

The Portrait of a Blameless Life

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[0 : 0 0] This morning we're beginning our summer sermon series in the book of Job. If we had 15 months, let alone the 15 weeks we have this summer, it wouldn't be sufficient! time to cover the book of Job exhaustively. John Calvin preached 159 sermons through the book of Job.

But our hope is to look at key landing points throughout the book that will hopefully help us understand and get a general view of the main messages and themes in Job and how they apply to our lives. Now when you think about Job, you most likely think of suffering, immense suffering and loss. And if you've read Job, most likely it's because your yearly Bible reading plan took you there. Or maybe you were searching for a specific verse and Google took you there.

Or possibly you or someone you loved was going through great suffering and you were looking for comfort and for answers. Now if you fall into that last category, I hope you did find both comfort and answers. If you did, you might question the series title, Suffering and the Silence of God.

However, if you didn't find the comfort or the answers that you were longing for, maybe you're fully behind the concept of God's silence during our suffering. Now just objectively speaking, God is silent through the majority of the book of Job, more than 80% of it. And as we begin to work our way through this very long, often repetitive feeling, 42 chapters, it might be easy to find yourself anxious to get on with it. Longing for God to break the silence, to show up, to speak comfort, to give answers.

And yet, at the same time, wishing Job's friends would stop. Stop talking, stop trying to give some encouragement, stop accusing, stop arguing that they would just be silent. I think those feelings are one of the goals of the author. Because subjectively speaking, if you've gone through intense suffering and loss, I'm sure you know firsthand how slow it can seem, how long every day seems to take. In the moments, the days, the weeks, the months, possibly even the years, that it seems like God is silent.

[2 : 5 8] Well, at the same time, all those around you are probably saying more than they should about things they might not fully understand. But I hope this summer that you'll begin to see that even when God is silent, it's an expression of his immense love. And it's a precious invitation, an invitation to draw closer, to know and experience him in a more intimate, deep way. Now, even though we're not going to look at Job in depth, if you'd like to dig deeper in your own personal study of Job, there is a commentary that I would recommend. It's Job, the Wisdom of the Cross by Christopher Ashe. And there's a QR code on the screen or in your listening guide that will take you to a link for the books. But there's also a link to a free online summary of the commentary as well, if that would be of use to you.

Now, the book of Job, it's an incredible work of literature. Aside from chapters 1, 2, and 42, the majority of Job, about 95% of it, is written in exquisite Hebrew poetry.

It's possibly the oldest book written in the Bible, and many people believe Moses may have edited it for inclusion in the Hebrew scriptures. Its unique composition has led some modern scholars to suggest that the book of Job is completely fictional. That in some sense, it's an extremely well-written ancient parable. However, we see in both the Old and the New Testament clear references to Job as a historical figure. In Ezekiel 14, verses 12 through 14, Ezekiel writing says, And the word of the Lord came to me, Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it, and break its supply of bread, and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast. Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord God.

And then James, in chapter 5, verses 10 and 11, writes, As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remain steadfast. You've heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you've seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

So I think we have every reason to see the book of Job as capturing historical events, but in a powerful and creative way that's designed to speak to the heart and not just the head.

[6 : 00] Which is also why you'll find it included with other books of the Bible that we call wisdom literature, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

Now, the book of Job begins with its own introduction. And so if you would turn with me to Job chapter 1, if you're using a Bible from the seat around you, you can find it on page 417.

Page 417. And we'll begin in chapter 1, verse 1. The first thing we're going to see is that there was a man.

There was a man. And we need to consider four things about this man. The first is who he was. Who he was. His identity.

If you'll follow along in chapter 1, verse 1, it says, There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. Now, we don't know the exact location of Uz.

[7 : 03] Probably in the land of Edom, which is east of the promised land, because of Lamentations 421, which reads, Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, you who dwell in the land of Uz.

Now, on this map, which is also in your listening guide, you'll see that that places Uz to the east of what would eventually become Israel. But also notice, it places it just to the west of Ur.

And if you remember, Ur is where Abram, who would become Abraham, was called by God to leave and follow him in faith. But also notice, it puts it in the same general vicinity of Midian.

