



REFLECT

1. Begin by summarizing both Job's friends' message and method of "comforting" him.
2. Has someone ever stuck with you in the midst of trials? Who was it?

ENCOUNTER

In his book on loving those in suffering, Dave Furman reflected on the need for true friends in the midst of suffering: "Initially after a loss, injury, or sickness, it seems as though everyone wants to help. But as time goes on, the excitement to help wanes, and the one hurting will often feel neglected and forgotten. There's an important ministry of loyalty, of sticking with the hurting, that can be tremendously helpful."

Job's friends were nothing like that. Rather than help, they poured salt on the wound. They kicked him while he was down. They literally added insult to injury. Pick your idiom! This week, instead of focusing on the failure of Job's friends, study what the Bible says about true friends.

3. What do these proverbs say about the role of true friends?

Proverbs 17:17

Proverbs 18:24

Proverbs 27:6

4. Are there other passages about friendship and comfort that instruct and challenge you?

TRANSFORM

5. Well-meaning people say really dumb things to sufferers. Rather than focusing on the negative, what comfort have friends provided you in difficult times?
6. How did this week's sermon challenge and encourage you?

PRAYER REQUESTS

RESOURCES

Here are two resources on serving those in suffering.

- Dave Furman. *Being There: How to Love Those Who Are Hurting*.
- Ben Hartwig. "How To Help Those Who Are Suffering." *Baptist Bulletin*, March/April 2019. Online at <https://baptistbulletin.org/the-baptist-bulletin-magazine/how-to-help-those-who-are-suffering/>