

The Ultimate Test The Fine-Line Test Job 27:2-6

The Fine-Line Test: When followers of Jesus go through hard times, we tend to run to one of two extremes: deep despair which can often bring anger, disbelief, and accusations against God, or denial, pretending the hard times aren't that bad as we declare our faith in God, his goodness and power. But what if the more Christ-like approach is to speak honestly without blasphemy and truthfully without contriving?

- **Honesty:** In Psalms of lament, writers would honestly pour out their hearts about their pain and suffering.
- **Truth:** In every lament, the author follows up his honest feelings about his pain with affirming the truth of God's power, wisdom, and goodness.

"How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death, lest my enemy say, 'I have prevailed over him,' lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken. But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD because he has dealt bountifully with me."
Psalm 13:1-6

"As God lives, who has taken away my right, and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter, as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit. Far be it from me to say that you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days."
Job 27:2-6

Main Idea: The Fine Line Test Involves Speaking Honestly and Hopefully in Hard Times

- I. **Speaking Honestly Without Blasphemy** – *"As God lives, who has taken away my right, and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter..."*
Job 27:2

How Did Job Honestly Feel About His Suffering?

- **Cursed the Day of His Birth:** *"Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said, 'A man is conceived.' Let that day be darkness! May God above not seek it, nor light shine upon it... Why did I not die at birth, come out from the womb and expire? Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?"*
Job 3:3-4, 11-12
- **Wanted God to Kill Him:** *"Oh that I might have my request, and that God would fulfill my hope, that it would please God to crush me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off!"*
Job 6:8-9
- **Abandoned by Family & Friends:** *"He has put my brothers far from me, and those who knew me are wholly estranged from me. My relatives have failed me, my close friends have forgotten me."*
Job 19:13-14
- **Couldn't Find God:** *"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I do not perceive him; on the left hand when he is working, I do not behold him, he turns to the right hand, but I do not see him."*
Job 23:8-9

- **Desperate for an Explanation:** *"I loathe my life; I would not live forever... Why have you made me your mark? Why have I become a burden to you? Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?"*
Job 7:16a-20b-21a

- II. **Speaking Hopefully Without Contriving** – *"...as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit. Far be it from me to say that you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days."*
Job 27:3-6

Where Did Job Find Hope?

- **God's Sovereignty** – *"The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.' In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong."*
Job 1:21b-22
- **God's Power** – *"He is wise in heart and mighty in strength..."*
Job 9:4a
- **God's Control** – *"He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away."*
Job 12:23
- **God's Promises** – *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!"*
Job 19:25-27

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
John 16:33

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."
John 14:27

Invitation: Are you going through a test? Is it hard, painful, and miserable? It's okay to admit that. But it's also appropriate to remember that God is sovereign, that God is loving, and God promises something special to his covenant children, especially in seasons like this...

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through the fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."
Isaiah 43:1b-3a

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities

- *New American Commentary: Job* – R.L. Alden (1993)
- *Be Patient* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *Wiersbe Expository Outlines on the OT* – Warren Wiersbe (1993)
- *Notes from My Bible* – D.L. Moody (1895)
- *The Spurgeon Study Bible* – C.H. Spurgeon (2017)
- *Tony Evans Study Bible* – Tony Evans (2019)
- *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary* – Hughes & Laney (2001)
- *The Wisdom Books: Job* – Chuck Swindoll (2023)
- *The Book of Job* – Ray Ortlund (2014)
- *CSB Study Bible* – Trevin Wax (2017)

