

- I. My Notes ... WWC message 1/31
- II. Series: The Problem with Pain
 - Title: It Makes No Sense
 - Text: Job 1-2
 - Quote: "Give thanks to God that He is there, no matter what is happening." — Oswald Chambers (Teacher, Evangelist)
- III. Introduction
 - We're living in a world where people feel the ground shifting beneath them more often than they'd ever admit. One phone call changes a family's future. A doctor's report rewrites someone's plans. A relationship that seemed steady suddenly fractured. Even the people who look composed are carrying something heavy beneath the surface.
Pain doesn't knock politely. It barges in. It interrupts. It rearranges. And it leaves us asking questions we never thought we'd have to ask.
 - Philip Yancey tells a story in *Where Is God When It Hurts?* that captures this reality in a surprising way. He writes about Dr. Paul Brand, a surgeon who spent years treating patients with leprosy. What shocked Dr. Brand wasn't the disease itself — it was what the disease took away: the ability to feel pain. He describes patients who would walk on a broken ankle without realizing it, or some who might rest their hand on a hot stove and not pull away. They weren't reckless. They simply couldn't feel the warning signals that something was wrong. Without pain, their bodies quietly deteriorated.
 - Dr. Brand eventually said something that sounds almost unthinkable: "If I could give one gift to my patients, it would be the gift of pain." Not because pain is pleasant, but because pain tells the truth. Pain signals danger. Pain reveals what's broken. Pain forces us to pay attention.
 - Job's story begins at the very point where pain demands attention — not because he sought it, but because it found him. And like Dr. Brand's patients, Job's pain revealed something deeper than the pain itself.
 - And that's where Job's story meets ours ... Job didn't ask for pain. He didn't deserve it. He didn't see it coming. But his suffering exposed things he never would have seen otherwise — the fragility of life, the mystery of God's sovereignty, and the depth of his own faith. Job's world feels a lot like ours: unpredictable, fragile, and full of moments that don't make sense.
- IV. Without Warning
 - In Job 1, we are introduced to Job. What we discover is that he is a righteous man from the land of Uz who was "*a man of complete integrity, who feared God and turned away from evil.*" (see Job 1:1). Job was wealthy, with many

animals, hundreds of servants, and seven sons and three daughters. God talked about Job to Satan, who challenged him by saying Job feared God only because of his prosperity.

God allowed Satan to put Job to the test, with limits on the test ... *Very well, the LORD told Satan, "everything he owns is in your power. However, do not lay a hand on Job himself." So Satan left the LORD's presence. (Job 1:12 CSB).* Satan then caused Job's losses — his possessions were plundered by the Sabeans and Chaldeans, and his ten children died. Despite these devastating trials, Job remained faithful, declaring, *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will leave this life. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."* (Job 1:21 CSB).

The stage is set for an insightful lesson on human suffering, who God is, and what the church should look like. Job's suffering is the catalyst for the dialogues with his friends and his eventual encounter with God. The key takeaway is that Job's faithfulness in the face of loss foreshadows his later restoration and deepened trust in God.

- Job's story reminds us that faithfulness does not exempt us from suffering — sometimes it invites a deeper testing.
- Most of us live with a quiet assumption: If I do the right things, life will go the right way.
- Job lived that way. At least that is what we see at the start of this story. Look at what we have found out about Job ... he was righteous, he was faithful, he cared for his family. And yet, with all these good qualities, everything collapsed — Job's life fell apart. Without warning.
- This brings to the forefront a deep truth about pain (about life). Pain doesn't check your spiritual resume; it doesn't look to see if you have been "checking all the boxes." Pain doesn't come with the warning, "are you ready for this?" Nor does it ask if you are in a position or place to manage it. Pain simply shows up and its arrival exposes our notions and concepts of security and control.

V. It's More Than a Moment

- I think that some of us have been to the beach. If you have stepped into the ocean, you have been hit by a wave, likely a small one. This is one of the fun things and one of the challenges of being in the water at the beach. Here is the lesson ... as you stay in the water and step a bit deeper, the waves become bigger and hit harder. Once you get knocked down, you stand up — coughing and gasping — another wave hits — and the turmoil starts again. It doesn't seem as if it will end. The problem isn't getting knocked down and struggling to get your breath, it happens. It's the speed at which the next wave comes. And the next one. It's a strong example of what suffering looks like. It just doesn't stop and the problems keep coming.

- And just like those waves, Job's suffering didn't come as a single blow — it came in a series of hits that left him gasping for breath.
- **Job 1:13-19 NLT**

13 One day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting at the oldest brother's house, 14 a messenger arrived at Job's home with this news: "Your oxen were plowing, with the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 when the Sabeans raided us. They stole all the animals and killed all the farmhands. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

16 While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived with this news: "The fire of God has fallen from heaven and burned up your sheep and all the shepherds. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

17 While he was still speaking, a third messenger arrived with this news: "Three bands of Chaldean raiders have stolen your camels and killed your servants. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

