

Trusting the Sovereign God

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[0 : 00] I find it helpful. Well, why don't I pray for us before we look at this next installment of Job. Let's pray. Father, again, we thank you for your word. We thank you that it deals with real life issues and that you do give us wisdom on how to deal with them.

Wisdom is not always the same as the world's wisdom, in fact, often very different. And so, Father, we pray that you would help us to understand what you are telling us tonight, to trust your wisdom and so trust you.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, I thought I'd start with a bit of a crowd participation moment. Okay, I even have some lollies as incentives.

They're the natural confectionery company, 99% fat-free, so everyone can participate. All right, I'm going to start with a bit of a who is this person kind of quiz.

So kind of the first slide. Who is this person, first one? No, I need a hand. No, I need a hand. Yep, Buzz Lightyear. Sorry, I just told you. Yeah. Buzz Lightyear.

[1 : 05] Is he right? Yeah, well done, Brendan. Can you catch? Can I throw? The lights are very bright here. I can hardly see anyone. That's my excuse.

I'm sticking to it. All right, next slide. Who's this person? Kerry? Barack. Okay, Doug, were you being rude before?

Yes, you're right. Yeah, thank you. You can give that to Kerry. Okay, yeah, that's Brock. Okay, what about this next one? Who is this? The Wiggles.

The Wiggles. Oh. Eric Smith, the warden, isn't here, is he? Oh, he is. Oh, my goodness. What's he? I'm going to get invited back. Yeah, the Wiggles. Okay. All right. Is there? I think that's it. Is that? That's it, I think.

[1 : 59] Next slide. Yeah, that's it. Okay. Okay. So, luckily, otherwise I'll damage more furniture. Now, this question, who is this person? God's actually going to ask it of Job, as we heard from our reading.

And now, it's not going to ask it because he doesn't know who Job is, but he's going to ask Job, who is this person, so that Job will remember who God is, that God is the sovereign God who rules and controls everything.

And the purpose of this is so that Job might relate rightly to God by trusting him. That's what we're going to see tonight. But before we take a closer look at God's speech that Matt read for us, there are a couple of other speeches that we've missed.

So, you remember last week on the next slide, I tried to show you the structure of the book because I want you to get to know God's word and understand how it's packaged and so on.

And so, there was three cycles of speeches, and we kind of tried to cover chapters 3 to 27, which are the speeches of the so-called friends. And then chapter 28, which is in italics there, is a chapter on wisdom, which we'll look at next week.

[3 : 08] It's a key chapter of the book. And so, we're up to chapters 29 to 42, roughly, which can be split up into Job's speech, chapters 29 to 31, then Elihu's speech, 32 to 37, and then God's speeches and Job's brief responses, 38 to 42.

Now, again, we only have time for a brief look at these, but with that overview in mind, at least, hopefully it'll help you read it on your own at home.

So, let's start with the final speech of Job, which is point one on your outline. So, please turn with me to actually chapter 29, verse 1, page 522. So, Job, this final speech, chapter 29, verse 1 says, Job continued his discourse, He says, Now, in verse 1, it says that Job continued his discourse, or literally, he again took up his discourse, which suggests a break of some sort, presumably for the narrator to put in chapter 28, which we'll look at next week, of course.

But this is Job's last long speech. And he begins by remembering how life used to be, did you notice? Have you ever heard older people say that?

Say, I remember back in the good old days. Have you ever heard people say that? Don't worry, you'll say it too soon. But that's what Job is doing here.

[5 : 14] In verse 2, he longs for the months of old, the good old days. In verse 5, he longs for the time when God was still with him and his children were around. And when, in verse 6, his path was drenched in cream and even the rocks poured forth olive oil.

In other words, back when his life was good and people respected him. See verse 7 and 8? He says, When I went to the gate of the city and took my seat in the public square, the young men saw me and stepped aside.

And the old men rose to their feet, he says. This longing for the days when he was respected actually continues throughout the chapter. So come with me to verse 11 and 12, for example. He says, Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, because I rescued the poor who cried for help and the fatherless who had none to assist me.

Or, on the other side of the page, verse 21, towards the end of the chapter, People listened to me expectantly, waiting in silence for my counsel. After I had spoken, they spoke no more.

[6 : 22] A bit different to the friends. My words fell gently on their ears. They waited for me as for showers and drank in my words as the spring rain. When I smiled at them, they scarcely believed it.

