



# HOW TO STAND WHEN YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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# How to Stand When You Don't Understand

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Job 1:6-22

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1723

As we go through life, there are many things that will not make sense to us. We will experience brokenness and confusion, and it will feel like heaven is absolutely silent.

In the Book of Job, God allowed the devil to bring hardship on Job because the devil didn't think Job could love God just for who He is. (Read Job 1:6-12.)

This story—split up into three acts—shows us how to stand, even when we don't understand.

## **Act one is an unexpected tragedy.**

Having done nothing to deserve it, Job has his life cave in on him. He loses his family and fortune, his good health, his reputation, and his friends—and he has no way to understand why.

But during this overwhelming devastation, Job continued to praise God. Job 1:21 says, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Through this example, we learn that in times of unexpected tragedy, we can praise God by faith. We don't have to understand or feel like praising, but in all things and all seasons, we are to worship Him.

## **Act two is an unexplained mystery.**

After losing everything, Job's soul enters a dark night. He begs God for answers, to understand why. Job 13:15 says, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Sometimes, it is God's plan that we don't understand. When we trust Him anyway, our faith is strengthened.

Adrian Rogers says, "We do not live by explanations, we live by promises."

## **Act three is an unexcelled victory.**

Job gets an answer from God, but it is not an answer to any of his proposed questions. Instead, God reminds him of His sovereignty and sufficiency.

Adrian Rogers says, "God never gave Job an answer; He just gave Job Himself."

In his suffering, Job learned that God was not only necessary but that He also was enough to get him through his trial. Remembering this is how we are able to stand.

## **Life Application**

Are you suffering, and you don't understand why? Remember that God is with you—He is sovereign and sufficient. Pray today, not that you would get the answers you think you want, but that you would recognize God Himself is enough to stand in this.



# How to Stand When You Don't Understand

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) We find out that as we go through life, there are many things that will not make sense to us.
  - i) There will be times when we are broken, crushed, confused, and nothing makes sense.
  - ii) We turn to God and ask Him why, but Heaven is absolutely silent.
- b) Job 1:6-9
  - i) "Escheweth evil" in verse 8 means that he hates what is wrong.
  - ii) This passage begins a drama, in three acts, that will help us to stand when we don't understand.
- c) One of the most perplexing commands in the Bible is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
  - i) It is easy to give thanks for some things, such as food, health, family, a new job, etc.
    - (1) There is no difficulty in that.
    - (2) But that isn't what this Scripture says.
  - ii) This Scripture says that we're to give thanks, not just for the good things, but in everything.
    - (1) What about evil?
    - (2) What about pain?
    - (3) What about divorce?
    - (4) What about apostasy?
  - iii) The key is that it doesn't say "for" everything; it says "in" everything.
    - (1) Take this verse and marry it with Romans 8:28.
    - (2) But how are we to give thanks for some things and even in some things?
- d) The background for today's message begins with a scene in Heaven.
  - i) Satan is allowed access to Heaven.
    - (1) "Satan" and "devil" mean "slanderer" or "accuser".
      - (a) Satan wants to slander.
      - (b) When we slander or have an accusatory nature, we are doing the work of the devil.
  - ii) Job 1:7-8
    - (1) Satan had been walking up and down the Earth, looking for someone he could criticize.
    - (2) God asked, "Have you considered my servant Job?"
      - (a) God was watching Job, and Job brought pleasure to God.
  - iii) Satan began to criticize Job.
    - (1) Job 1:9
    - (2) He implied that God had bribed Job and that Job had a commercial faith.
    - (3) He implied that the only reason Job served God was for what Job could get out of it.
  - iv) Job 1:10
    - (1) Satan knew that there was a hedge around Job because he had been trying to break through that hedge.
    - (2) And Satan is trying to get at you right now.
      - (a) Thank God for the hedge that He puts around us.
  - v) Satan offered God a challenge.
    - (1) Job 1:10-11



