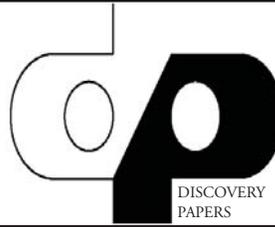


# LOVE, SPEAK, PRAY

SERIES: GOD OF A SECOND CHANCE



Catalog No. 20141123  
Jonah NT  
Final Message  
Scott Grant  
November 23, 2014

*Matthew 8:23–27, 12:38–42, 26:36–54*

The book of Jonah ends without an ending. At the end of the book, Jonah is still shaking his fist at God for sparing Nineveh, a hated enemy. The Lord makes a final appeal to help Jonah learn mercy, but we hear no more from the prophet—until the Gospel of Matthew, which, in a sense, dusts off the old story and picks up where it left off, some eight hundred years later!

Simon Peter was the first disciple of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew to understand who Jesus was. “You are the Christ,” Peter said to Jesus, “the Son of the living God.” Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).

Bar-Jonah means “Son of Jonah.” We may remember, as we read Matthew with an eye toward the entire biblical story, another man who bore the name Jonah: the reluctant prophet. When Jesus then proceeded to tell his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer at the hands of the Jewish leaders, be killed, and be raised up on the third day, Simon Bar-Jonah recoiled in horror. Jesus then told all his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 16:13–27).

Instead of taking up a sword against the Romans, who enforced their rule over Palestine by crucifying rebel Jews, a follower of Jesus was supposed to take up a cross, the very instrument that his oppressors used to keep his people in line. Instead of killing our enemies or holding grudges against them, Jesus tells us to love them—to the point that we’re willing, if necessary, to die for them. Such love is possible, Jesus tells us, if we lose our lives for his sake in order to find our lives. If we give our lives to him, if we lose our lives in him, he’ll show us the heart of God, and if we see the heart of God, we’ll follow Jesus to the end of the earth: we’ll learn to love our enemies. Simon Bar-Jonah, like his namesake, needed to see something he could only see faintly: he needed to see the heart of

God. Jesus would go on to give him multiple chances, just as God gave Jonah multiple chances. If we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, then we, like Simon Bar-Jonah, are blessed. As the Son of God, Jesus would help all us modern-day Jonahs see the heart of God.

You may hear in the title of this sermon, “Love, Speak, Pray,” an echo of Elizabeth Gilbert’s memoir, *Eat, Pray, Love*. I have not read the book, but in the movie that it is based on, Gilbert divorces her decent but boring husband; jumps into bed with another man but realizes that he’s not the right man; learns not to jump into bed with the wrong man, even if he’s cute; and then faces her fears in order to jump into bed with the right man and literally sail off with him. She travels the world to find herself, learns to meditate, and emerges with the “holy truth” that “God dwells in me, as me.”<sup>1</sup> It’s not wrong to want to “find yourself.” In fact, Jesus invites us to find ourselves. He says that to do so, however, we must lose ourselves: we must lose our lives for his sake. God dwells in me as me: I’m not sure what that means, but I’m pretty sure it doesn’t mean lose your life for the sake of Jesus in order to find it.

So, let’s not “eat, pray, love”; let’s “love, speak, pray.”

## A great storm on the sea

**Matthew 8:23-27:**

**And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup>And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. <sup>25</sup>And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” <sup>26</sup>And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. <sup>27</sup>And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”**

When we pick up the gospel of Matthew in Matthew 8:23, Jesus has just finished instructing two individuals who wanted to follow him (Matthew

8:18–22). To the scribe who vowed to “follow” Jesus “wherever” he goes, Jesus said, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” To a disciple who wanted first to bury his father, Jesus said, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.” Following Jesus is not something you simply add onto your life; it becomes the center of your life. Following Jesus continues to be Matthew’s theme in verses 23–27, for the disciples “followed” Jesus as he got into a boat.

Like Jesus, Jonah got into a boat, but for an entirely different reason. After the Lord asked Jonah to go to Nineveh, a Gentile city, and preach there, he headed in the opposite direction in defiance of the Lord. Jesus, on the other hand, got into a boat to go to the “other side,” to the east side of the Sea of Galilee, to the country of the Gadarenes—Gentile country (Matthew 8:18). Although Jonah eventually made it to Gentile country, however reluctantly, Jesus chose to go to Gentile country, even though he understood his mission to be to “the lost sheep of Israel” (Matthew 15:24). Jonah, the prophet of Israel called to go to the Gentiles, only went reluctantly, whereas Jesus, whose primary mission is not to the Gentiles, went willingly.

