

Day 1
September 7



Pray | Thank God for all your second chances!

Jonah blatantly ran from God. His life spared, he repented and was back on dry land, ready to try again. God repeated his instructions for Jonah to go to Nineveh. He gave Jonah a second chance to do what he'd been called and created to do. We see other examples in the Bible of God extending second chances. The story of the Israelites is chock full of them repeatedly rejecting God, repenting, and experiencing forgiveness. Not to mention individual stories like those of King David who committed murder and adultery; Rahab, a prostitute who became one of Jesus' ancestors; the adulteress who was to be stoned; Zacchaeus, the crooked tax collector; the criminal on the cross next to Jesus and Peter who denied Jesus just before his crucifixion. Over and over God gave second chances. Over and over he gives us second chances. And over and over he expects us to extend second chances and forgiveness to others.

Be mindful that Proverbs also tells us to guard our hearts. Forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation with those who may continue to harm us.



Read | [Proverbs 4:23](#); [Jonah 3:1-3](#); [Ephesians 4:32](#)



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Think of a time that you received a second chance from a friend, family member, boss, or someone else. What did that second chance do for you? How can you pass that on?

To whom do you need to (wisely) extend second chances or forgive? What might a second chance do for that person? Ask God to help you forgive them.

If you have not yet accepted God's forgiveness of you and any or all your shortcomings and sins, take a moment now to ask for and accept his forgiveness.

Listen to this fun, musical rendition of Jonah's second chance: [God is the God of Second Chances](#).



Pray | *Pray for the unreached: People in our world who have little chance of ever meeting a Christian.*

This week, please pray for the Hajam in India. This people group of nearly 2 million is mostly Muslim. The Hajam remains a fairly respected caste of hair-cutters: in some areas the Hajams are the owners of barber shops and salons. Through their work, the Hajam have contact with many different communities of people. Since Christians in India need haircuts just like everyone else, they could make a point of doing business with Hajam people, telling them stories about Jesus, or giving them with gospel materials in a language they can understand. If Hajams became Christian and began to gossip the gospel, they could reach many of India's thousands of people groups. Pray for faithful people to have contact with the Hajams and show them the way to be disciplined. (Information from <https://joshuaproject.net>)

Day 2

September 8



Pray | Ask God to help you turn around.

180 DEGREE TURN

Jonah was sent to the Ninevites to invite them to repentance and God's mercy. And guess what? They listened. They did an about-face, turning away from their evil deeds to immersing themselves in repentance. The king not only ordered his subjects to repent, but he also clothed himself in humility and remorse, calling out to God. He wasn't even completely certain that it would work and that God would relent, but it was obviously worth a try, so he did whatever he could to show God that he was remorseful. He believed God had the power to forgive his city, and he aligned his actions with that belief.



Read | [Joel 2:12-15](#); [Jonah 3:4-9](#)



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

What do you need to repent and do an about-face from in order to turn toward God today?

The king took off his robes -- the symbol of his power and prestige. He put down everything that set him apart as important, powerful, famous. He laid it all down and covered himself with ashes and sackcloth and sat in the dirt. What "symbols" of power, popularity, prestige, and importance will you "take off" in repentance?

The king and the Ninevites were repentant and aligned their actions with that repentance. Anyone passing through town would have seen the evidence. How does repentance manifest itself in your life? In other words, what evidence is there in your life that you follow Jesus and turn away from sin daily?

If you have not yet done an about-face to turn toward God, take a moment today to do so. Just tell him you want to turn toward him. That prayer will be your first step toward 180 degrees!

Day 3

September 9



Pray | For the humility to admit you have blind spots leading you away from God.

BLIND SPOTS

When Jonah told the Ninevites to repent and turn it was as though someone said, “Hey, you’re going the wrong way.” And they simply said, “Oh? Ok I’ll turn around then!” They had been living their lives, doing their thing, participating in and supporting the most evil brutality of their time. They were part of the Assyrian empire which was known for its brutality and warfare. Then a stranger came along, told them that what they’re doing was wrong and that they need to repent, and they listened. We have a much harder time simply believing when someone points out a blind spot. We don’t realize we have the blind spot and are usually reluctant to believe it and do an about-face. It’s important to let others in to speak into our blind spots and to listen to teachings and discipleship from pastors and leaders we trust, so God can open our eyes to our blind spots.