- (a) He claimed that if God took down the hedge, then Job would curse God to His face.
- (2) He implied that Job only loved God because of “because” love.
  - (a) “Because” love is the weakest kind of love.
    - (i) Some of us don’t have strong families because the only kind of love that we have for our wives or husbands is “because” love.
      - 1. I love you because you’re beautiful.
      - 2. I love you because you’re rich.
      - 3. I love you because you’re smart.
    - (ii) If we love with a “because” clause, then the love goes away when the “because” is taken away.
      - 1. People stay together because of what they feel they can get out of it.
      - 2. This is the kind of love that Satan accused Job of having.
  - (b) God was going to prove that this was not so.
    - (i) Job 1:12
      - 1. Not only does this tell us that Satan has the power to afflict, but it also tells us that Satan’s power is limited.
        - a. He is powerful, but he is not all-powerful.
- e) In today’s message, we will look into this drama in three acts.
  - i) We will learn how to stand when we can’t understand.

## 2) ACT ONE: IN UNEXPECTED TRAGEDY, WE PRAISE (JOB 2:3, 1:13-22)

- a) Life caved in on Job.
  - i) He had no way to understand why life had caved in on him.
  - ii) He had not done anything wrong at all.
- b) Job 2:3
  - i) Notice the last two words of this verse, “Without cause”.
    - (1) There was nothing that Job had done to deserve what he got.
- c) When trouble comes, one of the first things that we might say is, “What did I do wrong?”
  - i) Maybe we did do something wrong.
  - ii) But it is very possible that we have done nothing wrong.
- d) Job lost his wealth.
  - i) Job 1:13-17
  - ii) Job, who was one of the wealthiest men of his day, lost it all.
    - (1) His possessions were stripped from him.
    - (2) He went to bed a millionaire, and he woke up a pauper.
- e) Job lost his family.
  - i) Job 1:18-19
  - ii) All of his children were gone.
- f) Job lost his fitness.
  - i) Job 2:7-9
    - (1) A “potsherd” is a piece of broken pottery.
    - (2) Job had oozing, vile sores from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet.
      - (a) He could not get comfortable.
      - (b) He could not lie down.
      - (c) He could not sit up.
      - (d) The doctors could not do anything for him.



- (3) At this moment, Job's wife became the voice of the devil because that was exactly what the devil said that Job would do.
  - (a) Job 1:11
- g) Job lost his face (reputation).
  - i) Job 2:11
  - ii) Job's three comforters came to him, and they began to philosophize.
    - (1) Their philosophy was that Job had sinned.
      - (a) They claimed that no one could suffer the calamity that Job had suffered unless that person had done something wrong.
      - (b) They said that if Job was right with God, then he wouldn't know sickness and sorrow.
    - iii) There are a lot of people who tell us that if we just get right with God, then we will be wealthy, healthy, and will never know any more pain or trouble.
      - (1) But this is not the truth.
        - (a) Job had not done anything wrong, and he was suffering.
    - iv) Job lost his reputation because everyone wondered what Job had done that was so terrible.
  - h) Job lost his friends.
    - i) Job 19:13-14
    - ii) When trouble comes, a friend is someone who will come in with that trouble and then stand by us and help us.
    - iii) Job's friends forsook him.
    - iv) Even his relatives were gone from him.
    - v) Job 19:19
    - vi) It is a hard thing to take when it seems like there is not another soul on Earth who understands or even cares.
  - i) What do we do when tragedy comes?
    - i) Job 1:20-22
    - ii) When unexpected tragedy comes, we praise God by faith.
      - (1) We don't have to know why.
      - (2) We don't have to understand.
      - (3) This is not being hypocritical; it is being a saint.
        - (a) We don't feel like praising in these moments.
        - (b) But in everything give thanks.
          - (i) Thessalonians 5:18

### 3) ACT TWO: IN UNEXPLAINED MYSTERY, WE TRUST (JOB 13:15)

- a) Job 13:15
- b) The book of Job ends without Job ever knowing what went on.
  - i) God didn't tell Job that what was happening was a contest.
    - (1) The devil had said that if everything was taken away from Job, then he would curse God.
    - (2) God was going to prove the devil wrong.
      - (a) Job was going to help Him prove the devil wrong.
- c) Tragedy goes to mystery.
  - i) Job 23:1-5
    - (1) Job was saying, "God, where are You?"
    - (2) Job wanted answers.



