

## **JOB: FINDING PEACE ON AN UNPREDICTABLE PATH**

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### **SERIES SUMMARY:**

The book of Job includes one of the most well-known portions of the bible, both inside and outside of Christian circles. What is well-known about Job is his suffering, which is why many easily relate to him. Everyone suffers. The suffering of Job gives strong encouragement to anyone who has suddenly found themselves on an unpredictable or difficult path.

What Job loses, however, takes up only a very small portion of the book. When taken as a whole, Job's 42 chapters offer incredibly rich and comprehensive encouragement, guidance, and perspective that will help anyone successfully navigate their way through any of life's challenges.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Since the specific losses Job suffers are so well known, it will be tempting to make that the focus of each sermon. While his losses will provide important context for each sermon, it's important to recognize and stick to the specific focus of each week so that each sermon doesn't sound like it's addressing the same thing. Also be sure to read the daily reading assignments along with the congregation to better address the context each week.

### **WEEK 1: Why Bad Things Happen to Good People**

#### **Focus for this week:**

This is the introduction to the entire series. Of all the sermons, it will include the most detail about Job's specific losses. In particular, it will address why bad things happen to good people like Job. The perspective these verses give us on both God's and Satan's relationship to Job's pain is especially insightful and comforting.

**Sermon text:** **Job 1:1-19**

#### **Main points to consider highlighting:**

- Job didn't have a choice when he lost everything.
- The question of "Why?" God allows pain into our lives is one that troubles many.
- Job was "blameless and upright." He lived a life of faith.
- Satan was allowed to see if Job was ready to practice what he said he believed.
- God allowed this to happen. He even suggested Job to Satan.
- God calls Job "my servant;" a great description of our purpose in life.

**Suggested lessons:** **Luke 13:1-9**

Jesus directs us when we see bad things happen to ‘good’ people. Rather than using these times to evaluate how deserving a person is of pain or punishment, Jesus encourages us to use this world’s pain as a reminder to repent and make sure we are right with the God who graciously delivers us from all pain in heaven. He urges us to repent now since God’s patience with us will one day come to an end.

### **1 Peter 5:6-11**

Peter draws our attention to the reality of the devil’s work in our lives and urges us to resist him by standing firm in our faith.

#### **Hymn suggestions:**

*Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus* - CW 452  
*I Walk in Danger All the Way* - CW431  
*Make Me a Servant* - LAPPY 202

#### **Daily reading assignments:**

Day 1 – Job 1 (starts with first sermon)  
Day 2 – Job 2  
Day 3 – Job 3  
Day 4 – Job 4  
Day 5 – Job 5  
Day 6 – Job 6  
Day 7 – Job 7

## **Week 2: Dealing with Relationship Pain**

### **Focus for this week:**

This week focuses on the importance of living by faith within the context of our immediate family. Job didn’t suffer alone. His wife experienced all the same losses. But their reactions could not be more different. Job responds in faith (“may the name of the Lord be praised”), while his wife responds in unbelief (“curse God and die”). Job’s response leads to peace, while his wife’s leads to bitterness and conflict in their marriage. We will focus on Job’s relationship with his wife, and the impact of Job’s faith on the lives of his children.

#### **Sermon text:**

**Job 2:6-10 (Relationship with wife)**  
**Job 1:4,5 (Relationship with children)**

#### **Main points to consider highlighting:**

- The majority of Job’s life brought him great joy in his family. His pain was the exception.
- Even a little pain has a powerful impact on our perspective and on our relationships.
- His wife’s goals were in line with Satan’s. Anytime we practice an ungodly attitude or action, we bring Satan’s influence into our relationships. Lots of biblical guidance regarding marriage and parenting.
- Job taught his children the importance of faith (feasts/purification). This had an eternal impact on them and brought Job great comfort in their death.

**Suggested lessons:****Luke 8:19-21**

Jesus defines “family” as those who “hear God’s Word and put it into practice.” God’s family is the only one that stays together forever. Those who live by faith in Jesus are the only ones who are members of God’s family.

