

12a JOB

This is Friday, the 14th of July, 2006. We continue tonight our study in the Book of Job. We pause at the outset of each Bible class to, as they used to say in the army, orientate ourselves.

Orientate, by the way, is not a verb. But to orient ourselves, to remember that we are God's children. He has sealed us with His Holy Spirit.

And one of the functions of the Holy Spirit, one of the blessings that He bestows on us, is to give us insight into the Word of God, to give us a memory of the Word of God, and to help us see the ways that the Word of God applies to our life. This is so much better than a healing gift, or some kind of a speaking in tongues, or some of the things that people seek the Holy Spirit for. It is so practical and so important for our day-to-day life to know that God's Spirit is with us, and is leading us into the truth, and giving us memory and insight, and comprehension of the ways to apply the Word of God.

There is no more important time to be susceptible to His ministry than when we are looking at the Word of God and seeking to incorporate it into the reserves of doctrines stored in our soul. So, this is a good opportunity to ensure that we have washed our own feet, and that we have forgiven anyone who has offended us in some way, so that the road is clear, and the air is clear, and our hearing is clear to partake of God's Word in a spiritual way. Shall we pray? Father, what a blessing it is to have the occasion, have the opportunity, have the freedom, to assemble with believers of like mind, to spend time in fellowship, to give and receive blessing, and to see the work of Your Holy Spirit in our fellowship as we pursue together a better understanding of Your Word.

We ask that You will lead us and guide us so that we may rightly divide the Word of Truth, and that in so doing, we will be thoroughly equipped for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

We pick up our study tonight in the book of Job in chapter 18. If you are properly oriented and you remember where we are, you know that of the three dialogue cycles, we are smack in the middle. We're in the middle of the second cycle.

We are looking at the second friend, Bildad, who has responded to Job and has more or less reiterated some of his points from the first go-round. He chides Job. He chews him out a little bit.

And as we have seen the alternating dialogues between Job and his friends, one very strong emphasis comes out. The friends tend to talk about people. They tend to be subjective.

God is mentioned and God is referred to, but it is people. It's the wicked and the way they live, and the righteous and the way they live. And this seems to be the determining factor.

The determining factor is, well, what do you do? How do you live? That's what's going to make the great vending machine in the sky give you what you want. If you do well, you will prosper. Now, this is based in truth.

There is a lot of truth in it. Isn't this what God told Cain? If you do well, will you not be accepted? But if not, sin lies crouching at the door. It has a desire for you, but you must master it.

You must rule over it. Isn't that what God communicated from the beginning? This is one of the most interesting ideas that I personally have encountered thus far in the book of Job. Because the words of these men are recorded in Scripture.

Why? If they're off base and if they're giving faulty viewpoint, why would it be recorded at length in the Scripture? This was the same question I asked myself about Ecclesiastes when I was told over and over again, well, this is Solomon after he sort of went off the tracks, went off the rails, and was quote-unquote in reversionism, or was in carnality in his human viewpoint. Why would God put human viewpoint in a book of the Bible? Do we really need this written down for us? All we have to do is refer to our own thinking or the thinking of the world. Do we really need it enshrined in the Scriptures to help us see the way the world thinks? We're enmeshed in it.

We're drowning in it. We're surrounded by it. I suspected from the beginning, and our study together confirmed, that that is a much misunderstood book.

And it is, in fact, a very elevated and rich treasury of divine viewpoint. And it is the consummation and some of the highest pushing of the envelope in the Old Testament. And Solomon has just got his face pressed against the glass, longing for the day that we now enjoy, the day in which we live, where there is freedom to pursue an understanding of God.

There is a fuller revelation. There is the opportunity to lay up treasure in heaven. And he said, you know, I feel like I'm trapped under the sun and the work that I do is all temporal and temporary and cyclical.

And what can man do? And he is pushing forward. All these died in faith, Hebrews tells us, not having received a promise until we come along. And it won't be until the Millennial Kingdom that the Old Testament saints get the chance to partake and to pursue those things, partake of and pursue, those things that we now often take for granted.

Well, I would argue the same is true for these speeches of Zophar and Bildad and the other guy, Eliphaz. Thank you. Momentary loss of consciousness there.

Eliphaz, Zophar and Bildad. These speeches are not recorded just as a foil. They're too detailed.

They're too lengthy. And why are they here? They're good. They're quoted.

Some portions are quoted in the New Testament of the friends' speeches. So, they can't be there

just as a reference point of human perspective. But, what's the problem? Why does God say at the end of the book, only Job has spoken rightly of me? Because it's not enough to know the truth.

It's not enough to be able to recite the truth. It's not enough to know chapter and verse of the truth and be able to repeat it forward and backward. I've known many seminary professors who can give you point by point, extensive documentation, proof texts, books that have been written, church fathers they can cite.

They know their subject inside out, upside down, backwards and forwards. And yet, there is a problem. Think of the Pharisees.

