



November 13, 2016

Job 39 - 42

"My Life and Suffering"

Pastor Gary Hamrick

In his final message of a four-part series through the book of Job, Pastor Gary teaches about having a proper perspective on our suffering. We may not be able to understand or control some aspects of adversity in our lives, but we can try to gain the right perspective so that we can persevere despite our suffering. Pastor Gary used a potato and an egg to illustrate the two different ways people respond to the same adversity.

The Potato And The Egg

1. Pastor Gary said: "What is interesting about these two things is that if you were to plunge them both into the same pot of boiling water, the same boiling water would have an opposite [effect] upon these two objects. The egg would become harder and the potato would become softer. The same boiling water would produce different results in these two different objects, and the more intense the boiling water became, the harder the egg would become and the softer the potato would become. I bring this up because the reality of the difficulties and trials and tribulations in our lives will produce similar results, in that, you can face the same adversity as someone else and have an opposite reaction. For some people, their adversity, trials [and] difficulties, when the heat is turned up, if you will, will make them hardened in life. They will [become] cynical [or] calloused [or] they will become indifferent about things, and even turn away from God. While at the same time... others who face the same adversity will be more like the potato. They will become softer. They become [tenderer], more humble, [and] they actually turn toward God, instead of getting hardened about life, and about God."

2. Some people believe we react to various situations because of the way we are “wired.”
3. The way we react to adversity has more to do with our perspective than our personality.
4. Pastor Gary said: “It’s better to be softened by suffering, than hardened by suffering. We can learn a lot from Job, because he was a man who became softened by suffering. He became more broken. He became more humble. He became someone who turned toward God. He didn’t get angry with God. [He] had questions about why he was suffering, but that’s normal [and] natural when we don’t understand what is happening in our lives. [He was] otherwise a man that was tender toward God.”

Job’s Counsel On Suffering - Limit Your Isolation

5. God was angry with Job’s friends because they said things that misrepresented him, but Job’s friends did a few things right - they came to Job, stayed with him, and ministered to him with their silence and their presence.
6. We should be careful not to be isolated in our pain.
7. It’s true that some people need to go through suffering privately, but we should remember that it’s never a good thing to be isolated for too long.
8. It’s okay to allow just a few people to minister to us as long as we don’t shut everyone out.
9. It’s important to remember that isolation can breed desperation.
10. Sometimes we may have to force ourselves to go on or get out of bed or open up to other people so they can share in our suffering.
11. [Galatians 6:2](#) - “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ [, which is the law of love].”

Job’s Counsel On Suffering - Learn Your Limitation

12. Many people torture themselves wanting to know the “Why?” for things that are outside of their control or beyond their understanding.

13. The truth is that oftentimes there are no answers, but we have to trust and rest in God.
14. **1 Corinthians 13:12b** - *"Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."*
15. **Job 42:2-3** - *"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know."*

Job's Counsel On Suffering - Look For The Savior In Your Suffering

16. The book of Job is the oldest book in the Bible, and Job predates Jesus by at least 2,000 years.
17. There are three distinct references to Jesus in the book of Job, in which Job looks to the Savior in his suffering!
18. Pastor Gary said: "Job's wish is our reality. Job [wished for] and [longed] for a Savior to be revealed. We are now 2,000 years [on] this side of the cross. We have the reality of Jesus!"
19. **Job 9:33-35** - *"If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both, someone to remove God's rod from me, so that his terror would frighten me no more. Then I would speak up without fear of him, but as it now stands with me, I cannot."*
20. Jesus is the arbitrator; the one who mediates for us!
21. **1 Timothy 2:5** - *"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."*
22. **Job 16:19-21** - *"Even now my witness is in heaven; my **advocate** is on high. My **intercessor** is my **friend** as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend."* (Emphasis added)
23. Job understood that the Savior was his advocate, his intercessor, and his friend.
 - a. **1 John 2:1b** - *"... if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One."*

- b. **Romans 8:34b** - *“Christ Jesus... is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”*
 - c. **John 15:13-15** - *“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants... Instead, I have called you friends...”*
24. **Job 19:25-27** - *“I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed [physical death], yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes - I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”*

The Conclusion

25. It's true that God restored everything to Job, but that is not a pattern or a promise.
26. God restored everything to Job because God was the one who allowed everything Job had to be taken.
27. Pastor Gary said: “When it comes to our suffering, however, this is an example, but not a pattern. This is a story not to be [understood] as a continual pattern [about] the way God operates. God is not obligated to restore in your life what he has not taken. He didn't take your marriage. He didn't take your child. He didn't take your possessions or your business or your loved ones; a fallen world did. We now suffer the ramifications of living in a sin-polluted world because of man's original rebellion against God. Now this world is full of death and disease and heartache and trials and tribulations and all kinds of sad and messy things.”
28. **John 16:33** - *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*
29. Until the Lord takes us to the place he's prepared for us, he will give us the grace and ability to persevere through difficulties.
- a. **John 14:2** - *“In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.

2. Read [Job 42:7-17](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's illustration of the egg and the potato. (See #1 through #4 above)
4. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about times when they reacted to difficult situations like an egg or a potato.
5. How did the Holy Spirit help you cope as he helped you through your situation?
6. What are some of the dangers of being isolated during times of suffering?
7. Read and discuss [Galatians 6:2](#), and focus on ways we can be a blessing to others in their times of suffering.
8. What are some examples of times when you've been frustrated or angry with the Lord because you weren't able to figure out why you were suffering or experiencing difficult times?
9. Read and discuss [1 Corinthians 13:12b](#) and [Job 42:2-3](#).
10. Spend time reading and talking about [Job 16:19-21](#), and how Jesus, the Savior, is our advocate, intercessor, and friend. (See #22 and #23 above)
11. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about Job's life and how his story should be viewed as an example instead of a pattern. (See #27 above)
12. Read and discuss [John 16:33](#).
13. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).