**Ephesians 5:21-6:4**

Paul outlines specific duties for husbands, wives, parents, and children; all designed to focus our attention on God’s perfect love for us; all designed to best meet the unique needs of those we love.

**Hymn suggestions:***Love is the Gracious Gift – CW 505**What a Friend We Have in Jesus – CW 411**Ready, Lord – LAPPY 252***Daily reading assignments:**

Day 1 – Job 8

Day 2 – Job 9

Day 3 – Job 10

Day 4 – Job 11

Day 5 – Job 12-13

Day 6 – Job 14

Day 7 – Job 15

**Week 3: Choosing the Right Friends****Focus for this week:**

We define what a true friend really is by focusing on the actions and words of Job’s friends. Their actions of being there for Job would have lifted him up. Their words that tried to convince Job that he was being punished by God discouraged him and made his suffering even worse. This week, we discover how best to befriend a world that is filled with pain.

**Sermon text:****Job 2:11-13 (his friends being there for him)****3:1 (the first negative words out of Job’s mouth)****4:7-9; 22:5,10 (Eliphaz blaming Job for his pain)****16:12b,13 (Job seems to agree with his friends)****Main points to consider highlighting:**

- Job only cursed God after his friends came
- Believing that we suffer because God is punishing us is a very natural thought to us
- Scripture encourages us to “endure hardship as discipline.” Discipline is an act of love.
- Job’s friends didn’t focus Job on God’s promises, but on his own (dis)obedience
- The many “one another” statements in the bible; importance of being there for others

- Friends focus one another's attention on the cross; where the most obedient man was already punished for our disobedience

**Suggested lessons:**

**John 9:1-11**

Jesus' disciples wondered if a man born blind was being punished for his (or his parents') mistakes. Jesus assured them God doesn't work that way. Our pain is not only a reminder of our need for a Savior, but it also gives God an opportunity to display the greatness of his power and love through our lives.

**1 John 4:7-12**

John identifies love for others as the key attitude of godly friends; urging us to love one another "since God so loved us."

**Hymn suggestions:**

*Amazing Grace – CW 379*

*Rock of Ages – CW 389*

*Make Me a Light*

**Daily reading assignments:**

Day 1 – Job 16,17

Day 2 – Job 18

Day 3 – Job 19

Day 4 – Job 20

Day 5 – Job 21

Day 6 – Job 22

Day 7 – Job 23

**Week 4: God Is in Control**

**Focus for this week:**

Losing control of our lives does not mean that we are in a bad or hopeless situation, though it's easy to believe differently. We look at verses in which Job's loss of control has become too much for him to bear. God uses this feeling to help us answer the question of who/what our God really is. Is our god our ability to control our lives? Do we worship God only to get good things from him? Or is our God the true God; the one who uses his control over all things to love us and save us from our brokenness?

**Sermon text:**

**Job 13:20-14:1**

**Main points to consider highlighting:**

- We hate losing control. We feel better when things turn out just the way we want.
- Satan wondered if Job felt good about his life only because he felt like he was in control; because everything went pretty much the way he wanted.

- Connect Jesus' words from John 5 with this. He told the healed cripple to "stop sinning, or something worse will happen to you." Focusing on sin/grace is far more important than a focus on our ability to control, because it has a lasting impact on our peace/joy.
- Job 23:10 – "When he has tested me, I will come forth as gold." = Living by faith.

**Suggested lessons:**

**John 5:1-15**

We see a man who had no control over his life. He was crippled from birth. Jesus showed his ability to control all things – even disease. But he used the miracle as an opportunity to preach a message of sin and grace.

**Ezekiel 37:1-14**

The dry bones in this valley have no ability to do anything. They're dead. Yet the Word of the Lord brings them to life. The Word of the Lord does the same to our hearts when we're discouraged by our inability to control the details of our lives, because it points us to the God who uses his control over all things to love us.