When Jonah got into a boat in defiance of the Lord, the Lord “hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up.” When Jesus got in the boat, he did not do so in defiance of the Lord. Even so, “there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by waves” (Matthew 18:24).

Remarkably, both Jonah and Jesus slept through life-threatening storms. Jonah, however, descended into a deep sleep in order to shut out God. Jesus, on the other hand, slept through the storm presumably because he was tired, because the Son of Man had no other place to lay his head, and because he was trusting God. Jonah slept because he didn’t care; Jesus sleeps because he’s not worried.

The captain of the ship woke Jonah and told him, “Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish.” Likewise, the disciples woke Jesus and used similar words: “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” Jonah didn’t call on his God; instead, he advised the sailors to throw him overboard. Jesus, on the other hand, challenged those who woke him: “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith.” In Jonah’s case, the storm ceased when the sailors threw him overboard. Whereas Jonah didn’t call on his God, Jesus didn’t even need to! He simply spoke to the winds and the sea, and the storm ceased. In Jonah’s case, the storm abated only when he was in

the sea. In Jesus’ case, the storm abated when he was in the boat.

The sailors, suspecting that Jonah knew what caused the storm, asked him a series of questions that amounted to “Who are you?” After Jesus calmed the storm, his disciples asked a similar question concerning his identity. In Jonah’s case, God calmed the storm. In the Hebrew Scriptures, only God did this (Job 38:8–11; Psalm 29:3–4, 10–11; Psalm 65:5–7). Jesus did what only God was thought capable of; thus the disciples question concerning his identity: “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?” The sailors, after the storm abated, “feared the Lord exceedingly.” After Jesus calmed the storm, he challenged the faith of his disciples, and they “marveled.”

When the sailors threw Jonah overboard, the Lord sent a great fish to swallow Jonah so that he would fulfill his mission to the Gentiles. In Jesus’ case, no fish was necessary. When Jesus reached the other side, he brought the healing love of God with him, casting demons out of two men.

## Love

With the gospel open to all, Jesus likewise may call us to follow him to the other side, so to speak, to bring his healing love to people and places unfamiliar to us. Our inclination may be to run the other way, in the manner of Jonah, but Jesus may be just as persistent with us as God was with Jonah. That’s not to say that what he’s asking us to do will be easy. But if you have to face something like a storm, remember who’s in the boat with you. By all means, call on him; by no means throw him overboard, as if he’s responsible for getting you into this mess and can’t do anything to get you out of it. What sort of man is he? You know what sort: the sort—the only sort, by the way—who can shut down the storm with a word. The sort who sends us into the teeth of storms so that we of little faith may be strengthened in our faith. The sort who asks us to follow him to the other side to bring his healing love to people and places unfamiliar to us. For some, going to the other side may mean something like going to the other side of the world. More often, it means going to the other side of the street—or to the other side of the room. Lose yourself in Jesus, in the wonder and power and mercy of the gospel, to see the heart of God, and bring the healing love of Jesus to the other side.

Jesus calls us bring the healing love of God to the other side. He also gives us something to speak.

## Three days and three nights

Matthew 12:38–41:

**Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.”<sup>39</sup> But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup>For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup>The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.**

In one sense, the miracles that Jesus has already performed in the gospel of Matthew qualify as signs, but earlier some Pharisees dismissed them as coming from an evil source, not from God (Matthew 9:34). What they want now is a sign on their terms, on demand—one that proves, from their perspective, that Jesus is from God. Even then, such a sign would not likely convince them, unless Jesus lined up behind their agenda. From Jesus’ perspective, they want a sign of the wrong kind of kingdom. So, Jesus won’t give them a sign; in fact, their desire for such a sign makes them part of “an evil and adulterous generation” that opposes the kingdom of God, though, of course, they think that God is on their side. There have been plenty of signs, miraculous and otherwise, up to this point in the gospel of Matthew, but these scribes and Pharisees have been unable to read them. Another one would do them no good—with the possible exception of the sign of Jonah.

This sign, in fact, will be given to Jesus’ opponents, and all those in the evil and adulterous generation of Jesus’ day: it will be given, in the future, not on demand but when God grants it.

So, what’s the sign of Jonah?

The Lord called Jonah, a prophet of Israel, to preach in Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, a hated enemy. Jonah, afraid that the Lord would be merciful to Nineveh, headed in the opposite direction, boarding a ship bound for Tarshish. God, however, sent a storm, which threatened not only Jonah’s life but also the lives of the sailors on the ship. The sailors, having ascertained that Jonah was running from his God, threw him overboard to save themselves, whereupon the Lord sent a great fish to swallow Jonah. Instead of being devoured by the fish,

Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, after which the fish vomited Jonah up on dry land. Jonah then preached in Nineveh, and Nineveh repented.