Read | [Jonah 3:5-9](#); [Ezekiel 33:11](#)



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

When has someone pointed out a blind spot that you disagreed with? Consider what might have happened had you listened and taken their advice to heart. What is something good that could have come out of it? Ask God to help you be humble in receiving feedback.

When have you had a chance to be on the opposite end, giving feedback to someone in your life about their own blind spot? How difficult is it to do this? Ask God to help you be a light in their life with love and humility.

Who are the leaders you trust and listen to with an open mind, ready to hear where God wants to grow you? This could be your pastor, a church leader, a podcast, book, teacher, etc. How could you incorporate their teaching into your blind spots more often?

Day 4
September 10



Pray | *That God would be able to bless everyone he loves, including those toward whom you don't feel love.*

The Ninevites were ruthless and brutal enemies of Israel and therefore Jonah didn't want God to have compassion on them. He wanted God to swoop in and release his righteous judgment on them! But eventually he reluctantly agreed to let God use him to draw them to him. But the sermon he delivered simply told them that they must repent, or they'd be destroyed in 40 days. He didn't mention God's mercy or his love for them or his desire to bless them. This sermon wasn't Jonah's best work.

We all most likely have people in our lives whom we don't feel deserve God's mercy or don't want God to forgive. We sometimes elevate ourselves above them or determine that our sins aren't as bad as theirs and therefore we deserve mercy, but they do not. But God shows patience and mercy on everyone and wants everyone to come to repentance.



Read | [Jonah 3:1-10](#), [2 Peter 3:9](#)



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Consider someone who has hurt you or someone you feel doesn't deserve God's mercy. What is the difference between their sins and yours in God's eyes? Ask God for an extra dose of grace today to begin praying blessings on them. What steps can you take today to help you extend grace to them?

2 Peter says that God wants everyone to come to him and he patiently gives us time to make our mistakes and come to repentance. Take some time today to give any hard feelings you have toward someone else to God. Ask him to help you see them through his eyes, eyes that want to love and bless them and spend eternity with them.

Thank God that his compassion toward all of us is unrelenting, despite any sins we may have committed. He is always chasing us, desiring a relationship with us. If you haven't yet entered into a personal relationship with God, take a moment to read John 3:16 and claim it as your own. Consider reaching out to one of the pastors at Five to talk more about this decision.

Day 5

September 11



Pray | For the refreshing that comes with repentance.

REPENT! The command to repent can feel harsh and scary. It can be used as a fear tactic: “Repent or else!” It can leave us doing whatever we have to do to save ourselves, but it’s not a motivator. It’s scary and heavy and we can’t carry it for long. We may do an about-face out of fear of God’s anger or fear of eternal condemnation, but eventually, when the immediate threat seems to dissipate, we may end up back in our old behaviors. Perhaps we neglect the aspect of it that today’s passages show us. They show us that repentance actually leads to a time of refreshing and rest. They show us that repentance moves us toward something good rather than simply away from something bad. Instead of repenting simply to save us from God’s wrath, we see that repentance is a way to move us toward his rest and salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Read | [Isaiah 30:15](#); [Acts 2:38, 3:19](#); [2 Corinthians 7:10-11](#)



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Think about the contexts in which you’ve heard the command to repent and how it’s made you feel or impacted your long-term motivation. How do these passages compare with that? How can you think differently about repentance in light of these passages?

What typically leads you to repentance? How does that compare to 2 Corinthians 7:10-11? How might you reframe your sins in light of this verse?

What do you need freedom from? What do you need to repent of in order to experience that freedom? Take some time today to give that to God and work on a plan to turn toward him and experience his refreshing.

Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® (NIV®). Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

