



**Sermon Series:** Confident in the Face of Hard Questions

**To be used with Session 3:** Why Do We Suffer?

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** Suffering's Acclaim

**Scripture:** Job 30:26-31; 42:1-6

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the Bible study “Confident in the Face of Hard Questions” this sermon reminds us that the reasons we suffer vary from one believer to another. This variation in suffering makes determining a broad reason for the suffering of all elusive. However, even though suffering is included in our Christian journey, there are certain principles to which we can adhere and certain promises from God that we must believe and trust in.

**Introduction:** The story of Job is familiar to many believers. He was a man who lost everything. Speaking for himself, Job believed his suffering was because of a flawed character (9:13; 10:14) and because of a lack of righteousness (6:29). However, Job’s immense suffering was a test of his love and trust of God. This demonstration of Job’s worldview was challenged by Satan.

The book of Job reveals that suffering comes to everyone, the righteous and the unrighteous alike. In today’s culture, many teach that Christianity is all about health, wealth, and prosperity, but the fact remains that our God is sovereign. We may experience sunshine one day and a storm the next. The question of why we suffer is answered by God’s dealings with each of individually and according to whether God is using suffering to discipline us or disciple us. By His grace He has complete control over our lives, therefore we should trust Him when we suffer.

The question is, are we prepared to trust Him? Will we believe in and glorify Him? Will we submit and bring our minds in line with Him, knowing Him to be our loving Father?

### **1. Beyond Comprehension (Job 42:1-3).**

Early during his suffering, Job had questioned God about the equity and justice of God’s dealings with him. Job wanted to know the reason God did not deal directly with him to punish his wrongdoing (7:20) and the reason God does not punish the sins of the wicked (21:17). God responded by letting Job know that He was the One who ordered the world. This caused a

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revelation in Job's thinking as he confessed God's rightful sovereignty over all matters, including his situation (vv. 1-2).

There are things in our Christian walk we are not meant to understand, especially if we are suffering. We are not meant to understand God's thoughts or His purposes (Micah 4:12). Furthermore, there are things, we have not grown to understand. Jesus said, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God" (Matt. 22:29). To exemplify this thinking, Job said, "Surely I spoke about things I did not understand" (v. 3).

## **2. Residing in God's Presence (Job 42:4-5).**

At first, Job disrespected God by exerting his own importance. But after his revelation, Job recognized his position before God, and respectfully asked God if he could speak. Also, Job had a spiritual epiphany: he recognized that God was right with him. Even though Job could not see God standing right there before him, he saw God with his spiritual eyes. This had a profound effect on Job. God became more than just a God but a real being that Job had come to know. We too must recognize the reality of God. Just as He did with Job, when we suffer God never leaves or forsakes us, but He continues to reside with us to implement His will in our lives.

## **3. Recognize our True Selves (Job 42:6).**

It is fair to say that suffering ran its course in Job's life. He came to know God in ways that he did not before. He also came to understand himself. Job was honored that the God who created the world had spoken to him. In humility, he abandoned himself and fully submitted himself to God. Through his suffering, Job learned he could trust God above all else.

Therefore, it was right for Job to seek forgiveness from God. It is correct that Job's suffering was rooted in what was happening between God and Satan. Yet through an exalted, know-it-all attitude, Job spoke false words about his suffering, himself, and about God.

**Conclusion:** In verses 7-17, despite horrendous suffering Job's life was restored and the story of his suffering ended well. Whether he learned the reason for his suffering can be debated, but the outcome of his suffering was etched in stone. Job became a better person because of it. One of the sure lessons, we learn from Job is this: because we are human and limited by the time in which we live, we cannot know the reason for everything that happens in our lives. However, we have a sovereign and loving God who does, so we can trust Him.

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