Very same thing. Masters of the Old Testament can quote you chapter and verse on any subject you want to name. You may have read books or maybe seen a movie or something where very erudite men will speak to each other.

This used to happen a lot in English literature from a century or two ago where friends would be conversing and they would start going back and forth with Scripture. One guy would say something in a verse and the other guy would respond with a verse and they knew the Scripture so well that they could come up with a verse that when taken out of context would sort of answer the other guy and fit the occasion. This is the mastery of the subject that the Pharisees had and yet, Jesus Christ stood right in front of them and they could not see.

They couldn't identify him. What was the problem? Ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth is how Paul puts it. Always learning but never gaining a real knowledge, a practical knowledge, an effective, applicational knowledge of the truth.

These men, Eliphaz and Bildad and Zophar know the truth and they speak the truth and it's in the Word of God because it is truth but in this context and applied to Job's situation it's off the mark. Now this ought to concern us. It ought to concern you and it ought to concern me because we study the Word of God.

We like to think that we've learned a few things, come to an understanding of a few things, right? But that's not enough. It's not enough. There are a lot of very, very knowledgeable Christians, knowledgeable scholars.

A lot of us are very knowledgeable but that is insufficient. The test comes in application and Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar are misapplying their knowledge, clearly. Now, what question does this raise in our minds? How can I know whether or not I am misapplying the truth? That's the question that comes to my mind and if these guys who can compose these beautiful poetic speeches, rich in detail, rich in content and be wrong, what's going to keep me from doing the same? Well, it's an amazingly simple thing and you know the answer already.

How did we define subjectivity versus objectivity? What are the principles of subjectivity? How can you tell when you're being subjective? You have your eyes on what? Eyes on self, eyes on people, eyes on things, on circumstances, eyes other than on God. And we saw last time in some detail the contrast between Job who, in spite of the fact that he is suffering horribly and in spite of the fact that his friends are kind of picking on him and misjudging him and accusing him falsely of evil, his speeches are replete with references to God over and over and over. If I had the time, I would go through all 40 odd chapters of these dialogues and count the number of times that Job makes direct reference to God and then go back and look at each of the friends.

They'll mention God usually at the beginning and at the end and in the middle it's all about this is what happens to the righteous man and this is what happens to the evil man and their gaze is leveled in a horizontal direction and they're looking around. What works? What happens with people? Well, this is the test. We can ask ourselves the question, as I apply my knowledge of the Word of God, as I am seeking to make decisions and implement policy and engage in activities and so on, who am I watching and what am I thinking about? Who am I trying to please? What is my real goal? You remember we also classified human thinking under three categories.

Goals, values and priorities. You remember the difference between those? Priorities is when we sort things as being more or less important with reference to other things and those are not fixed. It depends on the context.

I love my wife above all other people on earth but if I am called on by my work to go out of town, I don't say, well, I'm sorry I can't go out of town because my priority is my wife and I can never leave her. There are times when we set our priorities based on the needs of the moment and so I might say, well, the priority in this particular moment is to make money so that I can feed my family and clothe my family and keep my family cool in the summer, warm in the winter, etc. and this calls for me to go out of town.

So priorities in any given moment will adjust to fit needs. How do we shuffle our priorities? Well, this goes back to our values. Values don't change.

I mean, not for the exigencies of the moment. Values are relatively fixed. Does the value I place on my wife or my family or my children ever change? That's one of the things that helps me determine what my priorities should be on any given day or at any given moment is what is the value that is assigned to them and the other thing that affects how I distribute my priorities in any given moment is what are my priorities and that's a different thing altogether.

Priorities, I'm sorry, what are my goals? What is the long-term objective that I have in my life? And based on my values and based on my priorities, I'm sorry, I can't even keep my own vocabulary straight. Based on my goals and values, I will set my priorities at any given moment. The priority right now for us is not to eat food.

It isn't to impress people. It isn't to make sure that there are clothes in the closet or gas in the car or clean laundry in the drawers. Right now, our priority is to concentrate on the Word of God.

Now, we can't maintain that all the time or indefinitely. If we sat in Bible class all the time, we would be completely dysfunctional. But at this moment, our priority is to concentrate on the Word of God.

Why? Because one of our fixed values is the importance of learning the Word of God, of growing in grace and knowledge of the Savior, of living the life that God wants us to live. And that spills over into goals. What is your goal? If your goal is to party down, this wouldn't be the best place to accomplish that goal.

You need to be down at the West End or Deep Ellum or someplace. Or you might want to be at a manure kicker bar or something down there someplace. But based on goals, based on values, based on priorities, this is how we live our lives.

And subjectivity versus objectivity is going to be a reflection of those goals and values and priorities. Now, as you read these speeches, just look at what is occupying the stage. When we saw chapter 18 last time, Bildad is speaking.

First of all, he's looking at Job. Job, when are you going to shut up? That's his opening salvo. It seems more polite here in the English, but that's because the translators have gone easy on Bildad.