And many years, of course, after Job, we'll find that Moses spends 40 years in Midian, in the same general area as a shepherd, before he leads the Israelites out of Egypt.

Now, when we look at Job, just based on the length of Job's life, as well as the fact that in the book of Job, there's not really any reference to the law, that the way that Job himself offers sacrifices, that gives us some indication, most likely Job lived during the time of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, in that general time.

[8 : 30] So not only do we see who he was, but we also need to consider what he was, what he was, his righteousness. Verse 1 continues, And that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

We need to look at those four things, starting with being blameless. And this is important because this is a key point in the book of Job, that as suffering and tragedy hit, we will see Job's friends time and time again and tell him it must be because of his sin.

And Job will consistently proclaim his blamelessness, that he doesn't deserve what's happened. Now, as it goes on and on and back and forth, you might find yourself tempted to think, maybe Job is guilty of something.

Maybe he doesn't know, or maybe he's deceiving himself. But there must be something there. And Job's friends will continue telling him, it's a sin that he needs to confess.

But maybe, maybe you'll decide for yourself that it's just Job needs to grow. It's to help him mature in his faith, help him to become more, more faithful in some way.

[9 : 53] But isn't that how we tend to view most suffering? We see it either as a result of our sin or discipline of our sin, or we think suffering's been sent to help some deficiency in our spiritual lives, to help us grow in Christ-likeness.

But we have to remember, in the book of Job, Job is really blameless. What happens is not because of sin, and it's not because of the immaturity of his faith in any way.

There must be a third option. A third option for why suffering happens. And I think Eric Orlund summarizes it really well when he says, sometimes God allows pain and loss that have nothing to do with sin in our lives and are not meant to teach us anything.

Rather, our loss and bewilderment become an avenue by which God gives himself to us more than he ever could have before when we were at ease. When God puts us into a position where we must hold on to our relationship with God for God's sake only, in which we stand to gain nothing but God, we start to receive him more fully than we ever had.

Now, thinking about Job's blamelessness, maybe it will help you, as it did me, to recognize that blameless is not the same as sinless.

[11 : 27] Now, of course, I know that only one man has ever been truly sinless. That's Jesus. But I think in the past, I've kind of seen Job as like second place.

You know, like not sinless. He probably had a bad thought once or, you know, lost his temper once, probably with his kids, right? That he was almost sinless.

But the truth is, that's not the picture that we get in Job at all. Job himself admits his sin numerous places in the book of Job. Here's just one example.

Job 14, verses 16 and 17. Job says, For then you would number my steps. You would not keep watch over my sin.

My transgression would be sealed up in a bag. And you would cover over my iniquity. You see, Job's blamelessness paints this picture of a man who honestly acknowledges his sin.

[12 : 27] Who has offered sacrifices in faith to atone for them and believes in faith. He's forgiven. And then lives differently because he is forgiven.

So this term blameless, it really communicates this genuineness, this authenticity in Job's relationship to God. Now, let me just ask you something.

Has there been a time in your life where you said to yourself, I really wish that I could be blameless? That whatever has happened, whatever has gone on, that it could be wiped away, that it could be clean.

And the truth is, no matter what you've done, no matter how big your pride, your selfishness, your evil, your wickedness is, you can be blameless today in Jesus.

If you would follow along with me, Colossians chapter 1, verses 19 through 23, it reads, For in him, that's Jesus, in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

[13 : 47] And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard.

You see, you can be blameless today, but your blameless is a little different than Job's, but similar. It involves honestly acknowledging your sin, accepting in faith Christ's death as the sacrifice that atones for your sin and giving your life to him, believing in faith that you are forgiven in Christ, and then living differently because you are forgiven and have new life in Christ.

So you can be blameless today. And if you'd like to know more about how you can have that kind of relationship with Jesus, please don't leave today without talking to me or to someone around you so that we can make sure that you have a relationship with Christ.

So Job is blameless, but he's also upright. Now, the word blameless talks about his condition or his relationship with God, but the word upright talks about his relationship and how he treats others.

You see, Job dealt with others with moral integrity. He was honest, respectful, honoring, and consistently so. He's the kind of friend or family member or boss or business associate that we all want to have and hopefully that we all want to be.

