

Autopsy of a Dead Ministry - Jonah 4

Jonah's ministry saw numbers, despite Jonah (120,000).
Jonah obeyed God mechanically but lacked the HEART of God.
Jonah 4 is an autopsy—what attitudes killed Jonah's ministry?

1. He was Controlling (4:1-4)

The entire book, Jonah is trying to control the outcome of his ministry. He wants the Ninevites to die.

Even now, (4:1) **Jonah is displeased... exceedingly...angry.**

Displeased means BROKEN, evil. **Ra** by itself means bad. **Ra'ah**, is for emphasis. Jonah has snapped. He is furious.

Angry = "to burn," that Jonah is seething boiling with anger. (See **Ex 22:24** where God was angry to the point of taking life).

There are **two reasons we get angry**:

Righteous indignation (Mad that God is not obeyed)

Selfish anger (Mad that I am not obeyed, lacking control)

Selfish anger reveals a controlling spirit.

Proverbs 29:11 "A fool gives full vent to his anger..."

(4:2) Jonah accuses God of doing wrong, that Jonah knew better. Jonah feels JUSTIFIED in his disobedient departure to Tarshish. Jonah criticizes God for being merciful. (It felt wrong to Jonah).

(4:3) Jonah would rather DIE than to lose control of this situation. Some people would rather see a ministry die than to lose control.

Abraham Lincoln:

"You can tell the greatness of a man by what makes him angry."

People who are angered by little things are little people.

Gulliver's Travels: Lilliput made war over how to crack an egg.

(4:4) God questions the legitimacy of Jonah's anger.

He gives Jonah a chance to think about this and repent.

2. He was Critical (4:5)

(4:5) Jonah departs the city (resents spiritual growth)

Jonah builds a shelter (plans to be on that hill a while)

"**He sat...till he should see what would become of the city.**"

He is waiting to make accusation against Nineveh for failures.

Jonah is hoping to see the spiritual failure/destruction of Nineveh.

Illustration: Statler and Waldorf (Muppets)

Revelation 12:10 Satan is the accuser of Christians.



3. He was Comfortable (4:6-8)

Jonah values his comfort over the will of God. (over people)

(4:6) God sends a plant to comfort Jonah despite his sin.

Mt 5:45 God sends his nourishing rain to both just and unjust.

Note: This is the first/only time in this book where Jonah is happy Source of happiness: Personal comfort.

(4:7) God appoints a worm to kill the plant.

(4:8) God appointed a scorching wind to burn Jonah.

*God uses pain to get the attention of sinning saints.

Jeremiah 13:16

God brings darkness and gloom at times to get us to glorify God.

**Jonah does not rejoice in the salvation of men, but in comfort.

Jonah would rather die than to live without comfort.

Likewise, churches often prefer services over service;

programs over productivity.

4. He lacked Compassion (4:9-11)

Compassion = "with pain" (See **Romans 12:15**)

When we see a lack of compassion in others, it is revolting.

Can a church ever lack compassion for the lost?

(4:9) God questions whether Jonah has a right to be angry.

Jonah has more compassion for himself/comfort than for others.

He feels worthy of God's mercy, but that Nineveh isn't.

Jonah cared more for the temporary than the eternal.

120,000 "**do not know their right...from left**" = they are children.

Be patient with the tangled lives of lost people—they're children.

Luke 23:34 "Father forgive them--they do not know what they do."

"**...and also much cattle?**" God cares even for the animals.

Jonah can't even care about the eternal souls of people.

Phil. 2:4 Mature Christians "look out for the interests of others."

Autopsy of a ministry. The poison that kills churches:

Controlling, to make the ministry please me.

Critical, of anything I don't like. Complain often.

Comfortable, unwilling to join the work, do new things.

Without Compassion, uncaring toward the suffering.

