jesus, and accept what God the Father has planned for me. I want the Holy Spirit to control my life. I choose to learn Your thinking in the word of God! When I'm positive to the word of God, I'm delivered in my mind from the problems in life. Ahh, peace!

Jesus Christ: When you are positive to the word of God it doesn't mean you'll have all the answers; it just means you'll keep going forward in God's plan through the power of God the Holy Spirit and with My thinking. This positive decision is a big decision in your life! You'll be committed to Me. It is to be your lifestyle.



Child: If I choose it as my lifestyle, then I can say, "I have style; God's style! Beautiful!"

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

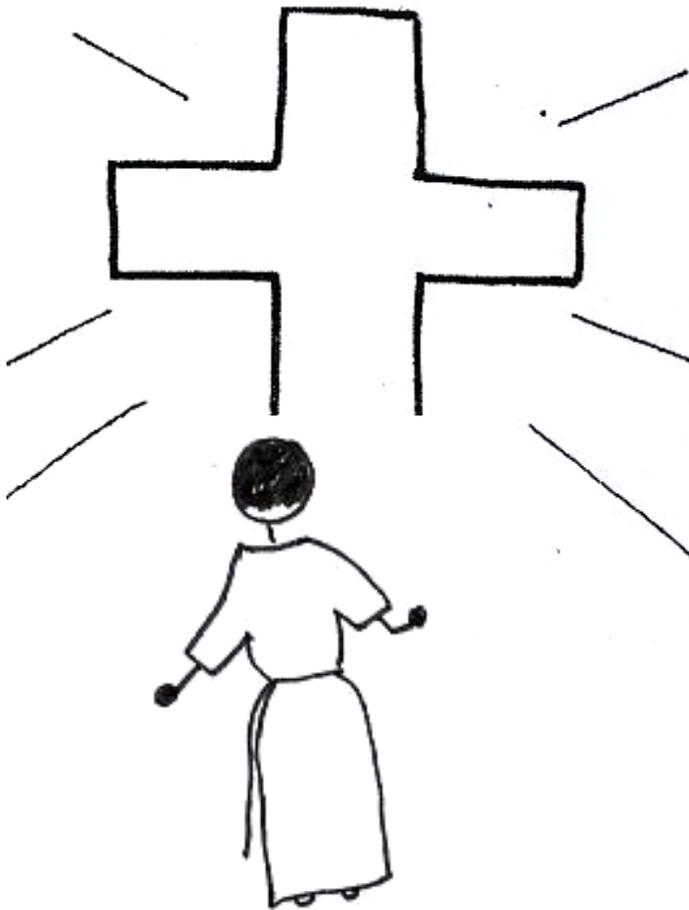
Jesus Christ: I'm always faithful to you. I'm committed to you; you never have to doubt that! Your faithfulness and sincerity in your commitment to Me shows in your critical decision to stay positive to My thinking. So, be consistent! Hang in there! You'll fail, but when you do remember to let the Holy Spirit be in control; get your eyes back on Me and My thinking, and move on!