[15 : 42] And we'll see his uprightness laid out in vivid detail when we get to chapter 31. But not only is he blameless and upright, but he's one who feared God.

Job was truly humble. He lived with an awareness of his place before a holy and a sovereign God. I think Charles Bridges in his commentary on Proverbs has my favorite definition of this fear of the Lord.

He writes, But what is this fear of the Lord? It is that affectionate reverence by which the child of God bends himself humbly and carefully to his father's law.

His wrath so bitter and his love so sweet that hence springs an earnest desire to please him. And because of the danger of coming short from our own weakness and temptations, there's a holy fear, an anxious care, a watchfulness that we might not sin against him.

So Job feared God, but you should ask yourself a question at this point, and that is, how does Job know God? How does Job know God?

[16 : 55] Because if Job was living during the time of the patriarchs, that's long before any of the scriptures we have were written. It's a long time before Moses began under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to capture, to write, to organize the beginning books of the Hebrew scriptures, what we call the Pentateuch, the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

So how does Job, or really any of the patriarchs, how do they know anything about God? Now, it's worth asking that question so we can take just a moment to appreciate God and how from the beginning, from the time of creation, God's been working at revealing himself to mankind and sovereignly working to make sure the things he reveals about himself, those things are passed on.

And so today, as a result, we're blessed to have his written word. We can see several places in scripture that emphasize the importance of passing on this knowledge of who God is and what he's done.

Here's two examples. Genesis 18, 19. God speaking of Abraham says, For I have chosen him that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.

So one of the reasons God calls Abraham is to pass on this knowledge of who God is, of what God has done and how to live rightly before him. We also see when Moses is calling the Israelites to treasure and to obey God's law.

[18 : 34] In Deuteronomy 4, 9, he says, Only take care. Keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life.

Make them known to your children and to your children's children. You see, from the beginning, God's been at work to reveal himself to us and to be sure that that knowledge is captured and passed on until it's finally written down in its entirety for us.

And with that said, just take a minute and consider this chart. You can see it up here, but it's also in your listening guide if it's easier to see. Just four things to consider. Okay, the first is, look at Adam and Methuselah.

Adam and Methuselah, their lives overlapped 243 years. There are 243 years that Methuselah could have sat down with Adam and heard directly from him about everything that had happened from the beginning.

But then notice, Methuselah and Noah, Noah is Methuselah's grandson, their lives overlap 600 years. But Methuselah and Shem, his great-grandson, their lives overlap 98 years, a lifetime for us.

[19 : 52] Can you imagine them working on the ark together and Methuselah telling Shem, yeah, this is what I heard, this is what I know, this is what's important. But then notice Shem. Shem lives 600 years, and I'll just tell you, I hadn't realized until this particular time that Shem outlives Abraham by 35 years.

And that Shem is alive the first 110 years of Isaac's life. So again, just to consider that at the time that Job lived, that most likely it's possible these stories of creation, of a holy God walking with Adam and Eve in the garden, of their rebellion against him, and the fall of humanity into sin and separation from God, the need for sacrifices to atone for sin, even about the worldwide flood, all of those things could have been heard in as little as three degrees of separation.

Now, just to put it in other words, let's say you lived at the time of Job. Well, at that point, Adam could have told Methuselah, and Methuselah could have told Shem, and Shem could have told you.

Now, did that happen? We don't know. The Bible doesn't tell us. We know that it was possible, but the main thing to recognize is that the source of information about God is not as far removed as we tend to think it is.

But whatever the number of degrees of separation, Job knew about God, and what he knew about God had grown into this affectionate reverence by which Job had learned to bend himself humbly and carefully to God's law.

[21 : 34] which also means Job turned away from evil. Now, again, Job's not sinless, but when he sins, he's repentant.

You know, we often talk about repentance and give it the definition of turning away from sin. And that's exactly the picture we have here. This paints a picture of a man whose character is marked by daily repentance, a habitual turning away from evil in his thoughts, his words, his deeds.

So we see Job's godliness as Christopher Ash puts it, Job is a real believer, genuine in his integrity, upright in his relationships, pious in his worship, impenitent in his behavior.