The light of my face was precious to them. He says. You see, it's a chapter full of remembering the good old life. Then in chapter 30, there is a change with the word, but, of course, in verse 1 of chapter 30.

Job moves from remembering his good old life to mourning over his present life. And so, chapter 30, verse 1, he says, But now they mock me, men younger than I, whose fathers I would have disdained, to put with my sheep dogs, he says.

Now, there's a play on words here in verse 1 with the word mock, which can also mean smile. See, back in 24 of chapter 29, just above there, Job smiled with warmth on others and helped them.

And they could scarcely believe they got a smile from Job. But now, in chapter 30, verse 1, others smile at him, but not with warmth. It's a reversal.

[7 : 40] Instead, with contempt and scorn. It's a complete reversal, you see. In fact, now they even spit on him. Come with me to chapter 30, verse 10, the right-hand side of the page there.

Verse 10 says, They detest me and keep their distance. They do not hesitate to spit in my face. Now that God has unstrung my bow and afflicted me, they throw off restraint in my presence.

It says. And it's not just social suffering that Job mourns over in this chapter. It's also physical suffering. So come down to verse 16, for example. Verse 16, And now my life ebbs away.

Days of suffering grip me. Night pierces my bones. My gnawing pains never rest. In his great power, God becomes like clothing to me.

He binds me like the neck of my garment. He throws me into the mud and I'm reduced to dust and ashes. Or over the page, have a look at verse 29, for example.

[8 : 47] Left-hand side of the page, verse number 29, I have become a brother of jackals, a companion of owls. My skin grows black and peels.

My body burns with fever. My lyre is tuned to mourning and my pipe to the sound of wailing. Of course, the sting in the tail for Job's suffering is that he knows he does not deserve it.

And so the final part of his speech, he maintains his innocence. So come with me now to chapter 31, where he does this. Chapter 31, we don't have to move fast, just below. Chapter 31, verse 1, I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at young women, for what is our lot from God above, our heritage from the Almighty on high?

Is it not ruin for the wicked, disaster for those who do wrong? Does not he see my ways and count my every step? If I have walked with falsehood or my foot has hurried after deceit, let God weigh me in honest scales and he will know that I am blameless, he says.

And so on the chapter goes. Job says, if he has sinned and deserves this, then so be it. But he knows he has not and does not deserve it.

[10 : 10] In fact, so certain of his innocence that Job demands God answer him. Have a look at verse number 35 on the other side of the page, bottom of page 525.

Verse 35, he says, Oh, that I had someone to hear me and now I sign my defense. Let the Almighty answer me. Let my accuser put his indictment in writing.

He says, Surely I would wear it on my shoulder. I would put it on like a crown. I would give him an account of my every step. I would present it to him as to a ruler.

You see, Job is confident that he is right and God is wrong. In fact, in 32 verse 1, Job's friends give up responding.

Have a look at chapter 32 verse 1. It says, So these three men stopped answering Job because he was righteous in his own eyes. See what Job's saying?

[11:08] I am innocent. And in the process of maintaining his innocence, Job suggests that God is wrong and he is right.

Because God makes good people like him suffer while wicked, it seems, prosper. That's what Job had said, as we saw last week in chapter 9. I'll put it on the slide. So chapter 9 verse 22 and 24, Job said, It is all the same.

That is why I say, God destroys both the blameless and the wicked. When a scourge brings sudden death, he mocks the despair of the innocent. When land falls into the hands of the wicked, he blindfolds its judges.

If it is not he, then who is it? Job is essentially accusing God here of injustice. And so here in chapter 31, he demands an explanation.

He signs his defense, as it were, and slaps it on the table and says, I've done everything right, God. And so now you owe me an answer. And when we suffer, we can certainly feel like that, can't we?

[12:13] We can feel like we're trying our hardest to please God, yet we suffer while non-Christians who ignore God seem to prosper. And we can feel like God owes us an explanation, especially if our suffering is bad.

In our final year of Bible college, we were about to graduate as ministers and head off into churches and communities and all the rest of it.

And then just before Christmas, a guy in my year was told he had throat cancer. I mentioned him a couple of weeks ago. His name is Byron. And it seemed like he'd done all the right things.

He sought to follow Jesus, even, you know, given up a good job to go and study at college for four years and go out into churches to help people and to tell them about Jesus.

And he was a bright guy. He was a gifted guy. In fact, some of the lecturers even went to him to check things out. He was a clever cookie. And no, he didn't smoke. So he didn't do anything to deserve this throat cancer.

