

# Four Things to Remember When Things Don't Go Your Way

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The Bible is full of stories of people whose lives were filled with interruptions, detours, and dead ends. Jonah is one of those. He got an assignment he didn't like from God, he found himself thrown overboard during a storm, and eventually he witnessed God forgiving people that Jonah would have rather seen destroyed.

Does life sometimes feel like that for you? Do your plans sometimes feel like they've been cast aside? Here are four things to remember when life doesn't go your way:

## 1. God can see things you can't.

When Jonah expressed his unhappiness with God's decisions, God asked Jonah, *"What right do you have to be angry?"* (Jonah 4:4 GNT). It sounds a lot like what he had asked Job: *"Who are you to question my wisdom? . . . Were you there when I made the world?"* (Job 38:2-4 GNT). We see what's here and now—and right in front of us. God sees the past, present, and future all at once. You can trust this: *"He does everything just right and on time"* (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NCV).

## 2. God is good to you even when you're cranky.

Jonah found himself sitting in the hot sun with a bad attitude. Here's how God responded: *"Then the LORD God made a plant grow up over Jonah to give him some shade, so that he would be more comfortable. Jonah was extremely pleased with the plant"* (Jonah 4:6 GNT). Even when Jonah's attitude stunk, God cared about his comfort. He cares for you too—no matter what.

## 3. God is in control of every detail of your life.

The morning after God had made a shade plant grow for Jonah, God arranged for a tiny worm to destroy the plant: *"But God also prepared a worm! The next morning the worm ate through the stem of the plant, so that it withered away and died"* (Jonah 4:7 TLB). God had an object lesson to teach Jonah, and he arranged for a tiny worm to be available to help. In the same way, God uses every detail in your life for his purpose.

## 4. Focus on what will last.

Jonah was upset when his shade plant died. What was God's response? *"You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly. But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?"* (Jonah 4:10-11 NLT). God was basically saying, *"If you're going to get distressed in life, at least get distressed about something that really matters."* There are two things that will last: God's Word and people. God wanted Jonah to invest in these things—and that's what he wants from you too. As 2 Corinthians 4:18 says, *"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal"* (NIV).

When life doesn't go your way, don't despair. Instead, remember God sees things you can't, is always good to you, and is in control of every detail of your life. And because of that, you can spend your life focusing on the things that will last!