- ii) Job 23:8-9
  - (1) Where is God?
- iii) Not only does Job have misery, but he also has mystery.
  - (1) It does not make sense to him.
- iv) We think we can bear almost anything if we just know why.
- d) Life is not a problem to be solved; it is a mystery to be lived.
  - i) This is what the book of Job is telling us.
- e) We do not live by explanations; we live by promises.
  - i) God never did explain anything to Job.
- f) Sometimes, it is God's plan that we don't understand.
  - i) When we don't understand and we trust Him, that is a far greater faith than understanding and trusting Him.
  - ii) Robert Frost said, "It was of the essence of the trial that you shouldn't understand it at the time. It had to seem unmeaning to have meaning."
- g) In time of tragedy, praise; in time of mystery, trust.
- h) Andrew Murray put it this way:
  - i) In times of trouble, God's trusting child may say, first, that He brought me here.
    - (a) It is His will that I am in this place.
    - (1) Next, He will keep me here in His love and give me grace in this trial to behave as His child.
    - (2) Then, He will make the trial a blessing.
      - (a) Teaching me the lessons He intends for me to learn and working the grace that He means to bestow.
    - (3) Last, in His good time, He can bring me out again.
      - (a) How and when, He knows.
  - ii) I am here by God's appointment.
  - iii) I am here in God's keeping.
  - iv) I am here under His training.
  - v) I am here for His time.
- i) Someone else has written the following:
  - i) God is too good to be unkind.
  - ii) He is too wise to make a mistake.
  - iii) When we cannot trace His hand, we can trust His heart.
- j) Job 1:21
- k) Job 13:15

#### 4) ACT THREE: IN UNEXCELLED VICTORY, WE STAND (JOB 38:1-4)

- a) Job finally gets an answer from God, but God never answered any of Job's questions.
  - i) God just answers Job.
    - (1) He answers the questioner.
    - (2) He never gave Job any answers.
  - ii) God just gave Job Himself.
    - (1) God gave Job a revelation of Himself.
    - (2) He did not say why; He revealed who.
    - (3) He didn't give a reason; He gave a relationship.
  - iii) There are some things that we will never understand until we get to Heaven.



- b) Job learned the sovereignty of God.
  - i) Job 38:1-4
  - ii) God asked Job some of the hardest questions on Earth.
  - iii) Isaiah 55:9
    - (1) There are things that we don't know and don't understand.
  - iv) God is the Creator.
  - v) God is the sovereign God.
  - vi) God can do whatever He wants.
- c) Job learned the sufficiency of God.
  - i) Job 42:1-2, 5
    - (1) Job finally sees God.
    - (2) Job's three friends were talking about God, but Job is now talking to God.
  - ii) God is enough.
    - (1) We all know that God is necessary, but many of us may not understand that God is enough.
    - (2) We may not know that God is enough until God is all that we have.
  - iii) Where are you getting your joy?
    - (1) Are you getting your joy from your children or your health?
      - (a) If those are taken away, then will you still have your joy?
  - iv) Job had nothing and no one, except God.
    - (1) He learned that God is sufficient.
  - v) Psalm 37:4
    - (1) He doesn't mean that He will give us things, health, a job, or anything else.
    - (2) He will give us Himself.
      - (a) When He does, then we can stand when we don't understand.
- d) We don't have to know why.
  - i) All we must know is Him.
    - (1) God is sovereign.
    - (2) God is sufficient.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) You can go from tragedy to mystery to victory, just like Job did so long ago.
- b) You may be hurting, and what you really need is not relief from your pain as much as you need God.
  - i) If you don't know the Lord Jesus, then you can know Him today.
- c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16





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Would you take God's Word and turn to the book of Job, comes just before Psalms in the Bible, the book of Job. And, turn to chapter 1. You're going to find out that as you go through life, there are many, many things that will not make sense to you. And some of them really won't matter. But, there'll be other times when you're broken, and crushed, and confused, and nothing makes sense and you turn to God and you ask God why? And Heaven is absolutely silent. I want to talk to you today on this subject, "How to Stand When You Don't Understand".