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

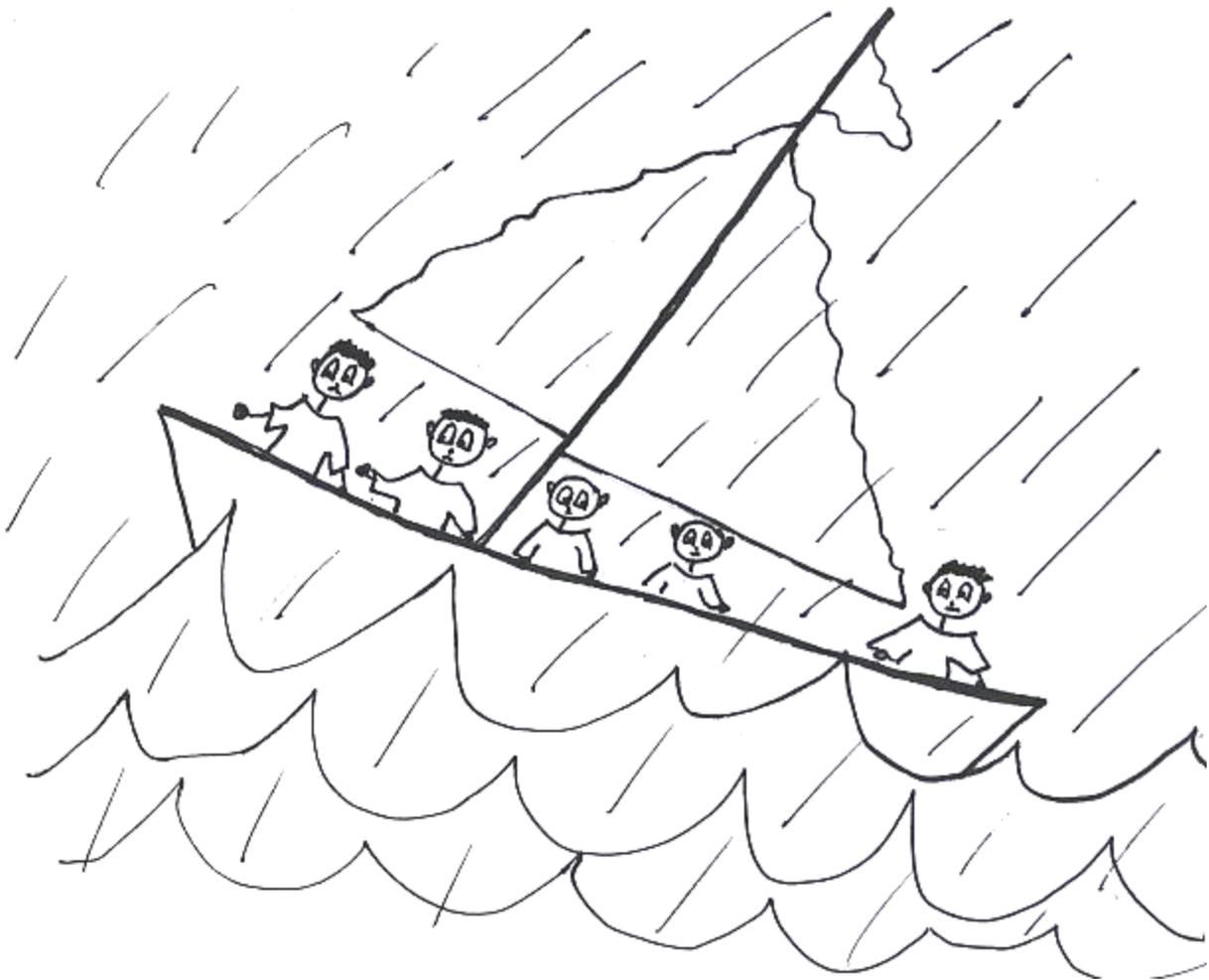


Commentator: Jonah was a prophet of Israel who had a standing vow or commitment to God. This means he had chosen a lifestyle using the thinking of Jesus Christ. It was an ongoing process to keep his thinking focused on Jesus.

Jonah had a great commission or task that God had planned for his life. The ability to perform the task was provided by God's grace. God wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh. **Jonah 1:2 "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me."**



However, Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh. He chose not to obey God. He broke his vow. He hopped on a boat that was going in the opposite direction! (Just like we do at times!) **Jonah 1:4** **"The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up."** During the storm the sailors became afraid, but Jonah was down below in the ship sleeping! The captain was upset with Jonah and wanted to know how he could sleep during the storm. Jonah had enough divine viewpoint in his soul to remain calm in the storm and have faith in God and His word.



Jonah let the captain and all the sailors know that he was the reason for the storm. He told them he was running away from what God wanted him to do. He told them to throw him overboard and the storm would stop. **Jonah 1:15-17** "So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. Then the men feared [respected] the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows [commitments]. And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights."

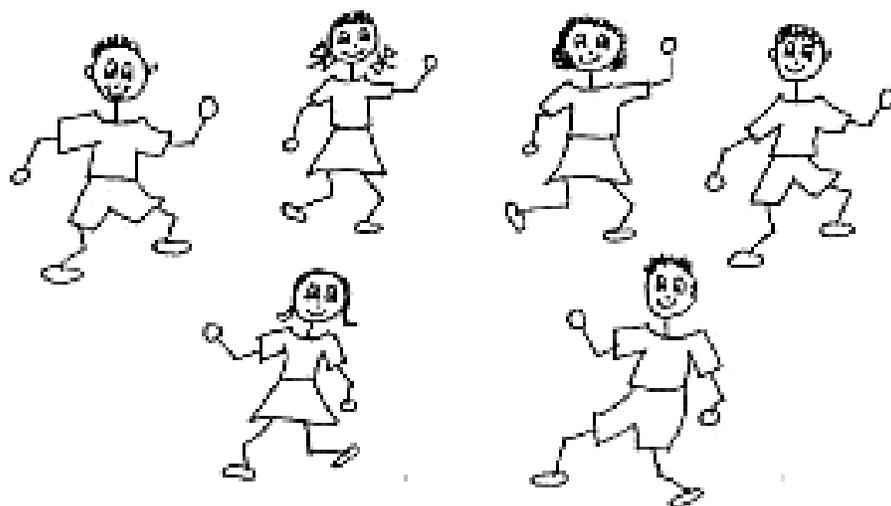
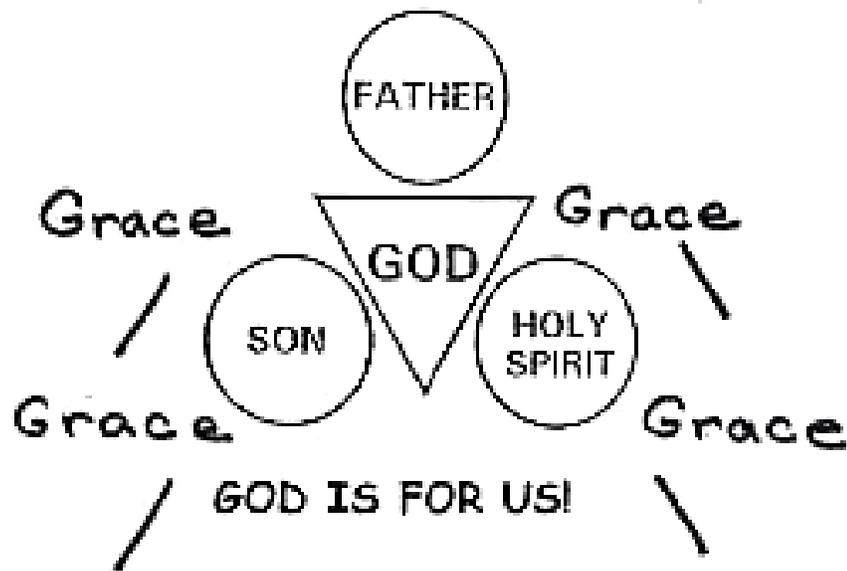


