



How to Survive a Shipwreck: Help Is On the Way and Love Is Already Here

By Jonathan Martin

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Life is turbulent. On that, we can all agree. Disappointed dreams, broken relationships, identity crises, vocational hang-ups, wounds from the past—there are so many ways life can send us crashing up against the rocks.

In this deeply personal book, Jonathan Martin draws from his own stories of failure and loss to find the love that can only be discovered on the bottom. *How to Survive a Shipwreck* is an invitation to trust the goodness of God and the resilience of your soul. Jonathan's clarion call is this: No matter how hard you've fallen, no matter how much you've been hurt, help is on the way—just when you need it most.

With visionary artistry and pastoral wisdom, Jonathan Martin reveals what we'll need to make it through those uncharted waters, how we can use these defining experiences to live out of our depths, and why it will then become impossible to go back to the half-life we once lived.

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Editorial Review

Review

Wow. I've never read a book like this one before! Who would ever guess that a few reflections on wind and waves, shipwrecks and sea monsters, could comfort and challenge so profoundly? Jonathan Martin writes with a pastor's heart and poet's touch, taking the reader to colorful, unexpected places with each turn of the page. His insights into Scripture are fresh, his storytelling honest and vulnerable. *How to Survive a Shipwreck* is a book to be savored, cherished, and returned to. I suspect it will take its place among some of the finest spiritual memoirs of our time. (*Rachel Held Evans, bestselling author of Searching for Sunday and A Year of Biblical Womanhood*)

Be warned: Jonathan Martin's title is a bit misleading. What he has packaged as a sort of shipwreck "survival kit" turns out to be a force of prose by which we are swept to the shore of Malta with a raging velocity that is at once raw and redemptive. Also we are urged to eat cheesecake tonight, for our own good. I love this book. (*Steven Furtick, lead pastor of Elevation Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, and author of Crash the Chatterbox*)

If Southern gothic theology was a genre of writing, this may be our generation's undomesticated, spirit-haunted introduction. Poet-prophet-preacher Jonathan Martin has come to us speaking in tongues of fire as a howl and a song from the sea, from life after everything is lost. This gorgeous book is deep water, terrible and beautiful and cleansing; the words smell of salt water and wine, bread and longing, grief and hope. All of us who have ourselves gone under will weep with aching recognition as Jonathan testifies to the loving God who meets us in the chaos and the swirl and monsters to set us utterly free through a rescue that didn't look at all like we thought it would. (*Sarah Bessey, author of Jesus Feminist and Out of Sorts: Making Peace with an Evolving Faith*)

Gritty and transcendent. *How to Survive a Shipwreck* isn't really any kind of how-to book. Rather, Jonathan Martin takes us on a stunning and stark voyage of his own soul's deep dive and near drowning. You won't reach for any well-fixed, handy life preservers here---Martin doesn't throw us any. There are plenty of "storm" books out there, swollen with platitudes and simple strategies for recovery. These pages are dripping instead with ache and beauty. A harrowing hope. His writing is mesmeric and will fill your lungs enough to ascend and take that first big breath at the water's surface. The breath you thought you might never take again. (*Nichole Nordeman, songwriting and recording artist*)

Anyone who has experienced deep and transformative brokenness will resonate with this book. I did. As Jonathan Martin turned the pain of his interior death into the poetry of resurrection, I found myself saying again and again, "Yes, that's what I found to be true." Our childhood understanding of life and faith must give way to a more nuanced view of ourselves, of others, and of God. Our hearts must be broken so they can be remade. We must journey past the illusions of our own adequacy so we can discover the most important truth of all---that at the center of everything is a great Heart of love beating for us. I love this book! (*Lynne Hybels, advocate for global engagement, Willow Creek Community Church*)

While many people in the Western Protestant church preach a gospel that is too saccharine and simple, Jonathan Martin writes as a Christian who has experienced some real pain and loss, and the gospel that emerges from his writing is more robust and full-bodied as a result---a gospel that embraces even pain as a grace. This will be an important book for a lot of people. (*Michael Gungor, singer/songwriter, coleader of*