The book of Job chapter 1 verses 6 through 9, "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Whence comest thou?' Then Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From going to and fro in the Earth and from walking up and down in it.' And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth. A perfect and an upright man and one that feareth God and escheweth evil,'" that is he hates what is wrong. "Then Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Doth Job fear God for nought?'" "Do you think he loves You God? He only loves You because You've bribed him. He only loves You because You bought him off." And we begin here a drama, a drama in three acts that's going to help us to understand how to stand when we don't understand.

Now you know, one of the most perplexing commands in the Bible is this. It's found in First Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 18. And it says this, "In everything give thanks, in everything gives thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Now it's easy to give thanks for some things, it's easy to give thanks for food, for health, for family, for a new grandbaby, when you're favorite ball club wins, when you get a new job, there're so many things it's easy to give thanks for, right? There's no difficulty in that. But that isn't what this Scripture says, this Scripture says, not just for the good things, but in everything give thanks. What about evil? What about pain? What about when your husband walks out on you? What about starving children? What about rape? What about divorce? What about AIDS? What about apostasy? What about the fact that you go to the doctor and he tells you there's some greedy malady that's gnawing away at your life? What about these things? This Scripture almost seems to mock us. When it says, "In everything give thanks." Well of course, the key is it doesn't say "for" everything, it says "in" everything. Take that verse and marry it with Romans 8:28, "For we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose." That helps some. But, how I say, can we give thanks for some things, even in some things? The book of Job will help us. How to stand when you don't understand.

Well, let's get the background and then we're going to look at this tragedy in three acts. It's not a tragedy really, it's really a victory, but it begins as a tragedy. It's a drama in three acts. Now first of all, I want you to understand what has happened. There's a scene in Heaven and Satan is allowed access to Heaven. And the name Satan means slanderer. The devil is one who is a slanderer. And Satan means accuser. So, Satan wants to slander, and if you ever slander, you're doing the work of the devil. If you have an accusatory



nature about you, you're very much like the devil. And so, the devil is there and God the Father says to him, "Where have you been?" He said, "I've been walking up and down in the Earth", evidently he's looking for somebody that he can criticize. And God says, "Have you considered My servant Job?" Look in Job 1 verse 8, "There's none like him," He says, "on the earth, a perfect and an upright man." It pleases me to know that Job brought pleasure to God. You know I would like for God to look down at me, or look down at you and say, "I take great delight in that man." You see, God was watching Job and Job brought pleasure to God.

And so God says to Satan, "Satan, have you noticed My servant Job?" And of course then Satan begins to criticize Job and says, "Well, God, You're deceived. You think Job is so hot. You think job is so great. You think Job is such a special person. Let me tell you about Your servant Job. The only reason that Job serves You is because You have bought him off. You've bribed him. He has a commercial faith. The only reason he serves You is for what he can get out of it. Why, You've built a hedge around him." Now that makes me wonder, how did Satan know that God had built a hedge around Job? Of course, Satan knew because he had been trying to break through that hedge and Satan's trying to get at you right now. And he is trying to get at me. And thank God for the hedge that God does put around us.

But then Satan throws down the gauntlet and he offers God a challenge. He says, "I'll tell You what. You think Job is such a wonderful man. You take down the hedge a little bit. You let me get at him. Let me take away the blessings You've given him. And I'll tell you what he'll do for You, God. He will curse You to Your face." Look in Job 1 verses 10 and 11, "Hast Thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands. And his substance is increased in the land. Put forth Thine hand now and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face." That is, "God, he only loves You because of because love." Do you know what "because" love is? That's the weakest kind of love. "I love you because." And some of us don't have good strong families because the only kind of love that we have for our wives or husbands is because love. "I love you because you're beautiful. I love you because you're rich. I love you because you're smart. I love you because you're strong." You see, all of these things, if you love with a because clause, then when the because is taken away, then the love goes.

