

STRIP IT DOWN

Job 1:1 (NIV)- In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.

1. God will strip away what you have to reveal what you really trust

Job 1:9-11(NIV) ⁹“Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. ¹⁰“Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. ¹¹ But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.”

A. There is a difference between loving God's hand and loving God's heart

Job 1:20-21 (NLT)- ²⁰ Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. ²¹ He said, “I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The LORD gave me what I had, and the LORD has taken it away. Praise the name of the LORD!”

Matthew 6:21 (NIV) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

Psalms 62:5-6 (NIV) ⁵ Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. ⁶ Truly he is my rock and my salvation;

Habakkuk 3:17-18 ¹⁷ Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,

¹⁸ yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

2. When God strips it down, don't let your pain steal your praise

Job 2:7-8 (NIV) ⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. ⁸ Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes.

Job 2:9-10 (NIV) ⁹ His wife said to him, "Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!" ¹⁰ He replied, "You are talking like a foolish^[b] woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?"

A. Faith does not mean you never hurt

Job 3:1-3 (NIV) After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. ² He said: ³ "May the day of my birth perish, and the night that said, 'A boy is conceived!'

Psalms 34:18 (NIV) ¹⁸ The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalms 42:11 (NIV) Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NLT) ⁸ We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed.

We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. ⁹ We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God.

We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.

B. Your Praise is a declaration that God is still worthy

Psalms 42:5 (NIV) Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

3. God will strip away your false understanding so you can know him more deeply

A. Sometimes God does not give you an explanation; He gives you a revelation

Job 38:1-4 (NIV) Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: ²“Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? ³Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. ⁴“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand.

Isaiah 55:8-9 (NIV) “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. ⁹“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Job 42:1-3 (NIV) **42** Then Job replied to the LORD: ²“I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. ³You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know.

4. What the enemy strips away, God can use to build a greater testimony

Job 42:10 (NIV) **10** After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before.

A. Your present chapter is not necessarily your final chapter

Romans 8:18 (NIV) ¹⁸I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us

2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV) ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

B. God can use what you went through to minister to somebody else

James 1:2-4 (NIV) ² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,^[a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

Conclusion: What is left when everything is stripped away?