[13:17] Yet on the eve of becoming a minister, so it was Christmas time, just about to graduate, go out to church. He finds out he has his throat cancer.

Now, I don't know how he reacted initially, but I remember how I did. I thought, what are you doing, God? And I felt as though God ought to explain himself.

And that's how Job is feeling here. And we can feel it too sometimes. Well, God will actually give an answer in a moment. But before he does, we hear from another person who tries to explain.

And now we won't spend much time on him because although he thinks he's a pretty good guy, he really doesn't have much new to say. His name is Elihu, which brings us to point two and chapter 32.

Now, the best way to get a sense of what this guy is like is just to read what he says. And so let me read you a chunk from verse 32. Pick it up from verse two.

[14:16] But Elihu, son of Barakal, the Buzite of the family of Ram, became very angry with Job for justifying himself rather than God. He was also angry with the three friends because they had found no way to refute Job and yet had condemned him.

So Elihu had waited before speaking to Job because they were older than he was. But when he saw that the three men had nothing more to say, his anger was aroused. So Elihu, son of Barakal, the Buzite said, I'm young in years and you are old.

That is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know. I thought age should speak. Advanced years should teach wisdom. But it is the spirit in a person, the breath of the almighty that gives them understanding.

It is not only the old who are wise, not only the age to understand what is right. Therefore, I say, listen to me. I too will tell you what I know. I waited while you spoke.

I listened to your reasoning. While you were searching for words, I gave you my full attention. But not one of you has proved Job wrong. None of you have answered his arguments. Do not say we have found wisdom, but let God, not a man, refute him.

[15 : 25] But Job has not marshaled his words against me, and I will not answer him with your arguments. They are dismayed and have no more to say. Words have failed them.

But I, must I wait rather, now that they are silent, now that they stand there with no reply? I too will have my say. I too will tell them what I know, for I am full of words, and the spirit within me compels me.

And so he goes. I'll have a look at verse 33 as well. But now, Job, listen to my words. Pay attention to everything I say. I'm about to open my mouth. My words are on the tip of my tongue.

My words come from an upright heart. My lips sincerely speak what I know. The spirit of God has made me. The breath of the Almighty gives me life. Answer me then, if you can. Stand up and argue your case before me.

And so he goes. Now, if you get the sense that Elihu is a young upstart who thinks he's wiser than everyone else, then you'd be right. In fact, he's not even called one of Job's friends.

[16 : 27] Yet now he wants to correct Job. He says in chapter 33, verse 5, Answer me then, if you can, Job. And while he pretends to be humble by saying Job's friends are older and wiser, he's basically saying, you've all got it wrong.

Now let me teach you. And so he sprouts his wisdom, which actually goes on and on and on. His speech spans chapter 32, chapter 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37.

And somewhat amusingly, he said back in chapter 32, verse 18, that he was full of words. Yep, he sure is. But does he say anything new?

No, he doesn't. Not really. He says that God judges the wicked and sinful, and so Job must have sinned. So come with me to chapter 34, verse 10, for example. Chapter 34, verse 10.

He says, So listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong. He repays everyone for what they have done.

[17 : 35] He brings on them what their conduct deserves. It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice. That's exactly what the friends have been saying, as we saw last week.

So much for a new argument. He says the same thing. Job must be suffering because he deserves it. Now, Job doesn't even dignify Elihu's long-winded speech with an answer.

And so, all Elihu's speech really does is to summarise all that the friends have already said, which makes one wonder whether he was really listening to them in the first place.

I don't know if you remember, do you remember that dull TV show called Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Apparently, there was this person who thought they knew it all, like Elihu, but wasn't really listening. So, on the next slide, this was the question they got.

Which of the following is the largest? Peanut, the moon, an elephant, the kettle? They chose elephant. Now, I deliberately cut off the face in case you know the person, everyone deserves a second chance.

[18 : 39] But, when we don't really listen, we very quickly can become a fool. And that's what Elihu is. It is foolish to speak without really listening.

But now we move from the fool Elihu to the truly wise God. So, point three. And here we come to our reading of chapter 38. So, please turn with me to chapter 38.

In verses one to three, we read this. Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm. He said, Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge?

Brace yourself like a man. I will question you and you shall answer me. He says. You see, God says, Who is this person?

That's who do you think you are, Job, to darken my counsel with words without knowledge? You see, Job had said that because he is innocent, then God must be unjust to cause such suffering.

[19 : 46] I mean, according to Job's knowledge, what other reason could there be? But God says, Your words lack knowledge. How dare you demand an answer from me as though you think you know all there is to know.