Jesus, says that he, as the Son of Man, will spend three days and three nights not in the belly of a fish but in the heart of the earth. How can a man survive for three days and three nights in the belly of a fish? Not without great difficulty—and not without much help from God. How can a man survive for three days and three nights in the heart of the earth? He can’t. He’ll be dead. Jesus was, in fact, dead before he entered the heart of the earth. “He was crucified, died, and was buried,” as the Apostles’ Creed observes.<sup>2</sup> Jesus leaves unsaid that he expects to emerge from the heart of the earth. Once he does, however, and the tomb is discovered to be empty, the Pharisees and the rest of the evil and adulterous generation will have a sign for all signs. Unless they believe what the final sign indicates, that Jesus is Lord, they can expect to face condemnation at the end of the age.

Why does Jesus refer to his resurrection as the sign of Jonah? Because the Pharisees would be well aware of the story of Jonah and of the repentance of Nineveh, a city of pagans. Comparatively speaking, it didn’t take much for Nineveh to repent. There’s no evidence that the people of Nineveh knew that Jonah had miraculously survived inside the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. They didn’t ask for a sign, and no sign was given them; they just heard the words of Jonah. Even so, Jonah’s emergence from the belly of the fish was like a resurrection. Jesus’ emergence from the heart of the earth, on the other hand, is a resurrection. Like Jonah, Jesus is a prophet. He is a greater prophet, a much greater prophet, for he didn’t have to be rescued from drowning in order to speak the message God gave to him. In fact, he is more than a prophet: he’s the Messiah; he’s Lord, to the glory of God the Father. His message is far greater. Jonah didn’t invite anyone to believe. He didn’t even tell anyone to repent. He just conveyed a message of judgment, with the faint hope that if Nineveh turned from its evil ways, it could be “turned around” instead of “overthrown.” Jesus, on the other hand, preaches, “Repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15), and in the end creates the gospel by going to the cross and rising from the dead. Indeed, “something greater than Jonah is here”: a greater message. Indeed, someone greater than Jonah is here.

## Speak

Does God grant to our generation a sign? Many think they would believe in Jesus if he just proved himself. They’ve experienced no miracles and seen no visions; therefore, they assume that Jesus is dead

and gone, just like every other person who has died. Certainly, I can remember times in my life when I wanted Jesus to prove himself by some sort of miraculous sign that would, I presumed, convince me of his reality. It is also quite possible, though, that he doesn't prove himself in such ways because that's not what we need—that our faith would not be improved by such signs.

In any event, God has already granted us the sign for all signs: the sign of Jonah. God raised Jesus from the dead. Most people, though, are not convinced by the claim that Jesus rose from the dead; many, though, say they would be convinced by evidence that Jesus rose from the dead. The early and widespread belief in the resurrection is strong evidence in its favor. People died and stayed dead in the first century, just as they die and stay dead today. The message of the gospel, which proclaimed both the resurrection and universal lordship of Jesus, was not, on the face of it, an easy one to believe. Yet many people believed it—very early on. We know that from not only from the scriptures but also from other historical sources. The best explanation for such belief in the resurrection, and the remarkable spread of the gospel, is that Jesus rose from the dead. The whole of the message was built on a claim that, if false, (a) could have been easily disproved or (b) would have been laughed off as unbelievable.

Those of us who believe in the sign of Jonah have now been entrusted with the greatest message concerning the greatest person: the victory over evil in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which includes forgiveness of sins and eternal life for all who believe in him. Why did people believe such an outlandish message way back when? In some cases, the evidence convinced them. In all cases, the message was accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

So, what do we do? Lose yourself in Jesus, in the wonder and power and mercy of the gospel, to see the heart of God, and be ready to speak. Look for opportunities to speak, as Simon Bar-Jonah urges us to do: “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15). The evidence is strong, and the Holy Spirit, who is with us, is stronger still. Sometimes, the strongest evidence for the reality of the gospel is what it is doing in your own life. The sign of Jonah to those around you, validating the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is what's happening in you.

## Change in focus

Bill Hull, an evangelical leader, writes of returning from a gathering of fellow leaders. It was an intense time, so when he boarded his flight, he didn't want to talk to anyone. He was relieved that his seatmate had both a book and earphones. “It looked good, like we could ignore each other,” Hull writes. Then, unexpectedly, his seatmate asked him a question: “So what have you been doing in Minneapolis?”