His life was marked by what we would call repentance and faith, which are still the marks of the believer today as they have always been. Now, we also need to consider what he had, what he had, his greatness.

Follow along in verses 2 and 3. It says, there were born to him seven sons and three daughters. He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camel, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.

[22 : 59] Now, the first thing we see is his family having seven sons, three daughters, ten children. All of those numbers in Hebrew are reflective of good, ideal things.

And we'll see momentarily the relationship they had with one another. Job has a wonderful family that he's been blessed with. We also see his prosperity.

You see, Job's a farmer. He's not a nomad. He has a house. He doesn't live in a tent. His extended family have houses. And then these massive herds, sheep for food and clothing, and camels for desert transport, oxen for plowing, and donkeys for local transport of all of this produce with a vast staff of servants that make it all happen.

Just immense prosperity. But not just prosperity. We also find out later that Job had this influence that is worth noting. When he describes it in Job 29, verses 7 through 10, he describes it this way.

When I went out to the gate of the city, when I prepared my seat in the square, the young men saw me and withdrew, and the aged rose and stood.

[24 : 18] The princes refrained from talking and laid their hand on their mouth. The voice of the nobles was hushed, and their tongues stuck to the roof of their mouth. It's this description of influence, of respect, of standing in his community.

So just speaking of his prosperity and his influence, it's probably not an unreasonable comparison to say Job was the Elon Musk of his time. And so it's really, it's no surprise that the summary statement given is that he is the greatest of all the people of the East.

Now, the last thing we need to consider is what he valued. What he valued. His intercession. Follow along in verses 4 and 5.

It says, Job with his sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day. And they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them. And he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all.

[25 : 30] For Job said, it may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus, Job did continually.

Now, a few things to notice. One, notice that Job's relationship with God is intimate. It's authentic. It's inward. It's spiritual. But it doesn't end there.

Job doesn't view his relationship with God as merely a personal thing. He has a heart that desires to see others in right relationship with God as well.

We see that concern first presented here about his family, his concern and commitment to lead them into right relationship with God. It's because he recognizes the wickedness of the human heart.

And that although Job undoubtedly has taught his children what is right and how to live rightly before God, nonetheless, he knows they might have sinned and turned away from God in their hearts.

[26 : 36] So Job would summon them and he would lead each of them in offering sacrifices to make things right with God. Francis Anderson in his commentary on Job says, Job's own act of intercession in offering burnt offerings to restore the holiness of his children shows a belief in the power of a mediator that will lead to his desire later on that someone should do the same for him.

See, this wasn't a one-time thing for Job. He did this continually. It was a lifelong practice such that even as adults, Job's children knew what to expect.

They knew their father would summon them. They knew that he would lead them to right worship and right relationship with God. But Job's concern for others doesn't end with just his children.

We'll see in Job 2 verses 9 and 10 how he seeks to shepherd his wife and guide her thinking. In Job 13 7 through 10 we'll see he's concerned for his three friends' views about God.

In chapter 27 verse 11 he expresses his desire to teach his friends about God's ways. And then finally in chapter 42 verse 9 at the end we'll see Job pray for his friends that their relationship with God would be restored.

[28 : 03] So we see this man Job a godly man who's blessed with both prosperity and influence that cares not only about his own relationship with God and living rightly before him but also cares about others' relationship with God.

We see this picture of the world being the way we want the world to be. A world where the righteous are blessed with prosperity and influence and they use it for God's glory.

But yet even in this perfect picture there's just this subtle awareness that people may act like they love and serve God but in their hearts turn away from him cursing him wishing him gone or dead.

Christopher Ashe summarizes it this way. He says there's something dark in human hearts and Job knows it. Job knows that by nature we do not honor God as God or give thanks to him.

Only sacrifice can cover such sin in the heart. and we know that it's only Jesus' sacrifice that can truly atone for such sin and change sinful hearts.

[29 : 22] So there was a man. But that's not all. We also need to see there was a day. There was a day. And if we're honest the ripples of that particular day wouldn't stop at just changing Job's life forever but they continue down through time impacting even us today.