The implication is that God did have other good reasons that Job does not know about. And so God reminds Job about Job's limited knowledge and God's unlimited knowledge.

Now, firstly, of the earth. So, verse 4. Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimension? Surely you know.

Who stretched out a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set? Or who laid its cornerstone while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

You see, God is asking Job whether he knows all about the world, whether he built it, laid its foundations. Of course, the answer is no. Job does not know all about the world because he did not make the world.

[20 : 52] But God knows because he did. And so it goes on. God continues to show his sovereign rule over all creation. In verses 8 to 11, he talks about the sea. In verses 12 to 15, it's the dawn.

In verses 16 to 17, it's the underworld. And in verses 18, or just have a look at verse 18, God says, have you comprehended the vast expanses of the earth that he's just been through?

Tell me, Job, if you know all this. In fact, God really pushes the point with a bit of sarcasm of his own, I think, he says in verse 19 about light and darkness.

He says, what is the way to the abode of light? And where does darkness reside? Can you take them to their places? Do you know the paths to their dwellings?

Surely you know, for you were already born, Job. You have lived so many years, he says. You see, he's saying, Job, think about how old you really are, how old the earth is.

[21 : 59] Were you really there when it was made? Do you really know all there is to know? Well, in chapter 39, God moves from knowing about the natural world, the earth, to knowing about the animal world.

But the point is still the same. God has an intimate knowledge of his world's workings and controls it. But Job does not. And so how can Job know that God is wrong when it comes to his suffering? How can Job know that God has no good reason of his own to allow such suffering? Well, how will Job respond to all this? Somewhat surprisingly, he does not say sorry to God for accusing him of injustice.

Come with me to chapter 40. Chapter 40, verse 1. Then the Lord said to Job, Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?

Let him who accuses God answer him. And then Job answered the Lord, I am unworthy. How can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer.

[23 : 07] Twice, but I will say no more. Job is overwhelmed by God's sheer power, true, but he does not say sorry. The word unworthy there is not a sign that he is sorry.

It literally means little. Job admits he is little compared to God. Earlier on, Job had feared that he would be too overwhelmed to answer God if he ever met one-on-one with him and that's why he wanted a mediator as we saw last week.

And he was right. He is overwhelmed. And so he puts his hand over his mouth and no doubt he feels the impact of God's speech, but he has no answer for God. He has nothing new to say.

Then he's already said that he is innocent and that God seems unjust. And so he's got no more words to add. And so because Job does not say sorry, then God continues in verse 6.

So verse 6, Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm, Brace yourself like a man and I will question you and you shall answer me. Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?

[24 : 16] Do you have an arm like God's? And can your voice thunder like his? Then adorn yourself with glory and splendor and clothe yourself in honor and majesty if you think you do.

Unleash the fury of your wrath. Look at all who are proud and bring them low. Look at all who are, sorry, look at all who are proud and humble them.

Crush the wicked where they stand. Bury them all in the dust together. Shroud their faces in the grave. Then I myself will admit to you that your own right hand can save you, he says.

Now the words arm and voice in verse 9 represent God's power and authority. And so God is saying to Job, do you have the power and authority to rule and administer justice?

I mean, you're accusing me of injustice, but can you do it any better? Do you have the power and authority you need to do that? If so, then robe up with your majesty, says God. Show me your power.

[25 : 18] Show me your ability to bring the wicked to justice. In the words of Jerry Maguire, if you remember that movie, God says to Job, show me the money. Show me your power, your credentials to judge and then, then I'll admit that your own right hand can save you.

That your own power and justice can prove you right and me wrong. A little while ago, I confiscated a toy from one of my children because they were misusing it and they said that that was unfair and as I took it to my study to put it away, I walked into the room to my study and they slammed the door, well, no, it's a church house, they gently closed the door behind me and then exclaimed,

you're not coming out of your room because you're unfair.

I just opened the door and walked out. You see, they thought they could judge me but they had no power or authority to enforce their judgment, you see, which meant they really weren't in a position to be my judge and that's what God is saying to Job here.

God is saying, if you, Job, think you can judge me as being unjust or unfair, if you think you can administer justice better than I can, then show me your power and ability to do that because if you don't have the power and authority, then how can you enforce your judgments?

Now, the rest of the speech, God will go on to talk about two big animals, the behemoth and the leviathan, two great creatures whom no person has power to tame except God.