Hull: “Well, we have been wondering if there is a problem with the church.”

Seatmate: “I know there's a problem. What did you find out?”

Hull: “The problem is that many of us have been taught and believe that we can become a Christian but not a disciple of Jesus.”

Seatmate: “You mean, you say you believe but don't act like you believe.”

Hull: “Yes.”

Seatmate: “What is the solution?”

Hull: “The solution is to rearrange our lives around the practices of Jesus so we become authentic followers.”

Hull's seatmate then wanted to know how they were going to implement the solution.

Hull: “I have spent a lot of my life trying to make things happen and trying to get the people around me to do what they didn't want to do or didn't have the character to do. I've decided to stop trying to change the world. I've even stopped trying to change the church. People seem to get so angry. I have decided to focus on changing me. I've hit a lot of walls in my life and have hurt a lot of people. I'm finished with that. I just want people to be attracted to Christ because of who I am and what I have to say and the way I say it.”

Hull describes what happened next:

He turned away from me and looked out the window. He became very quiet. I saw his face tighten, his skin redden, and his shoulders slump, and he swallowed hard. He began to cry. Then he began to weep. I didn't know what to do, so I quietly waited. We began to discuss the many walls he had hit, and he found new hope that day in the gospel. It was a gospel that came to him with humility and authenticity. I do believe that young man had not heard the spirit of the gospel until then. And it was because of my own personal ongoing transformation.<sup>3</sup>

You don't have to know all the answers. You don't have to know any of the answers. You just have to know what you already know better than anyone: what the gospel is doing in your own life. And you need to be ready to share what the gospel is doing in your life.

As you lose yourself in Jesus, bring the healing love of Jesus to the other side and speak about what the gospel is doing in your life. Finally, do what Jesus did in a place called Gethsemane.

## Sorrowful enough to die

**Matthew 26:36–54:**

**Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.”<sup>37</sup> And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled.<sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch[a] with me.”<sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”<sup>40</sup> And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?<sup>41</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”<sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”<sup>43</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.<sup>44</sup> So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.<sup>45</sup> Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.<sup>46</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”**

<sup>47</sup>While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.<sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; seize him.”<sup>49</sup> And he came up to Jesus at once and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” And he kissed him.<sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you came to do.” Then they came up and

**laid hands on Jesus and seized him.<sup>51</sup> And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant the high priest and cut off his ear.<sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword.<sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?<sup>54</sup> But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?”**

Jonah pitched a fit outside the city of Nineveh, angry with God for sparing his enemies. Jesus, on the other hand, pitched a fit inside the city, the city of Jerusalem, overturning tables and accusing Israel of turning its back on the Lord (Matthew 21:12–13). Then, like Jonah, Jesus came to a place east of the city, a place called Gethsemane. Jonah, east of Nineveh, sat down and raged at the Lord, but Jesus fell on his face to pray. Jonah was angry enough to die, but Jesus was sorrowful enough to die: “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death.” East of Nineveh, Jonah grew faint. East of Jerusalem, Jesus’ disciples grew faint, falling asleep when he asked them to stay awake. Jesus, though, stayed awake. Instead of defending his disobedience (he had no disobedience to defend, of course) and raging at God for sparing his enemies, Jesus submitted to the will of God: “not as I will, but as you will.”

In Gethsemane, Jesus waited for his enemies, who were led to him by Judas, his friend. He told his betrayer, “Friend, do what you came to do.” When one of Jesus’ followers took up a sword, and attacked, Jesus told him, “Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword.” He said he could have called on more than twelve legions of angels to turn back his enemies, but he didn’t, of course. Instead of defeating his enemies, or raging at God for sparing his enemies, Jesus submitted to them and went with them to Jerusalem (Matthew 26:36–54). There, he suffered and died for them.

Jonah went to Nineveh reluctantly, and God used him to spare his enemies. Jonah was livid. Jesus went to Jerusalem willingly, for “the joy set before him,” and God used him to save his enemies (Hebrews 12:2).

## Pray

Bringing the healing love of Jesus and speaking of the healing love of Jesus are daunting tasks—so daunting, in fact, that it’s easy to lose heart. Therefore, we may have occasion, like Jonah, to complain to God. Go ahead, pitch a fit. After you’re through, though,

you might want to pray in a different way. You might feel the need to pray in a different way—so much so that you might even fall on your face to pray. Don't faint. Don't fall asleep. Instead, pray. Pray what? Try something like this: "Not as I will, but as you will." Offer yourself to the Father. Submit to him. Trust him. Do it somewhere near the beginning of each day, as you set out to bring the healing love of God to the world, as you ready yourself to speak of what the gospel is doing in your life.