So just briefly we need to consider four things about that day. The first is who was there? Who was there? The sons of God. Look at verses six and seven.

It says now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan from where have you come?

Satan answered the Lord and said from going to and fro on the earth and from walking up and down on it. So on this fateful day we start by being privy to seeing into the heavenly throne room.

We see God and the word used here is really God's proper name Yahweh. We see Yahweh in the place of absolute authority. And we see these sons of God come to present themselves before Yahweh and give a report.

[30 : 40] Now this term sons of God indicates created beings that we can describe as superhuman or maybe supernatural is better.

We see this term used throughout the Old Testament but here's just a few examples from Psalms. Psalms 29 verse 1 says ascribe to the Lord O heavenly beings O sons of God ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Psalm 82 1 God has taken his place in the divine council among the sons of God in the midst of the gods he holds judgment. In Psalm 89 verses 6 and 7 for who in the skies can be compared to the Lord who among the heavenly beings among the sons of God is like the Lord a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones and awesome above all who are around him.

So these sons of God are supernatural beings but then notice that one of these supernatural beings is highlighted for us the Satan.

Now I say the Satan because there's a definite article here in the Hebrew which is why if you look at whatever translation you have it's quite likely that there's a footnote that says it could be translated as the accuser or the adversary which is what Satan means well this has led to much discussion and an abundance of writing about whether or not this the Satan is the same Satan that's talked about more explicitly in the New Testament.

[32 : 19] Now time constraints keep us from delving into this in any detail but let's just look briefly at Revelation. Revelation chapter 12 verses 9 through 11 it reads and the great dragon was thrown down that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan the deceiver of the whole world he was thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down with him and I heard a loud voice in heaven saying now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down who accuses them day and night before our God and they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony for they loved not their lives even unto death.

So what I can tell you what we can see for sure about the Satan and Job is that he's doing the very same thing we see him described as doing in Revelation he's accusing the brothers now in my opinion that makes it definitely reasonable and I would say likely to think that it's the same supernatural being talked about as Satan in the New Testament.

Now I know the topic of angels and demons always piques everybody's interest and most likely you have a lot of other questions that you'd like answered from these verses and I am not going to answer them because I don't want us to be distracted from the main point.

You see the main point of this brief glimpse into heaven is to make it abundantly clear that Yahweh is the sovereign God who is in absolute control of all things.

He's the supreme and sovereign creator. All of creation lies under his absolute authority. Our God has no rivals. He has no competitors.

[34 : 15] And there's no one that can thwart his holy will. Yet, we also see that in his sovereignty he chooses to govern the world as Christopher Ash aptly puts it by the means of and through the agency of a multiplicity of supernatural powers some of whom are evil.

That is to say the sons of God represent powers that are greater than human powers and yet are less than God's power. They include among their number the Satan and his lying and evil spirits.

So we see who was there. We also need to see what was asked. What was asked. The invitation. Look at verse 8. It reads, And the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job that there's none like him on the earth?

A blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil? Now, the first thing to make note of is the word considered. That word really literally means have you set your heart upon?

And so God basically invites Satan to set his heart upon Job. But notice the two words God uses to speak of Job my servant.

[35 : 39] You see, this term makes clear Job's intimate relationship with God. It communicates Job's honor and dignity that Job is indeed living in a covenant relationship with God.

It's a term we find used 40 times of Moses. Here's just one example from Numbers chapter 12. God speaking says, Hear my words. If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make myself known to him in a vision.

I speak with him in a dream, but not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. When I speak, with him I speak mouth to mouth clearly and not in riddles.

And he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? It's an intimate title. It's a title used of some of the patriarchs.

It's a title used of a number of the prophets. And it really communicates here a powerful intimate relationship between God and Job.

[36 : 43] So God invites Satan to consider or to set his heart upon Job. But we need to be sure we don't overlook what was confirmed. What was confirmed and that's Job's righteousness.

Right? God himself states, There is none like Job on the earth. A blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. God himself affirms that Job is this kind of man.

But also notice Satan doesn't argue with God. There's no pushback. Satan's like, What? Job? That guy ain't blameless? Let me tell you some things. Right? There's no argument.