**Hymn suggestions:**

*Precious Lord – CW 451*  
*Be Still, My Soul – CW 415*

**Daily reading assignments:**

Day 1 – Job 24,25  
 Day 2 – Job 26,27  
 Day 3 – Job 28  
 Day 4 – Job 29  
 Day 5 – Job 30  
 Day 6 – Job 31  
 Day 7 – Job 32

**Week 5: It's OK to Question God**

**Focus for this week:**

This week shows us Job confronting God directly and lamenting, "I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil." Can those words be spoken by a child of God? Is it possible that Job lost his faith during his struggle? At the very least, this week shows the very real impact suffering and pain can have on even the most godly disciples. Job obviously didn't understand everything that was happening to him. But he didn't need to in order to find comfort. He simply needed to be reminded who his God is.

**Sermon text:**

**3:11-25, 7:11-16**

**Main points to consider highlighting:**

- Job doesn't hold back in his criticism of God or regarding how discouraged he felt. Chapter 7 seems to indicate Job was slightly suicidal.
- No one questions God when life is comfortable; only when we're in pain. Our pain is real

- Key thought to wrestle with: Can you sincerely question God and still have sincere faith?
- That Job couldn't handle everything in his life didn't mean he was more broken than anyone else. It meant simply that he's not God.
- Because we don't have God's understanding, we're going to have questions for him.
- Faith is believing God is good, even when things don't look very good.
- The reason we're so rarely satisfied on earth is because this broken world wasn't made for us. God made us for something better – heaven, which is ours through Christ.

**Suggested lessons:**

**Hebrews 11:1,13-16,39,40**

The 'Heroes of Faith' chapter. These particular verses direct us to focus on the "better country" of heaven and the fact that we will never be fully satisfied on earth.

**Genesis 32:22-32**

Jacob wrestling with God gives us a great example of living by faith. He continued to engage with God, refusing to let him go, because he was holding onto a promise God had made him. Jacob was living by faith.

**Hymn suggestions:**

*Take the World, but Give Me Jesus* – CW 355  
*I'm But a Stranger Here* – CW 417

**Daily reading assignments:**

**Day 1 – Job 33**  
**Day 2 – Job 34**  
**Day 3 – Job 35**  
**Day 4 – Job 36**  
**Day 5 – Job 37**  
**Day 6 – Job 38,39**  
**Day 7 – Job 40,41**

**Week 6: God's Final Answer to Our Pain**

**Focus for this week:**

In the last week of this series, God finally speaks to Job. And he doesn't hold back. Near the end of the book, we can see that the primary focus of Job's life was Job, just as we each so easily fall into the temptation of making our lives all about ourselves. With some of the most powerful words in Scripture, God reminds Job that the universe doesn't revolve around Job. It revolves around God. A life focused on God will never disappoint. A life focused on self always will.

**Sermon text:**

**Job 31:6-10,35,40; 42:6**

**Main points to consider highlighting:**

- Job demanded that God answer him
- In the suggested verses of this sermon text, Job uses some form of the word "I" or "my" 17 times. His life was very much focused on himself. He saw himself as the victim who was owed something (better treatment) from God

- God’s answer to Job humbled him tremendously
- Use the reading assignments from the previous week to highlight God’s greatness
- God made Job twice as prosperous at the end of the book, but not before he repented of his self-centeredness (42:6)
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**Suggested lessons:**

**Matthew 14:22-33**

This is the well-known section of Peter walking on water. He walked on water as long as he kept his focus on Jesus. He started sinking when he took his eyes off of Jesus and focused more not only on the wind and waves, but on how those winds and waves affected him.

**Ephesians 6:10-18**

Paul urges us to “put on the full armor of God;” each piece of which is a powerful reminder of something God does for us.

**Hymn suggestions:**

*I Need Thee Every Hour* – LAPPY 137

*It Is Well with My Soul* – LAPPY 154

*How Great Thou Art* – CW 256

*He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands* – LAPPY 111

**Daily reading assignments:**

**Day 1 – Job 42**

**Day 2 – NA**

**Day 3 – NA**

**Day 4 – NA**

**Day 5 – NA**

**Day 6 – NA**

**Day 7 – NA**