[26 : 58] And so again, God's point is that if you, Job, want to do my job of administering justice, then you have to have the power to do it. You have to be able to control these two great creatures, for example.

But Job does not have that power. And so, Job responds in chapter 42. So come with me to chapter 42, final chapter of Job, verses 1 to 6.

Chapter 42, verse 1 to 6, we read this. Then Job replied to the Lord, I know that you can do all things. No purpose of yours can be thwarted.

You 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. You said, listen now and I will speak.

I will question you and you shall answer me. My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.

[27 : 56] You see, Job now sees God in a way he hadn't before. He now realizes that God is God. He now admits that he overstepped the mark.

He acknowledges he went too far when he moved from grieving to God to accusing God of injustice and demanding God give him an answer as though God answered to him.

And so Job repents. And in so doing, Job acknowledges who God is and who he is. That is, Job acknowledges that God is the sovereign ruler of the world who knows and controls all things, things too wonderful for Job to grasp.

And Job acknowledges that he is but a man who must trust his sovereign God. Of course, the surprising thing in all of this is that God has still not given Job an answer for his suffering, did you notice?

Though we'll see a bit more of an answer next week when we look at chapter 28. But God's priority here is not to give an answer for his suffering but to restore a right relationship with Job through some tough love, some scary speeches.

[29 : 09] You see, God is concerned that he might continue to be God in Job's life and that Job might continue to trust him as God. And this is really the big lesson for us tonight.

You see, when we suffer and don't know why, the more important issue is not knowing why, but trusting God who knows why. And we'll see that very clearly next week.

It's remembering who God is and who we are. And we need to remember this for two reasons. First, so that we might not overstep the mark. You see, we are to wrestle and vent and cry out to God as Job did.

Sure. But as soon as that venting becomes accusing, as soon as that wrestling becomes demanding, then we've overstepped the mark. God is God and so we must still relate to him appropriately.

Grieving, wrestling, begging, but not accusing or demanding of God as though he answers to us. We must remember who he is and who we are.

[30 : 09] And second, we're to remember this so that we might trust him. You see, because God is sovereign, then as Job says, no plan of his can be thwarted. And it seems with Job's repentance he returns to trust in God, even though at this stage there's no indication that Job's life will get any better.

Yet Job repents and I take it returns to trust in God as he did in the beginning, without any promise or explanation. He trusted in God despite his suffering.

And this is a model for us. In fact, it's what Jesus did. So, if I can hopefully have the next slide. From 1 Peter 2, verse 23, we read this, when they held their insults at Jesus, he did not retaliate.

When he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. Now, of course, Jesus knew why he was suffering, unlike Job, and sometimes unlike us.

We won't know always why we suffer more than another, but we do know more than Job knew. We know that God is at work even in our suffering and that helps us to trust in him.

[31 : 22] In fact, we even know God's goal for us in suffering, which is more than what Job knew. And here we come to our second reading. So, please turn with me to Romans 8, which actually was read first, I think, but our other reading.

If you can't get the slides to work, just leave it for now. Now, so it's page 1133.

So, have a look at verse number 28 to start with. He says, and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Do you see what we know that Job didn't? We know, says Paul, that God is at work in all things, including our suffering. I think Paul particularly has in mind the suffering that comes from persecution as verse 35 suggests, but nevertheless, the promise is that God is at work in all things. And because God is the sovereign creator, as we've seen from Job, then we know he's able to do this. He's able to work in all things. What's more, unlike Job, we also know that God works in all things for our good, it says.

[32 : 45] I once heard a young guy say that according to this verse, then every girl he asks out will say yes. But no, that's not what that verse means. He's misunderstood what good refers to, doesn't he?

What's more, you only have to look at what Paul endures in verses 35 to 36 to know it's not talking about any kind of physical, healthy life or fortune. Paul goes through the ringer, doesn't he?

Rather, it's talking about our spiritual good. And we know this because of verse 29. Have a look at verse 29. For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

See, God's plan is that we might be conformed to the image or the likeness of Jesus. Now, why is that good? Why is that better than health or wealth? Well, because whether you realize it or not, Jesus is the epitome of humanity.

That is, he is the one true human who lived as we were created to live. And so in him we find ultimate meaning, identity, contentment, joy, happiness.

[33 : 56] He teaches us how to be a true human. I remember when iPods first came out. Yeah, I'm getting old. And the first one we got, I was very excited, you know, boys with toys and so on.

Two days later I loaned it to someone to go jogging and it went through the wash and never lived again. I'm not bitter about it at all, but I do loan things out to my wife.