As a matter of fact, we're going to see just momentarily that Satan goes on to acknowledge Job does indeed fear God and turn away from evil. Which brings us to the final point.

We need to consider what's the accusation? What's the accusation? And it's that God is unjust. God is unjust. Look at verses 9-11.

[37 : 48] It says, Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has on every side?

You've blessed the work of his hands and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has and he will curse you to your face.

Now, there's several important observations. One, again, notice, Job does indeed fear God. Satan is willing to concede that. And also notice, Satan has set his heart on Job.

Right? It appears that all of the previous times he has attempted to mess with Job or his stuff, he's been thwarted by God's protection. That there's a shield around him and all of his things.

Also notice that all of Job's greatness, his prosperity, his influence, his family, all of that is really from God. It's not that Job's a self-made man.

[38 : 50] It's that God has been the source of all of these blessings in Job's life. But then also, think about Satan's accusations. He says, does Job fear God for nothing?

You could translate that. Job's righteousness is not genuine. He's just serving himself. It's just about what he gets. Then he says, you've blessed him on every side.

And the accusation is, you're buying him off. You're bribing him. You're paying him to love you. Then take it all away and he'll curse you. Your system doesn't work.

It produces hypocrites, not worshipers. So we see Job's godliness is challenged as being superficial or selfish, that it's only sustained by God's divine protection and blessing.

But even more than that, worse than that, God's character is maligned. He's accused of bribing Job into devotion, paying him off, making it easy.

[39 : 55] And so here we have the central questions raised. Is God worthy of love for who he is apart from his blessings?

Will a person remain faithful even without receiving any benefits? You see, Satan's basically questioning God's policy of rewarding the righteous.

He says, it's flawed. God, you got this wrong. You're corrupting true virtue. You're making it impossible for there to be true righteousness because you're introducing these ulterior motives.

And eventually, we'll see Job question God's policy of letting the righteous suffer, saying that it's not just, it's undeserved. And really, through the book of Job, we'll see Satan and Job and Job's friends all in one way or another eventually question or challenge God's wisdom in how he rules and runs his creation.

So, on that day, we see who was there, what was asked, what was confirmed and the accusations that were made. Now, as we work our way through Job, we'll consider both the process and the purpose of suffering.

[41 : 14] But this morning, this morning, let's end our time considering, asking ourselves the same basic question that Satan is asking God.

Why is Job pursuing a relationship with God? And let's make it more personal. Why are we, why are you pursuing a relationship with God?

Is it, is it because God is worthy of your love, your devotion, and your worship in and of himself? Or, is it because of what you're getting or what you hope to get from him?

Let me ask you this week to ponder, to consider, what if you lost everything good in your life? What if it happened today?

What if you lost every blessing, your money, your source of financial support, your home, your closest, most precious relationships, your health? I mean, just everything good in your life.

[42 : 16] What if you lost it today? Would you still love, obey, and worship God? But, but let's up the ante because it's hard for us as followers of Christ to, to really consider this because of all the blessings that we receive in Jesus.

But, but imagine if it was possible and in Christ it's not possible, but imagine if it was possible. What if you lost heaven? What if you found out today without a doubt that, that when you die it's just over?

There's no heaven. Or, or maybe worse, what if you found out today you would spend eternity in hell? Would you still love, obey, and worship God?

You see, we have to ask these questions because it's, it's the very question being asked of Job here. Which leads us to verse 12, the last verse.

It says, then the Lord said to Satan, behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

[43 : 27] And so we have this final verse in our passage today and it sets the foreboding tone for what's to come next week. Let's pray.

Father, we come to you this morning thankful for your grace and your glory. Father, confessing that those of us that love you and follow you, we want to be able to say that we love you in and of yourself for you are worthy.

But Father, we know our hearts are deceptive. So we ask that by your spirit you would search us, that you would show us what it is in our hearts that truly drives us to pursue you, that it might be refined, that it might be for our love for Christ, for who he is, first and foremost in all things, that he would be lifted up in our hearts and minds, that our devotion would be pure, that we would be equipped to face whatever comes knowing that if we have Jesus, we have all that we need.

It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Thank you, guys. Have a good day.