Jesus Christ: Jonah went from: being committed to My thinking, to running away from it, to hitting "rock bottom", and to accepting responsibility for his negative decision. Once he accepted his responsibility, he was delivered by God's grace from the disaster of the stormy sea. Now you might not think spending time in the belly of a fish is deliverance, but it was a perfect place for Jonah to learn. It gave him time to be alone with Me and My thoughts!



Commentator: Now, when Jonah turned away from God's plan he was relying on his abilities. When he came back to God's plan, he relied on God's abilities! God's abilities work through us; His grace calls the shots and makes the shots! Have faith in God and His shots! We are effective in the spiritual life when we are leaning on God's power, His ability, His grace. Let's let Him complete the good work He has started in us, **Philippians 1:6** *For I am confident of this very thing,*

that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.



Jesus Christ: There are two types of deliverance: First Order Deliverance and Second Order Deliverance. In the first one, God the Holy Spirit helps the believer use Bible teaching on the situation. Then God's grace relieves the pressure put on the soul as a result of suffering. Second Order Deliverance - God's grace may or may not remove the actual source of suffering in the life of the believer. 2 Corinthians 12:9 "And He has [had] said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power [divine power] is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me."



Child: So, it was the response of Jonah that was important, not the fact that he hit "rock bottom". When we hit rock bottom, God is always there just like He was with Jonah! God allows those kinds of experiences to force us to make a decision about His word. It is actually a great benefit for us!

Jesus Christ: That's right. Jonah's adventure was a way of getting his thinking back on Me. It also showed the captain and the sailors on the boat that they had a need for Me, their Savior. It's called **crisis evangelism!** This means there are times when it takes a crisis for people to believe in Me as their Savior.



Jesus Christ: While Jonah was alone with Me and My thinking in the belly of the fish, he relaxed and took responsibility for his behavior. He prayed to God the Father; he remembered Psalms that he had learned. He was using the word of God for the situation. Jonah was thankful for the first deliverance from God. He didn't complain! (Read Jonah 2:1-9.)

Then God gave him the second deliverance; **Jonah 2:10** "Then the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah up onto the dry land. "

Child: God made sure Jonah had the divine viewpoint he needed to know for the situation he was in; if I stay faithful to Your word, He will do the same for me! God will take me places I would never dream of in order to accomplish His purpose! I don't think Jonah thought he would be in the belly of a big fish! If I stick with You and Your thinking I will grow through the situations with You!

When things go crazy, I can settle down, staying in the moment with You and Your thoughts, Jesus!



Commentator: Our Creator understands all we go through. There may be times when God gives us moments of alone time with Him. This is a good time to check our thoughts and see if our thinking lines up with the thinking of Jesus Christ. Are we committing ourselves to Jesus Christ? God always provides the power; in fact, it is His responsibility, Philippians 2:13. We provide the volition; that is our responsibility, Philippians 2:12. We have to show up for Bible class and make positive choices. God the Father designed a plan for us to succeed in the spiritual life despite what goes on in our lives! It is up to us to make the decision to live in that plan.



Philippians 2:12 -13 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence

only, but now much more in my absence, work out [implies the responsibility of the believer in their own sanctification/deliverance] your salvation [deliverance - you have to use your volition - the power comes from the Holy Spirit and the word of God] with fear and trembling; for it is God [Holy Spirit] who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure [to glorify God].