Reflecting on Gethsemane, Tom Wright writes:

*"But our calling remains the way to Gethsemane: to struggle in prayer on behalf of the kingdom of God at the place where the world is still in great pain, and to be ready for our own vocation, whether or not it is the one we would have chosen for ourselves . . . Gethsemane is the place which reminds us that the real battle must be won on our knees in advance"*

—or on our face.<sup>4</sup>

For many years now, our church has sent teams to India. Some are doctors, nurses, or pharmacists: they bring the healing love of Jesus. Some are teachers: they preach at churches and teach pastors. Some are pray-ers: they pray for the people the doctors, nurses, and pharmacists treat. We bring the healing love of God in deed, word, and prayer to the other side—in this case, to the other side of the word. The trip reminds me, every time I go, that Jesus calls us to love, speak, and pray not just for two weeks once a year, but also for fifty-two weeks all year.

## Journey to Caesarea

It was Simon Bar-Jonah, by the way, who took up his sword (not his cross) in Gethsemane (John 18:10). He couldn't see the heart of God. Jesus, though, gave him multiple chances. After Jesus was arrested, Simon followed Jesus as far as the courtyard of the high priest but then three times denied even knowing Jesus (Matthew 26:69–75). Finally, after Jesus rose from the dead and served him breakfast on the beach, feeding him love and forgiveness, Simon Bar-Jonah's eyes were opened (John 21:12–19). In the book of Acts, we see Simon bringing the healing love of Jesus, speaking of the healing love of Jesus, and praying as he does so. Especially, we see him doing all three in Acts 10.

One day, an angel appeared to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, instructing him to send for Simon, whereupon he dispatched three men to search for him. The next day, when Simon went on a housetop to pray, he saw a vision and heard a voice, indicating

that the gospel was not just for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. The voice also told him that three men were looking for him. Some eight centuries earlier, the Lord had told Jonah, "Arise, go to Nineveh . . ." The voice told the son of Jonah, "Rise and go down, and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them." Jonah, upon being commissioned by the Lord to go to Nineveh, instead boarded a ship heading in the opposite direction. The son of Jonah, on the other hand, "rose and went away with the men" to Caesarea, the home of Cornelius.

The next day, Simon entered the home of Cornelius, a military leader in the nation that was enforcing its rule over Simon's people by crucifying them. In fact, Romans soldiers had only recently crucified Jesus, Simon's Lord. Jonah preached in Nineveh, a city of hated enemies, but only under compulsion. Will the son of Jonah take up sword in Caesarea, just as he took up a sword in Gethsemane? No. He tells Cornelius, his family, and his friends, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection." Cornelius asked Simon to tell him "all that you have been commanded by the Lord." Jonah, of course, recoiled from speaking what the Lord commanded him.

The son of Jonah, on the other hand, having prayed on the housetop, was ready to speak, and he delivers a far better message than the one entrusted to Jonah. Jonah preached judgment, but the son of Jonah preached Christ. He told those gathered at Cornelius' house about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Before he finished, the Holy Spirit fell on those who heard the word, and those present were baptized in the name of Christ.

Oh, and where was Jonah when he boarded a ship heading in the opposite direction from where the Lord commanded him to go? He was in Joppa. And where was the son of Jonah when he heard the voice commanding him to go with the men sent by Cornelius? Joppa! What an ending to the Jonah story! The son of Jonah, who was at first just as reticent as his namesake, has lost himself in the gospel, he has seen the heart of God, and he finishes the story. More than that, the story of Israel moves outside Israel in a new way, for the conversion of Cornelius' family and friends propelled the gospel outward, even to "to the end of the earth"—and to us today.

Lose yourself in Jesus to see the heart of God—and to be part of the story. Love. Speak. Pray.

## (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> *Eat, Pray, Love* (Colombia Pictures, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Jesus, of course, was not in the grave for three days and three nights. Technically, he was dead for parts of three days and two nights. Apparently, the expression “three days and three nights” was understood as an idiom that covered for the time that Jesus was in the grave.

<sup>3</sup> Alan Andrews, general editor, *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Spiritual Discipleship and Spiritual Formation* (Colorado Springs, Col.: NavPress, 2010), 109–10.

<sup>4</sup> Tom Wright, *The Way of the Lord: Christian Pilgrimage Today* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 89–90.