

The Strength to Suffer | the gospel according to Job

Never More Alone

Job 19:1-10, 23-7

June 25, 2017

Review: In what ways were you able to see Jesus as worthy of worship in the midst of crisis last week?

Introduction: The measure of your hope is the measure of its strength in suffering. How do we respond in the face of anxiety, depression, grief, injustice, anger, and loss? How do we develop the kind of strength that will allow us to bear up, persevere, be bold, and share hope with a hurting world?

Job knows. God gives us the book of Job not just to help us when we ask "Why is there evil?" or "Why be good when the world is not?" Job is the story of a man who moves from innocence to deep wisdom, a wisdom that will hold him in the face of nauseating hurt. It's an invitation for us to find the same. Job points us to the Son of God who treads the path of pain with us every step of the way. Maybe true wisdom isn't knowing the answers but knowing the one who walks us through the questions.

Job is tormented by the condemning world of his friends when his life has fallen apart. This week we examine how Jesus stands with us against every other word of accusation.

Pray: Thank you God that Jesus is with us; even when we do not feel his presence or see his face. Give us eyes to see and hearts to recognize your love for us. Amen.

Read: Job 19:1-10, 23-7

Discussion:

1. Though the counsel of his friends deepens his suffering, why is the process of expressing his pain with those who know him valuable?
2. Job gives voice to his feeling of helplessness to change his painful situation. He has much to say to God. How does putting our pain and confusion into words and giving this to God strengthen us?
3. How does your understanding of God change when you see how Job tells his real story of suffering to God and God absorbs it?

Have you known God's comfort when you have been unfairly accused?

4. What role does patience and waiting have when we are in pain?
5. Job has not escaped his suffering situation. Yet in the midst of his sense of alienation and attack he utters authentic faith; "I know that my redeemer lives..." (verse 25) Why is it so powerful to speak words of faith when we are in the middle of pain and unresolved difficulties?

How does crisis show us what we truly believe?

6. How does God free Job from shame and self-condemnation?

Application: This week consider how the book of Job relates to your own life.

Pray: Lord, help us to freely express our pain to you. Give us the strength to trust you, especially when we suffer. Free us from shame and self-condemnation. Amen.