18 While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived with this news: "Your sons and daughters were feasting in their oldest brother's home. 19 Suddenly, a powerful wind swept in from the wilderness and hit the house on all sides. The house collapsed, and all your children are dead. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."
- I would say that Job was having a bad day. He didn't suffer one loss, he lost everything – his family, his wealth, his home. One messenger arrives with tragic news, then another, and one after that, and one more. The devastation just kept rolling in. This is a real example of the adage, "when it rains, it pours."
- Have you ever had one of those days when nothing goes right, when life seems to fall apart? For Job it was much worse.
- In life, pain seems to find traveling companions. It never is just being hit with one thing. It comes in waves. It compounds and overwhelms.
- You know what I am talking about ... the job loss that hits right after that medical diagnosis – the relationship breakdowns and break ups right after the funeral – the never-ending financial pressure ... I could go on, but the point has been made.
- But there is purpose in those moments. Pain has a way of revealing where our trust is placed. Is our faith built on our bond with the Lord God or expected outcomes? Is our hope in Jesus Christ or in circumstances and the results? Does the peace that we search for come from our trust in the character and nature of our Lord or in the way that life goes?
- Pain and suffering reveal our faith; they don't destroy it.
- These Scriptures don't minimize pain; they interpret it. They give us a lens through which to understand what God is doing beneath the surface.
- James tells us this. *2 Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its full effect, so*

that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing. (James 1:2-4 CSB).

View the pain and suffering as a “great joy” ... this doesn’t make a lot of sense, and most don’t want to hear it.

- It must be a message that is needed because Paul says something remarkably similar. *3 And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, 4 endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. 5 This hope will not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5:3-5 CSB).* Stay the course, have the proper perspective, and your character grows.

VI. Think About It

- Why was Job enduring this suffering? Let’s go down the checklist ... Suffering is a result of sin, especially unconfessed sin. Not so, we see that in this case. Pain comes from punishment or correction. That isn’t what is happening in this instance.
- One of the common misconceptions I hear today is that “if I were closer to God, then this wouldn’t be happening. If I prayed more, read my Bible more, gave more, or served more then I wouldn’t be facing these issues.” Hearing Job’s story tears that lie apart. Sometimes the most faithful people face life’s hardest challenges.
- In the difficulties of life, in the challenges of the moment, even strong believers face some daunting questions ... why is this happening? What did I do wrong? Am I standing alone? These are real life questions that each person asks at one time or another.
- When those questions arise, think about the words of Jesus. *“I told you these things so that you can have peace in me. In this world you will have trouble [persecution; suffering], but be brave [take courage/heart]! I have defeated [victory over; conquered; overcome] the world.” (John 16:33 EXB)*
- It is important to recognize that pain and suffering do not signify the conclusion of a matter; rather, they mark the start of a process. Suffering initiates a journey that can lead to restoration, reconciliation, and personal growth.
- For believers, suffering is not random or meaningless — it is a sovereign, purposeful part of God’s plan that reveals truths about His character, our calling, and our hope.
- Suffering Reveals God’s Sovereignty and Faithfulness – In Scripture we find that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Even in pain, He is in control, and His faithfulness is proven through trials. Paul testifies that God is “the God of all comfort” who comforts us in all our troubles (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)
- Suffering Refines and Strengthens Faith - Trials are a means of refining our faith, like gold refined by fire (1 Peter 1:7). James calls believers to rejoice in

suffering because it produces perseverance and maturity (James 1:2-4). It is through these moments of pain that we are able to reflect the kindness and compassion of God to those who are watching our journey.

- Suffering Points to Christ - Through suffering, Christians are conformed to the image of Christ, learning obedience, humility, and self-sacrifice (Philippians 3:10; Hebrews 5:8). Jesus' own suffering reveals the depth of God's love and the cost of redemption.
- Suffering Reveals the Value of Perseverance - Hebrews 12:1-2 urges believers to "run with endurance the race set out for us," fixing their eyes on Jesus. Suffering reveals that endurance is not passive endurance but active trust in God's promises.
- Suffering Reveals Where Our Hope is Focused - Paul reminds us that our present sufferings are not comparable to the glory that will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18). Suffering reveals that our hope is not in this life but in the eternal redemption that awaits.
- Suffering Reveals the Need for Community - Suffering is not meant to be endured alone. Galatians 6:2 calls believers to "bear one another's burdens," showing that suffering reveals the importance of fellowship and mutual encouragement.
- The reason we look at stories like Job's is that we can see that there is no shame in having or asking questions. It's in those questions and struggles that we find a place to breathe, to be, and to grow in wisdom and understanding.

VII. Wrapping Up

- Some of you are living your own Job chapter right now. You didn't ask for it. You didn't see it coming. And you're doing your best to stand in the waves. This series is for you — not to give easy answers, but to help you see the God who stands with you in the storm.
- Pain and suffering are not interruptions to the Christian life; they are part of the landscape through which God forms His people. Job's story reminds us that suffering is neither random nor wasted. It becomes the place where God's sovereignty is revealed, where faith is refined, where Christ is more clearly seen, and where endurance is cultivated. In these moments, our hope is redirected from the fragile promises of this world to the unshakable promises of God.
- When the waves of life rise without warning, when the questions outnumber the answers, when the losses come faster than we can process, Scripture assures us that God is not absent. He is present. He is faithful. He is working. And He is shaping a people who trust Him not because life is predictable, but because He is unchanging.
- So, as we begin this journey looking at the Problem with Pain, let us hold fast to this truth: suffering is not the end of the story. It is the beginning of a deeper

work — a work that leads us toward maturity, toward Christlikeness, and toward a hope that cannot be shaken. May we learn, like Job, to anchor our lives not in what we can see, but in the God who holds all things together, even when life makes no sense. And as we walk through this series together, may we discover that the God who met Job in the ashes is the same God who meets us in ours.

- Let's Pray
- Grace First, Grace Always