I heard about a man and his wife were moving into a beautiful, scrumptious new home, and she was the wealthy one; she had inherited the money. And she said, "Harold, I want you to know that if it weren't for my money, we wouldn't be in this apartment." And then they looked out there and there was that beautiful car out in the driveway and she said, "Harold, I want you to know if it weren't for my money that car wouldn't be there." They moved a stereo into the den, and she said, "If it weren't for my money, that stereo wouldn't be there." He had enough. He said, "Edna, if it weren't for your money, I wouldn't be here." That's because love. People stay together because of what they feel they can get out of it. That's the kind of love that Satan accuses Job of having. He says, "No wonder Job serves You. You've bought him off. You've bribed him. You've been so good to him." And God says, "No! That's not so. And I will prove it." And so, the battle begins.

Look in Job 1 verse 12, "And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Behold all that he hath is in thy power. Only upon himself put not forth thy hand.' And so Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord." Now that tells us that Satan has the power to afflict. But, it also tells us that Satan's power is limited. He is powerful, but he is not all powerful. And then, we begin a drama in three acts. And I want to tell you as we look into this story, how to stand when you can't understand.



Act one is **unexpected tragedy**. Life just caves in on Job. And he has no way to understand why life has caved in on him. It is nothing that he has done. He has not done anything wrong at all. Go to Job chapter 2 and verse 3, and I want to show you this, “And the Lord said unto Satan, ‘Hast thou considered My servant Job? That there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man. One that feareth God and escheweth evil. And still he holdeth fast his integrity. Although thou movest me against him to destroy him,’” now watch this last two words, “‘without cause.’” There’s nothing that Job has done that deserves what he gets. Nothing. One of the things that will happen to you when trouble comes, when your child is hit by a car, when you get cancer, when you lose your job. One of the first things you might say is, “What did I do wrong?” Well, maybe you did do something wrong. But it is very possible that you have done absolutely nothing wrong.

I want you to see the tragedy that came to Job when he had done nothing wrong. Look, beginning in chapter 1 and verse 13 through 17, “And there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house. And there came a messenger unto Job and said, ‘The oxen were plowing and the asses feeding beside them and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped to tell thee.’ And while he was yet speaking, there came another also, and said, ‘The fire of God is fallen from Heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped to tell thee.’ And while he was yet speaking, there came another also and said, ‘The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped to tell thee.’” Just like that, Job, who was one of the wealthiest men of his day, lost it all. His possessions are stripped from him. Job went to bed a millionaire and he woke up a pauper. Just like that, it’s gone. His wealth is stripped from him.

Not only did he lose his wealth, he lost his family. Look in Job chapter 1 verse 18 and 19, “And while he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, ‘Thy sons and they daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.’” His fortune is wiped out just like that. And now not only his fortune, but his family. All of his children are gone. There’s a tornado and the house falls in upon his children. They’re all in that house and they die.

Well, it gets worse. Job chapter 2, look if you will in verses 7 and 8, “And then went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd,” that’s a piece of broken pottery, “to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.” Here’s this man now. His wealth is gone. He’s bereaving for his children. He has a broken heart. They have died and there seems to be no reason whatever that his children die. And now he has this corruption. These oozing, vile sores from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. He cannot get comfortable. He cannot lie down. He cannot sit up. The doctors can’t do anything for him. It gets so bad his wife says in Job 2:9, “Why don’t you just curse God and die?” And at that moment she became the voice of the devil because that’s exactly what the devil said Job would do. He said, “God he’ll curse You if You allow me to do certain things to him.”

But then, not only has he lost his fortune, and lost his family, and lost his fitness, but he’s also lost his face; that is his reputation. Look in Job chapter 2 now, and begin to look in verse 11, “And now when Job’s



