

What Job Has Taught Me

Job 1:6-12

If we did not have the book of Job in the Bible, we would be lacking many precious truths that are only found in this wonderful book.

After preaching through the book of Job for the past two years, we need to ask ourselves: Have I learned anything? Am I any better for it? How has it made a difference in my life... in my relationship with God... in my relationship with others (James 1:22).

I cannot speak for you, but I've been edified and richly blessed by Job. God has used the Book of Job to teach me some valuable lessons I needed to apply in my life.

➡ He taught me some lessons about...

I. **The MINISTRY of God's Word.**

- ➡ God taught me some things about ministering to hurting people.
- ➡ Job was a man who had a very, very bad day. No one ever had a worse day than Job. In one day four different messengers came to him with bad news:
 - Messenger #1—“Job, 500 of your oxen have been stolen and your servants have been slain with a sword.” (1:14-15)
 - Messenger #2—“The fire of God fell and burned up all 7,000 of your sheep and your servants.” (1:16)
 - Messenger #3—“The Chaldeans have taken all 3,000 of your camels and killed your servants who tended them. (1:17)
 - Messenger #4—“Job, a tornado suddenly came from out of the wilderness and all ten of your children are dead.” (1:18-19)
 - Next, Job was smitten with a loathsome disease (2:7). His body was covered from head to foot with painful, oozing boils. Job could not sit down without sitting on a boil... stand up without standing on a boil... or lay down without laying on a boil.
- ➡ News spread rapidly about Job's troubles (2:11). If something happened to someone here in Port Orchard like what happened to Job, it would be on the evening news.

Job's three friends teach me two things about ministering to hurting people.

A. **Positively** (2:11-13).

1. Their coming—Job's friends came from a great distance to mourn with Job and "comfort" him. Anyone can be a friend from afar. But your physical presence shows you really care.
2. Their crying—They wept with Job (Rom. 12:15). Sometimes it is best not to say anything—Just be there for one who is hurting.
3. Their composure—They did not say anything until Job spoke first (3:1-3, 11, 20-21). After hearing Job's bitter words, it they must have felt compelled to tell Job what he was feeling was wrong.
 - That was a mistake. Right or wrong, when someone is suffering, they may say things they don't mean. It is not our place to scrutinize their words, but to pray for them, and try to understand why they are saying what they say.

B. **Negatively**. If you want to see how NOT to be a blessing to someone who is hurting, follow the example of Job's three friends. Learn from their mistakes.

1. They spoke words without empathy

- ➡ Job's friends believed suffering was due to personal sin, and success came by righteous living. However, the ungodly are often very successful, and the godly are often considered failures by human standards (i.e. Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and Stephen).
- ➡ Human success does not equate with God's blessings (1 Tim. 6:5). If you equate human success with God's blessings, then you must admit the big gambling casinos... the Mormons... the liquor industry, and Hollywood, are greatly blessed by God.

"There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness..." (Eccl. 7:15). *"There be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous"* (Eccl. 8:14). In other words, both the wicked and the righteous experience the same things.

- Away with the presupposition that Christians should never grieve or suffer loss. That is unscriptural, unfeeling, and unrealistic. Some of the greatest saints in the Bible suffered greatly: Joseph... Jeremiah... Stephen... Paul.
- The health and wealth gospel is a heresy spawned by Satan. In Florence Bulle's book, *"God Wants You Rich (and Other Enticing Doctrines)"*, she warns:

The deception in the success-prosperity doctrine is subtle. It sounds so spiritual to assert that we cannot be sick or fail if we trust God, and that He will reward us for faith and giving and being good, by making us rich in material things. But this was not the message of the men and women of faith who throughout history set church and nation aflame with revival.

The more we pursue such poppycock, the more likely we will end up like pampered children. Getting everything we want won't turn us into soldiers for Christ. We may wear a tailored suit with gold buttons and hash marks, but we will be no more soldiers than the six-year-old with his feet shoved in his dad's old combat boots and carrying a wooden gun. Unchecked, the success prosperity syndrome will not see Christians developing together into a vigorous, stouthearted, indomitable church. Rather, it will reduce the body of Christ to spiritual flabbiness.