No, I don't. I've forgiven her. I have, did I say that loud? Oh, gee. Inside voice, inside voice. But you see, the things of this life that bring joy and contentment never last.

That's the point. They all have a limited time span. But true joy, true contentment, true meaning is found in Jesus because he is the true human who lived as we were created to live.

And so that's why it's good. It's for our good to be made like him. What's more, because he is God's son, then to be like him means suffering now, yes, but unimaginable glory later.

[35 : 00] These are the things God wants for us, so that's God's goal for us, to be made more like Jesus, to reflect his character more and more and so find true meaning, joy and life, which will include suffering now, but glory later.

Of course, we won't be completely godly like Jesus until we're in heaven, but nevertheless, God is working in all things towards this goal. It's his priority for our lives and I wonder, is this goal our priority for us?

I wonder if it's the goal which we work towards as so much so that we work hard at living like Jesus, that we work hard at reading the Bible to think like Jesus, that we work hard at coming to church to serve like Jesus, that we work hard at praying for others because we want them saved like Jesus.

is God's goal for us our goal for ourselves and for others? Of course, the good news is that even though we sometimes mess up or forget what our goal should be, God is at work in us to achieve it. In fact, Paul is so confident that God will achieve this goal that he goes on to say in verse number 30. Have a look at verse number 30. He says, and those he predestined to be called, you know, to be conformed to the likeness of Christ, he also called.

[36 : 18] Those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified. Do you notice the word glorified there? It's past tense as though it's already happened.

But we're not in heaven yet. We're not fully like Jesus yet. But Paul is so confident that God will make it happen that he writes as though it already has happened. And why is Paul so confident?

Well, verse 31, he says, what then shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also along with him graciously give us all things?

You see, God has already given up his son for us to make us right with him. And that's a good thing, isn't it? I mean, I love you guys, but there's no way I'd give my son up for you.

Well, maybe when he's really being naughty, but no, no, no, no, no, I wouldn't do that. Yet God did that for us. It's extraordinary when you think about it.

[37 : 21] It must have been incredibly hard for him to do that. And if God has done the hard thing for us already, then surely he can do the relatively easy thing of giving us everything we need to make it to heaven, to be transformed, to be like Christ.

And this includes working in all things, including suffering. And so we're to trust this promise, you see. The promise, of course, though, in verse 28, is only for those who love God.

That is, it's only for those of us who are Christians, who have trusted in Jesus. If you are not a Christian here tonight, then you'll miss out on that promise unless you trust in Jesus.

And so trust in Jesus. And for those of us who have, then we are to keep trusting this promise, keep trusting our sovereign God who loves us, who gave his son for us, and continues working for us to make us more like Christ.

Well, let me wrap up. After some chemotherapy and a lot of prayers, a scan showed that Byron's throat cancer was gone. But the doctors did tell him that they weren't sure if the cancer would return or not.

[38 : 35] He had written a few emails updating our year at college. And with the very real threat of the cancer returning one day, he wrote this email. Have we got it on the slide? Yep, great.

He says, what has changed since the scan? In one sense, not much. I will still die sooner or later, but I still continue to trust the God who raises the dead.

I still follow one whose path of faithful obedience meant suffering amidst a groaning and broken world. Health remains a good gift from God, but not the goal of life.

See what he says? Although Byron does not know why he suffered cancer, he knows the sovereign God who rules over all and can even raise the dead. And he knows God's goal for his life is not health, but to be made like Jesus, which I know is what he refers to there.

That's what he meant. And so he continued to trust his God who worked in the past and he's working in the present for his good. You see, Job was reminded of who God is, the sovereign creator of the world, and that he is to continue to trust in him.

[39 : 46] Yet in Jesus we are reminded of even more than Job was, for we are reminded that God is not just the sovereign creator of the world, but that he also loves us deeply to the point of giving his son for us, to the point of continuing to work in all things for us, for our good.

And so when we suffer, how much more than Job are we to keep trusting our sovereign, yes, and loving creator? Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this book of Job.

Father, we thank you that through it and particularly tonight you remind us of who you are and of who we are. We thank you that you remind us that you are the sovereign creator of the world who knows all things more than we know and that you have good reasons for doing what you do.

We thank you for reminding us that you're also a loving God who gave your son for us and continues to work for our good even in suffering. And so knowing who you are, Father, we pray that you'd help us to trust in you.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. I think we're going to sing again. to him in his mother, toð-