three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came everyone from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.” Hence we get the phrase, Job’s three comforters. Now here are these three guys have come. And they come in and just sit down and look at Job and they begin to philosophize. And their philosophy, if we had time to show you is simply this, “Job you’ve sinned, son. Job you’ve done something wrong because we know that no man could suffer the calamity that you’ve suffered Job, unless he’d done something very, very, very bad. Now Job, why don’t you quite being a hypocrite? Job, why don’t you quit protesting your innocence? Why don’t you fess-up Job? Why don’t you just let us know the terrible, horrible things that you have done. Because if you’re right with God, you can’t be sick. If you’re right with God, you can’t lose your job. If you’re right with God you won’t know sickness and sorrow.” Have you ever heard that lie? Folks, there are a lot of people telling that lie on television, these joy boys today on television. And they’ll get on there and tell you that if you just get right with God, you’ll have the key to Ft. Knox. You’ll just be wealthy and healthy and you’ll never know any more pain and no trouble. There’s just one thing wrong with that. It’s a lie and there is a Greek word for it and it’s called bologna. Now folks, it is not so. And here’s Job, he has not done anything wrong and he is suffering and he’s lost his reputation because now everybody says, “I wonder what ole Job did. I wonder what he’s done that’s so terrible.” He’s lost face before these.

And then on top of that, he lost his friends. Go to chapter 19 and look with me if you will for a moment. Just fast forward to chapter 19. You know, it wouldn’t be so bad if someone were to just come and put their arm around old Job and hug him and say, “Job, I love you fellow. I don’t know what’s happened, but I know Job that you’re a good man. And I know that God loves you and I want to love you too.” But look in Job 19 verse 13. He says, “He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.” I mean, a friend is somebody when trouble comes in, they come in with that trouble, to stand by you and help you. But they just forsook old Job. Even his relatives, his kinsfolks, they’re gone from him. Look if you will in chapter 19 verse 19, “All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.” I tell you, that’s a hard thing to take. When you need help and you need love and you need somebody to understand and put their arm around you and they walk out on you. And it seems like there’s not another soul on Earth who understands or even cares. Well, what do you do when tragedy comes?

I want to tell you what you do. Now folks, it’s very, very important that you understand what you do when this comes. Go back to chapter 1 if you will and look if you will in verse 20, “And Job arose, and rent his mantel,” that is he tore the hood that was over his head, “and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped, and said, ‘Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.’” If that’s not underscored in your Bible, underscore it because you’re going to need it. “‘The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.’ And in all of this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” Now, what do you do when unexpected tragedy comes? You praise. You praise. Just praise God by faith. You don’t have to know why. You don’t have to understand. You just simply say, “God, I praise You.” You say, “I’d be a hypocrite.” No, you’d be a saint. You say, “Well I don’t feel like praising.” Of course you wouldn’t. You say, “I don’t understand.” Of course you don’t. But in everything give thanks. Just simply say, “God, I worship You. God, I praise You, I praise You.”



Now, that brings us to the second thing. First of all, in unexpected tragedy, give praise. Secondly, in **unexplained mystery, give trust**. Look if you will now in chapter 13. And folks, pay attention because you're going to need this, we're all going to need it. Job chapter 13, look in verse 15. Job said this, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Do you see it? If that is not underscored, you better underscore it. Job 13 verse 15, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Now, let me tell you something, you and I have the book of Job in our hands. We have the Bible and we can read the book of Job from beginning to end. And we were back there behind the stage when God and Satan were talking; we read all this. Job has not read all of this at this time. He doesn't know all of this. The book ends without Job ever knowing what went on. God didn't say to Job, "Now Job, what's happening here is we're having a contest. And the devil says if I take everything away from you, you'll curse Me. And I'm going to prove the devil is wrong and I'm going to shut the Devil's mouth. And you're going to help Me to shut the devil's mouth." God never tells Job that. Job doesn't know that. We know it. Yeah, sure we know it because we're reading it. But, Job didn't have the book of Job to read. I want you to understand that.

Now, let me just show you what kind of darkness Job is in. What kind of mystery Job is in. See, tragedy goes to mystery. Go if you will to chapter 23 and look in verses 1 thru 5 and see if you've ever been here. If you haven't, maybe you'll be there soon. "And Job answered and said, 'Even today my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning.'" He said, "The way I suffer, I cannot even express what really is in my heart. My groaning will not even express it. "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! That I might come even to His seat," to His throne. He's saying, "God, where are You?" He said, "I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say unto me." He said, "God, You owe me some answers." Oh, if I only knew how I could find God. Go down to verses 8 and 9, "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; backward, but I cannot perceive Him: On the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand." Where is God? Have you ever been there? See, Job, not only does he have misery, he has mystery; it just does not make sense to him.