- We must have a Scriptural view of suffering if we are to be effective in ministering to people who are hurting.
3. They made accusations without evidence. Job's friends accused Job of having sin in his life. But they could never point to a particular instance of sin in Job's life. They could not back up their accusation with proof.
 - 1 Timothy 6:4 calls this "*evil surmisings*." "*Evil surmising*" is suspecting someone is wrong with no verifiable proof to confirm it. This is what Job's three friends did.
 4. They gave answers without distinction. They offered counsel without considering the *uniqueness* of Job's suffering. Beware of "pre-packaged" answers and "one-size-fits-all" solutions to problems. Not everyone's situation is the same. Be careful about giving advice based on how God worked in your experience.

Example: Two different parents lose a child. You must realize each case is uniquely different. You must take into account the individual context of each situation. We never help anyone's pain by saying, "I know how you feel," when you've never experienced what they are going through.

➡ Don't assume you know why someone is suffering, when you don't know! You're not qualified to make that diagnosis.

II. The MYSTERY of God's ways.

- Life is not a problem to be solved—it is a mystery to be lived. We do not live by explanations—we live by faith.
- Some questions will never be answered. God owes no one an explanation for what He does or why He does it. William Cowper wrote: "God moves in a mysterious ways, His wonders to perform."
- Would you rather have all of your questions answered, or all of your questions removed? Job asked lots of questions. But by when we reach the end of the book, he didn't care—His questions didn't matter any more! Why? Because he realized...
 - A. The **IMMENSITY** of God—God is bigger than our capacity to understand His ways. His ways are higher than our ways. His ways are past finding out.
 - The truth is, **NOBODY KNOWS WHAT GOD IS DOING NOW** (Eccl. 8:16-17; Rom. 11:33). Jesus told Peter, "*What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter*" (John 13:7). God marks across our questions, "I'll explain later."
 - B. The **SMALLNESS** of man—We are only a small part of an immense spiritual war that has been waging since before the fall Adam—An *unseen* war where we have little understanding of the role we play on that battlefield. We cannot see what goes on "behind-the-scenes."
 - When baffled and overwhelmed by trials we should lift up our eyes to see the big picture of God's plan for the universe..

III. The **MAJESTY** of God's works.

- A. The majesty of God's **SOVEREIGNTY**. All those questions God asked Job in chapters 38-41 humbled Job to finally confess, "*I know that **thou canst do ever thing**. ~~Little and that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I know not.~~*"
 1. God rules in the affairs of heaven and earth. Satan is subject to God's authority. Satan could not attack Job without God's permission. And even then, God put restrictions on how far Satan could go.

2. When we go through in life is not a matter of time and chance. The devil does not “sneak up” on us while God’s back is turned. God is involved in every test that we go through. God is in charge! God is still on His Throne!!!
- B. The majesty of God’s **SUFFICIENCY**. The God who made all things and controls all things can certainly provide all things. God restored everything that was taken from Job and more.
1. Job learned that **God is enough!** Do you know that? How do you know God is enough? You may never really know God is enough until God is all you have.
 - Where do you get your joy? You answer, “From the Lord.” How do you know you’re not getting your joy from your family?—Your children? Your husband or wife? Would you still have joy if God took your family?
 - Where do you get your joy? From your health?
 - Where do you get your joy? From your stuff?
 2. Job was reduced to this—No possessions... no family... no health. He had nothing but God, and learned God was enough—God is sufficient (42:12-17).
 3. Suffering perfected and refined Job like gold (23:10), so in the end Job is a better man than he was at the beginning (42:12).

SUMMATION: Bottom line: Job teaches us to simply trust God’s great power and wisdom, and let God be God!

➡ I love that old song, “*I Don’t Need To Understand.*” All I need to do is trust God that He loves me and He knows what He is doing.