

Pity the Fool

Jonah 4:1-11

Big Idea: God has shown pity to us; so, we should pity others.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ² And he prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

⁴ And the LORD said, "Do you do well to be angry?"

⁵ Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. ⁶ Now the LORD God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint.

And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die."¹⁰ And the LORD said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night."¹¹ And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?" (**Jon 4:1-11 ESV**)

Big Idea: God has shown pity to us; so, we should pity others.

Pity the fool!

1. None deserve mercy (vv. 1-4).
2. Comfort makes us happy (vv. 5-6).
3. God's priority isn't happiness (vv. 7-9).
4. Pity the fool (vv. 10-11).

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None deserve mercy.

- i. Nineveh didn't deserve mercy (v. 1).
- ii. Jonah wants grace for Jonah, but not Nineveh (v. 2; Ex 34:6-7).
- iii. Give me comfort or give me death (v. 3).
- iv. Jonah's sin is believing he gets to choose who receives Gods' grace.

“If anyone thinks ill of you, don’t be angry; for you are worse than he thinks you to be.” -- C.H. Spurgeon

None deserve mercy.

- i. Check your theology.
- ii. None of us deserve mercy (Rom 3:10-12).
- iii. Not about Jonah (us), but God (Isa 42:8).

2. Comfort makes us happy (vv. 5-6).

“He sat under [the booth] in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. ⁶ Now the LORD God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to [deliver Jonah from his evil]. So Jonah [rejoiced with a great rejoicing] because of the plant.”

Notice the contrast:

God appoints a prophet (v. 3:2)

The prophet *saves* Nineveh (v. 3:5)

Jonah is unhappy (v. 4:1)

God appoints a vine (v. 6a).

The vine *saves* Jonah (v. 6b).

Jonah is happy (v. 6c).

3. God's priority isn't our happiness (vv. 7-9).

⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm [to strike down] the plant, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah [to strike him down]. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." ⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die."

Jonah experiences God's wrath

God *strikes down* the plant (v. 7).

God *strikes down* Jonah (v. 8a).

Jonah wants to die (v. 8b).

God's priority isn't our happiness.

i. God decides who receives his grace.

ii. We share the gospel with everyone because none deserve God's grace.

4. Pity the fool (vv. 10-11).

¹⁰ And the LORD said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"

Jonah's pity, God's pity, and the fool.

i. Jonah pities the plant (v. 10).

ii. God pities the people (v. 11a).

iii. The fool (v. 11b; Ps 14:1).

If I appreciate the Lord's pity,
shouldn't I also extend that pity to
others?