You know, we can bear almost anything we think, if we just know why. As a pastor, I've gone to so many funerals, so many hospitals, so many children's wards. I've had good strong dads come up to me with tears brimming in their eyes and their chin quivering and they take me by the lapel and say, "Pastor, why is this happening to my child, why? Why? We want to know why? Where is God?" Learn this about life. Life is not a problem to be solved, it is a mystery to be lived. That is what the book of Job is telling us. We do not live by explanations, we live by promises. And God never did explain anything to Job. Sometimes it is God's plan that we don't understand. Because when we don't understand and trust Him, that my friend is a greater, greater faith than understanding and trusting Him. Robert Frost said it this way and I think he said it perfectly. "But it was of the essence of the trial that you shouldn't understand it at the time. It had to seem unmeaning to have meaning." In time of tragedy, praise. In time of mystery, trust.

The great Andrew Murray put it this way. He was a saint of the past and this is what he wrote, "In times of trouble, God's trusting child may say first, 'He brought me here. It is His will that I am in this straight place. Next, He will keep me here in His love and give me grace in this trial to behave as His child. Then, He will make the trial a blessing. Teaching me the lessons He intends for me to learn and working in the grace He means to bestow. Last, in His good time, He can bring me out again. How and when He knows. Say, one: I am here by God's appointment. Two, in His keeping. Three, under His training. Four, for His



time." And someone else has written, "God is too good to be unkind. He's too wise to make a mistake and when we cannot trace His hand, we can trust His heart." Now in time, a tragedy; praise. "The Lord gave, the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." In time of mystery, trust. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

Act one, tragedy. Act two, mystery. Act three, victory. Let's move on to the third act here and find out what Job did. Now, in unexpected tragedy, we praise. In unexplained mystery, we trust. But, **in unexcelled victory, we stand.** Now, Job finally gets an answer from God. But God never answers one of Job's questions, all He does is answer Job. He answers the questioner. He never does give Job any answers. He never does say, "Now Job, this is why all this is happening." He just shows Himself to Job. And we're going to see that in a moment.

I was going through some deep heartache. I mean some of the deepest sorrow I've ever known in my life. And I was sitting in the old building. And some girl, stood to sing. And she sang a song, I'd never heard it before. She sang, "When answers aren't enough there is Jesus". When answers are not enough there is Jesus. And she sang it beautifully. But I thought, "Oh little lady, if you only knew what you're singing. If you only knew what you're singing." How that song touched my heart. And how that song is exactly what Job is all about. God never gave Job an answer. He just gave Job Himself. We're going to see this in a moment. He gave Job a revelation of Himself. He did not say why, He just revealed who. He didn't give a reason, He gave a relationship. And when Job shut up, God showed up. I want you to see this. Job learned three things about God and I hope you'll learn them today. Because if you don't learn these three things about God, you'll never be able to stand when you don't understand. Because there are some things you will never understand till you get to Heaven; if you ever get to Heaven. And when you do get to Heaven you won't need to understand because you'll see one look in the face of Jesus and you'll say, "What questions?"

But I want to tell you the three things that Job learned about God. And I want you to learn them. First of all, he learned **the sovereignty of God.** Turn if you will to Job chapter 38. And look if you will, in verses 1 through 4, "Then the Lord answered Job." Now, ole Job cries, "He's coming. He's going to tell me the answer." "The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said," He answers him with a question. Look at this, "'Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou Me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Declare, if you have understanding.'" And then the rest of this chapter is full of questions like that. He asked Job some of the questions, the hardest questions on Earth. Of course, Job hasn't got the foggiest. God says, "Now Job you've been asking Me questions. Job, you don't even begin to be able to understand My ways and your ways. 'As the heavens are high above the Earth are My ways above your ways,' and so forth. And so, God never really answers Job's questions. He just asked Job some questions to say to Job, "Job listen, did I consult you when I did all this? Where were you when I flung this world out into space? Where were you when I spread out the skies? And, where were you when I scooped out the seas, and heaped up the mountains? Where were you Job?" Job just had to sit there and look dumb. "Job, there're some things you don't know. You don't understand. I am the Creator. I am the sovereign God. I can do whatever I want." And the first thing Job learned about God is the sovereignty of God.

