



“Then Jonah prayed to the Lord from the fish’s belly.”
Jonah 2:1

When we find ourselves in a seemingly unsolvable situation or problem, there is usually someone around who will gladly tell us: “If all else fails, follow directions.” A similar reminder is often issued among Christians: “When all else fails, pray.” Unfortunately, we too often have to be reminded that prayer should be our first impulse, not our last resort.

Jonah would have done well to have received that reminder when he found himself tossed into the sea. He had done just about everything wrong: he had rebelled against God, and was accused of causing the calamity that caused his shipmates to want to throw him overboard in hopes of placating the “storm gods.”

And adding insult to injury, he was swallowed by a great fish. But it was not until the final action that he decided it was time to pray. And it was from the belly of that great fish that he finally sought the Lord. He didn’t actually confess his sins, but he did repent of his pride by calling out to God for help.

There is a lesson here for all of us. Don’t wait until we’ve tried every other solution before turning to God in prayer. Regardless of the severity of the situation, make prayer your first impulse. And a good way to start that prayer is to ask God “what is it You are trying to teach me in this situation?”

Someone has wisely noted: before we can pray ‘Thy kingdom come’ we must be willing to pray ‘my kingdom go.’

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