



# God is at Work

Jonah 4:4-11 | Ryan Pfeiffer | Nov 19, 2023

Jonah— This plant thing— God uses it to teach Jonah something.  
God is at work in our world... in those around us... and in us.

God is working in us & through so many ways... Look at Jonah...

1. Through a calling... go to Nineveh
2. Through sailors... Call on your god
3. Through storms... now I know God hears my cry
4. Through Nineveh... God- "shouldn't I care?"
5. Through prayer... I'm so angry with you!
6. Through God's word... Exodus passage.. God's character and nature.
7. Through plants, worm and wind... through nature and small things.

"Scriptures know nothing of a creation or a history that is at a single moment independent of God's agency. The question is not whether God is involved in every aspect of our lives but how God is involved." —Michael Horton, *The Christian Life*, p369.

**FOCUS.** Learn to see how God is working and join Him.

SEEING GOD. 5 Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. 6 Then the Lord God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. 7 But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live."

"God provided" (4X's)... plant, worm, wind... also 1:17 "a huge fish"

Introduces the idea of God's Providence.

Providence comes from word to provide... the idea that God governs and is in control of all creation from the smallest detail to the largest systems.

- From the biggest fish... to the smallest worm... God is working...
- From greatest City to smallest prophet... God works globally/ personally.

1. Thru the miraculous & ordinary... in judgement & mercy... God's working!  
Through it all... God is involved... interested... interceding... engaged.



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Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

GOD IS AT WORK...

God is at work in ALL THINGS... good the bad and the ugly... small... big...

God is at work in all things for GOOD... with compassion, mercy, grace

God is working through those he has called to his PURPOSE. to bring renewal!

JOINING GOD. God frames this entire last moment around a question

v4 Is it right for you to be angry (Nineveh)?

v9 But God said to Jonah, 'Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?'

The whole object lesson with the plant illustrates two things.

- Jonah has more concern for a plant that brings him comfort than for a huge city of 120,000 people ... and animals!
- Jonah resents God using him to bring His goodness to them.

Why them? And why me!?— Jonah's anger.

We are not simply called to believe God is at work but to join him.

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

It's one thing for God to be at work in the world... its another to go with him!

"but some doubted" — Like Jonah... really Jesus... me? them? All nations!?

A Christian is not simply someone who believes but someone who follows.

Faith + Works... the two go together.

God's for us saves us; God's love through us changes us!

1 John 4:11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1. God's love for me frees me — my shame and guilt...
2. God's love thru me frees me — my self centeredness and prejudice...



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Jonah is angry because he is attached to his self-centeredness and prejudice toward Nineveh. Not me... Not them.

When God's love for us transforms us when it flows through us.

RECEIVING JESUS.

Jesus followed the same pattern as Jonah but where Jonah failed Jesus won

The Father sent his son to earth to reach a world of violence, cruelty and sin.

Jesus saw through our wickedness to God's love for us.

Jesus went through death on the cross to free us... offering undeserved grace and sacrificial love.

1 John 4:15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

Faith in Jesus saves us from our sin.

Faith in Jesus fills us with God's love for others.