And then he learned the sufficiency of God, and now we are really closing in. Go to chapter 42. He learns the sovereignty of God. He learns that God is God and He can do whatever He wants. And then he learns the sufficiency of God. Look in verses 1 and 2, "Then Job answered the Lord, and said, 'I know that





Thou canst do everything.” That friend, is the sovereignty of God. “And that no thought can be withholden from Thee.” And then, he goes on to say in verse 5, “I have heard Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee.” Job finally sees God. Job’s three friends are talking about God, but Job is now talking to God. Job says, “Lord, thank You. Thank You. I’ve seen You. And because I have seen you, that is enough.” Now, listen precious friend, all of us here today, know that God is necessary; we all know that. But, I wonder how many of us know God is enough; God is enough. Let me say it again, God is enough. You see, you may not know God is enough, until God is all you have. Where’re you getting your joy? You say, “Well, from the Lord.” How do you know you aren’t getting it from you children? Well, take away your children and see if you still have your joy. Where are you getting your joy? From your health, are you? Or from God? Well, how do you know you’re not getting it from your health? Take away your health and see if you still have your joy. See, God reduced Job down to this. That Job had nothing and nobody but God, and he learned that God is sufficient.

St. Augustine wrote a sermon on the pure love of God. And in that sermon, Augustine asked this question. He supposes that God came to you and offered you a deal. And here’s what God says to you. I want you to listen to it. God says, “I will give you anything you want.” Here’s the deal God is making. “You can possess the whole world. Nothing will be impossible for you. You will have infinite power. Nothing will be a sin. Nothing forbidden. You will never die, never have pain, never have anything you do not want, and always have everything you do want except for just this one thing. You will never see My face.” Then Augustine asked this question. ‘Would you take that deal?’ He said, “If not, you have the pure love of God.” Augustine asked this question. “Did a chill arise in your heart when you heard the words, ‘You will never see my face?’? That chill is the most precious thing in you. That is the pure love of God.”

What’s he saying? Now, folks, we’re in deep water now, we’re in deep water. God showed up when Job shut up. And God said, “Job, I am sovereign. And Job, I am sufficient.” That’s what the psalmist meant in Psalm 37 and verse 4, “Delight yourself in the Lord and He’ll give you the desire of your heart.” He doesn’t mean He’ll give you things, and health, and a job, or anything else. He will give you Himself. And friend, when He does, that’s how to stand when you don’t understand. You don’t have to know why. You may never know why. All you must know is Him. He is sovereign. And He is sufficient. We’re in deep water this morning, but folks, you can go from tragedy to mystery to victory. Just like old Job did so long ago. We ought to be grateful for Job, that he suffered all this that we might look here today and learn this lesson.

Let’s bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. I know there are some of you who are hurting. What you really need is not relief from your pain, as much as you need God. You just need the Lord. And if you don’t know the Lord Jesus, I want to help you know Him today. So, bow your heads in prayer and let me help you to pray to invite Him into your heart. Why don’t you pray like this, “Dear God, I know that You love me and I know that there’s nothing that can separate me from Your love. There’s no sorrow, there’s no pain, there’s no difficulty, there’s no loss that can separate me from Your mighty love. You’re sovereign and You are sufficient. And now, dear Lord, I need You. I open my heart and I receive You. I thank You, Lord, that You sent Your son Jesus to die for me. I believe He paid my sin debt on the cross. And now, like a little child, I open my heart and I receive Your love and I receive Your Son. I receive Your forgiveness. I receive Your salvation. I trust You and You only and always to save me. And Lord I know that not only are You necessary, You are the only one who is enough for me.” Father, I just pray that many will be praying a prayer like that today. In Jesus’ wonderful name. Amen.



2941 Kate Bond Road | Memphis TN 38133 | (901) 382-7900