

Title: Lessons from Job
Text:
ID: 1152
Charts: Yes; PowerPoint slide

File Name: job lessons.docx
Scripture Reading: Job 1:1-5
Binder #: 25-10
Chart file name: job lessons.pptx

Introduction:

- I. What kind of week did you have this past week? Hopefully we all had a great week.
 - A. Great week for some – end of school!
 - B. Finish some project around the house? Get some well-deserved praise at work?
 - C. There might any number of things which were responsible for us having a wonderful week.
- II. On the other hand, we all have bad days/weeks sometimes.
 - A. Don't feel well? Bad news about our health? Death in the family or among our friends?
 - B. Financial problems? Unexpected expenses eat up our available cash?
 - C. Problems in some relationship? A falling out with a close friend?
- III. It is easy to believe that God is with us and protecting us when things are going well, but how about when things don't go so well?!
 - A. Do we begin to wonder if God is angry with us? Is He punishing us?
 - B. Job wondered the same thing when he suffered.
- IV. Purpose of our study:
 - A. Remind us of the philosophy of individual suffering held by Job and his friends.
 - B. Observe several helpful truths from the life of Job.

Body:

- I. **“You Must Be One BAD Sinner!”**
 - A. Job 1-2 details the terrible calamities which occurred in Job's life – lost his possessions, his children, even his own health.
 - B. For Job's friends (Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar), the truth was simple and clear cut.
 1. Personal suffering is *always* the direct result of sin and in proportion thereof.
 2. Job is suffering greatly.
 3. Therefore, Job must have sinned greatly.
 - C. Note these statements by the friends:
 1. Eliphaz: 4:7-8; 15:17-25
 2. Bildad: 8:2-7, 20; 18:5-12
 3. Zophar: 11:2-6; 20:4-8
 4. They believed that moral justice in this world is perfect.
 5. The wicked always suffer; the righteous always prosper.
 - D. Job pointed out to his friends that sometimes the wicked don't seem to suffer as one might expect, in light of their wickedness (Job 21:5-21).

1. More importantly, Job knew that he was not wicked, as his friends were quick to conclude about him (Job 6:24-25).
 2. He defended his past conduct in chapter 31.
- E. Important point: The frustration evident in Job's speeches is born of the fact that he held the same view as the friends!
1. He believed that God was the source of his suffering and so he questioned the justice of God in some very rash statements (as he later acknowledged).
 2. Note these statements: 6:4; 7:20-21; 9:21-23; 10:2-3; 19:6-8, 21-22

II. Why Do We Suffer?

- A. Sometimes we suffer because of the sins of our predecessors. We are not guilty of their sins (Ezek. 18:4; compare NKJ with the ESV), but we certainly suffer the temporal consequences of their sins.
- B. Sometimes we suffer because of the sins of the people around us. Same point as above.
- C. Sometimes we do indeed suffer because of our own sins.
 1. There is some truth to the observations of Job's friends!
 2. ^{KJV} **Proverbs 13:15** Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors *is* hard.
- D. Sometimes we suffer as the result of the violation of the natural laws by which God governs our world. Other times we don't "violate" these laws, but we suffer because of the power of the natural elements of this world (floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, lightning, etc.).

III. Lessons from Job

- A. The prevailing view regarding individual suffering was wrong!
 1. The friends of Job assured him that their wisdom had come down from "the fathers"; "everybody knew that it was true!"
 2. John 9:1-3 note the question of the disciples regarding the blind man's condition
- B. Job was a godly man, but he also held the wrong view regarding the relationship between sin and suffering.
 1. Job was forced by his suffering to look at the evidence and conclude that the view he had previously embraced was wrong!
 2. Job's incorrect view didn't result in an immoral lifestyle as some wrong views do in the lives of those who hold them.
 3. We do not have to understand everything in the Scriptures, nail down every theological or doctrinal question in order to be godly in the sight of our God!
 4. How many people are discouraged because they are afraid that they do not understand enough about the Bible! We need to study, but there are many questions which do not impact our daily lives in any material way.
- C. As good as Job was, he needed to grow!
 1. Remember the description of Job by God in the beginning of the book.
 2. Yet Job's faith was tested and he sinned (40:1-5; 42:1-6).
- D. God was patient with Job while he grew in spiritual understanding.

1. Note the growth of Job's faith: 13:15; 19:25; 23:10
2. God will likewise be patient with us, if we are trying to conform ourselves to the image of His Son.

Conclusion:

- I. The book of Job contains important information about innocent human suffering.
 - A. We may suffer for reasons other than personal sin.
 - B. We do need to examine our lives against God's word; it MAY be that our suffering is, in fact, the consequence of our failure to obey the word of God.
- II. We should take hope in the experience of Job.
 - A. Like Job, we don't need to understand everything in the Scriptures perfectly.
 - B. In fact, there will be areas in which we just need to trust the righteous Judge of the universe.
 - C. Like Job, we need to continue to grow and God will help us because He loves us and gave His Son for us (Romans 5:8-10).

Invitation:

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