

***Carolyn Roth***  
***Ministry***  
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### **Politichicks**

*Politichicks* is an online political newsletter for conservative men and women. It is a refreshing change from much of the liberal news media. The Editor is Ann-Marie Murrel from Texas (good southern girl). The newsletter has over 156,000 subscribers and the website is [www.politichicks.com](http://www.politichicks.com).

Recently, I have started to write articles for the newsletter. I did a series of articles for Holy Week— Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Resurrection Day.

I am writing a series of articles on human trafficking and migrant smuggling. I was shocked to learn that human trafficking is in the top three criminal industries in the United States. For some reason I thought it was a third world problem.

The articles I wrote that most interested me came from my approximate decade living on the Texas-Mexico border in El Paso. In that decade I saw horrible abuse of U.S. compassion for care of less fortunate individuals. There was abuse of U.S. educational system, health services, and don't even get me started on something as mundane as car insurance laws.

If you have an opportunity, go to [www.politichicks.com](http://www.politichicks.com) and read some of the posts. Candidly, I have to admit that some are simply rants. Others are well researched and enlightening. There is a place for you to comment on each post. All writers welcome your feedback.

### **Compassion – Lessons from *Jonah***

Most of you know something about Jonah. Jonah's ministry was almost 3000 years ago; but, the message is timeless. *Jonah* begins with God telling Jonah go to Nineveh, Assyria to warn the people to repent of their wickedness. If Ninevites didn't repent, God was going to destroy them.

Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh! He boarded a ship sailing across the Mediterranean Sea in the opposite direction. Every Sunday School child knows what happened next. God caused a giant storm in the Sea, sailors threw Jonah overboard. A fish swallowed Jonah.

Jonah remained in the fish's belly three days. During that time, he rethought his disobedience to God's command to go to Nineveh. I would have rethought my disobedience if I was in the belly of a fish, wouldn't you?

Jonah repented. In response, God caused the fish to vomit Jonah onto land. Can you imagine your clothes and skin after being in a fish's belly three days? Slime, mucus, digestive juices! All I can say is "Yuck, I need to bathe and to get a clean set of clothes. Where's the shower?"

After this experience, Jonah went to Nineveh and proclaimed the message God give him: Forty more days and Nineveh will be destroyed unless you repent.

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## Compassion

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Ninevites, including their king, believed Jonah. They fasted and repented in sackcloth and ashes. When God saw that Ninevites turned from their evil ways, he had compassion. God did not destroy Nineveh.

Likely, Ninevites were ecstatic over God's decision not to destroy them; however, Jonah was angry. Jonah went to a hill top, east of Nineveh, built a small shelter, and sat down under it. Jonah waited to see what would happen to Nineveh. Jonah had no confidence that Ninevites would continue their reformed ways. Jonah wanted God to destroy Nineveh and he wanted a front row seat.

As he watched Nineveh, God caused a vine to grow over Jonah to screen him from the sun. Jonah was glad for the vine's protection. The next day, God caused a worm to chew the vine. It withered. Later in the day, God caused a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah and the sun to shine on his head. Jonah grew faint.

Jonah was angry with God for destroying the vine. God asked Jonah: "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?" Jonah's response was a resounding "I do and I am angry enough to die."

God told Jonah that Jonah was concerned about a vine that he neither caused to grow nor tended. How much more should God be concerned about Nineveh, a city of 120,000 people who didn't know right from wrong.

Jonah's vine symbolized God's compassion. Compassion is awareness of another person's distress, together with a desire to alleviate the distress. Throughout *Jonah*, God leads Jonah to a new understanding of God himself and God's compassion. God was never angry with the sulky Jonah. Instead, God gave patient explanations, using Jonah's feelings for the vine to parallel God's feelings for Ninevites.

I wonder if our lack of compassion on individuals of other nationalities results from Americans believing that God and Christianity belongs to us. I hope not. Hopefully, we rejoice that God has compassion on all peoples.



Jonah's vine

### Scheduled Events

**May 4, 9—3:00: St. John Lutheran Youth Yard Sale** to benefit missions. Great Room at St. John Lutheran Church, 4608 Brambleton Ave. , Roanoke. I will be selling and signing books.

**May 10—10:30—11:30 a.m.: "Gardening with Bible Plants"** Colonial Avenue Baptist Church, 4615 Colonial Ave., Roanoke, VA. Contact is Pastor Melissa Scott.

**May 17, 6-7:30 p.m.: Gardening Skills for Grade School Children.** Colonial Avenue Baptist Church, 4615 Colonial Ave., Roanoke, VA. Contact is Pastor Melissa Scott. I am going to be there as a Master Gardener helper.

**May 20, 12:30-4:30 p.m.: Master Garden Help Desk.** I am volunteering at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Master

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