(the musical collective Gungor, and member of The Liturgists)

No one is more qualified to talk about the forgotten path of spiritual descent than Jonathan Martin. *How to Survive a Shipwreck* is a breakthrough in the way we are to understand our own spiritual process and conversion. His honesty and unique voice---which has been drenched in heartache, wrestling, and triumph---has deeply resonated in my life and the lives of countless others. Like so many of us, I was taught to act saved but not how to truly be born again. I believe this book is part of the antidote to help heal the great sickness of “spiritual certainty” in our world today. (*William Matthews, songwriter and recording artist*)

Jonathan Martin is that rare soul who’s been through the fire and has more, not less, hope because of it. Is he a poet or mystic or teacher or recovery expert---who cares? He has something to say. (*Rob Bell, author of How to Be Here Now and What We Talk about When We Talk about God*)

Bob Dylan said, “Behind every beautiful thing there’s been some kind of pain.” I believe that’s true. It’s certainly true of Jonathan Martin’s *How to Survive a Shipwreck*. From his bitter experience of nearly drowning in a sea of pain, Jonathan has survived to paint a beautiful portrait of a grace that will not quit. He artfully re-minds us that even when we feel we are swallowed in a sea of pain, we are still enveloped in the boundless ocean of God’s relentless love. This book will help and heal many shipwrecked souls. (*Brian Zahnd, pastor of Word of Life Church, Saint Joseph, Missouri, and author of Water to Wine*)

Brilliant and demanding, *How to Survive a Shipwreck* is Jonathan’s heart-wrenching comeback story---and it is a hidden parable for us. Can I accept one who is fallen? We are all shipwrecked. We stand in need of grace. (*Dr. John Sowers, author of The Heroic Path*)

This is a stormy book---dark, fierce, jolting. And really it is not about survival but about suffering and death---and just so about resurrection and the life of faith. Over and over from beginning to end, Jonathan Martin does all he can to remind us of the gospel’s deepest promise: our only hope is in letting ourselves be wrecked so we can sink into the depths of God’s unrelenting devotion to our good. (*Dr. Chris Green, professor of theology at Pentecost Theological Seminary and author of Foretasting the Kingdom*)

This is no preacher’s sermon. This book is a survivor’s confession: even while your life is violently torn apart---your heart, it can break open. Break open to a beauty, compassion, and calling you thought would never again return. Break open to a grace more powerful than the waves of pain, disaster, failure, and devastation that could so easily devour you. If you need more than self-help soothsayers and positive-thinking profiteers, Jonathan Martin invites you to undergo a baptism in grace that is deeper than the seas that would drown you. (*Jarrod McKenna, Australian peace award winning pastor, activist, and cofounder of First Home Project*)

In this beautifully written, ruthlessly honest, often humorous, and sometimes heart-wrenching work, Jonathan Martin takes readers on a tour that intimately explores the scary, painful, dark contours of his own shipwreck. This raw but hope-filled tour leaves readers with a wealth of biblical insight on how to survive and even be transformed by the stormy times that decimate the ships of our lives. (*Dr. Greg Boyd, senior pastor of Woodland Hills Church and author of twenty books, including The Myth of a Christian Nation*)

About the Author

Jonathan Martin is a writer, speaker, and dreamer currently living in Tulsa, OK, where he serves as Teaching Pastor at Sanctuary Church. He holds degrees from Gardner-Webb University, The Pentecostal Theological Seminary, and Duke Divinity School. He is the author of *Prototype: What Happens When You Discover You’re More Like Jesus Than You Think?* He is a product of the “Christ-haunted landscape” of the

American South, sweaty revivals, and hip-hop. Years before a life of church planting, writing, and preaching, his claim to fame was getting his Aquaman, Robin, and Wonder Woman action figures saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost at an early age. He loves to talk about the beauty of God, what an extraordinary thing it is to be called God's beloved, and finding new ways to be human.

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