But he basically says, Job, when are you going to shut up? How long till you put an end to words? Gain understanding, and afterward we will speak. If you'll quit being a moron, I'll talk to you. I mean, this is his... He's pretty much a cut to the chase kind of guy.

Why do you treat us like dumb animals and treat us like morons? Are we camels? Are we donkeys that you ramble on and on? Why don't you be quiet and pay attention and let us talk to you? That's his opening point. You who tear yourself in anger, shall the earth be forsaken, shall the rock be removed from its place? Should we just drop everything and throw over everything we've learned and everything we know and all the traditions of the elders and everything and treat you like some kind of a special case? So now, ask yourself the question. Subjectivity versus objectivity.

What is Bildad looking at here? What are his eyes on? Well, right now he's looking at Job. He's saying, Job, you're screwing up. You're being a moron.

You're treating us like morons. You're talking too much. You need to be quiet.

Then he goes on and he says, the light of the wicked goes out. If somebody's light's going out, if somebody's lamp is blowing out, they're wicked. That's just the way the world works.

And so now he's going to talk about the wicked. Eyes on people. Light is dark in their tent.

His lamp is put out. The steps of his strength are shortened. His counsel cast him down.

He's cast into a net. He walks into a snare. Taken by the heel.

He's trapped. A noose is hidden for him. Terrorists frighten him on every side.

His strength is starved. This is what happens to the wicked and he's all wrapped up in the fate of the wicked. He says all of these things happen.

He doesn't say who makes them happen, does he? He says it could just as easily be fate. Verse after verse after verse. He is uprooted from his tent.

They parade him before the king of terrorists. They dwell in his tent. For none of his brimstone is scattered on his dwelling.

His roots are dried. This is one of the things they tell you when you take English or business writing or something like that. They say you should try to avoid the passive voice.

One of the marks of bad writing is when the passive is used all the time. And a lot of times people fall into this because they think it sounds official. And so a fireman or a policeman writing a report or somebody writing a business report, they will say, well, the products were shipped and the items were received and they were subsequently handled and unpacked and they were brought.

It never says we received them, we took them, we packed them, we shipped them. That's active voice. You have a subject and a verb instead of just a verb and everything is happening in the passive voice.

But this is all in the passive. This is what happens to the wicked. It just happens.

There's no actor. God isn't mentioned until the tail end. And it's sort of like as an afterthought.

He says, those in the west are astonished at his day. Those in the east are frightened. Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked.

And this is the place of him who does not know God. And God kind of gets an honorable mention in the very end of the chapter. Well, when Job responds, and this is where we pick up tonight, he says, how long will you torment my soul and break me in pieces with words? These ten times you have reproached me.

And Job has pointed this out before. You can't get it in your head that the application you're making is not valid. You're not ashamed that you've wronged me.

If I have erred, my error remains with me. If indeed you exalt yourself against me and plead my

disgrace against me, know then that God has wronged me and has surrounded me with his net. If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard.

If I cry aloud, there is no justice. He has fenced up my way so that I cannot pass. He has set darkness in my path.

If you don't get anything else out of the study of the book of Job, one thing all of us ought to remember is look at the way Job views the universe. Look at the way he views life. To him, God makes things happen.

God is the important factor in life. Job is distressed when he loses his things, but not for the reason that Satan predicted. Take away his stuff and he'll forget about God.

It's just the opposite. When these things are taken away, it distresses Job because he feels a distance and a separation from God and this is the source of his great misery and his great suffering. It's God-centered.

It's God-based. Job can't think a thought. He can't make an argument without eventually tying it back to God.

Where is God? Why won't He talk to me? I wish I could talk to Him. He's the one that has brought this about. I don't understand the distance.

What has happened between me and God? And Job gets almost a little tiresome to his friends because he's constantly going back to his relationship with God and they're trying to say, look Job, get practical. You need to act the way people act to get by in this life. Now there's a reason why this is important because this is evermore the problem in Israel.

Ever since God spoke to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and through Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and led them in the wilderness and brought them to the promised land under Joshua and carried them through the vagaries of life in the book of Judges with the Philistines and all the other ites that were harassing them and they kept having this cycle where they would get oppressed and downtrodden and they would call upon God and then a judge would raise up and deliver them and they would go great guns for a while and then they would become apathetic and indifferent and Judges is nothing but Gilgal rolling over and over. It's a lumpy, out of balance wheel. They're down and then they're up and then they're down and then they're up and then they're down and then they're up.

And it isn't until you get to the books of Samuel where you have that prophet coming to Israel and teaching and exhorting and leading and eventually initiating the monarchy under Saul and then David and of course Solomon comes after that but very soon after that bright beginning with David and Solomon you have this loss of perspective and it all comes down to what's in it for me and you can look at the prosperity of Solomon much as you look at the prosperity of the United

States after World War II. It is almost a curse to be so prosperous because people forget God. Forgotten God in this country they're making every effort to eradicate Him everywhere they can and we're suffering for it.

We've never had higher suicide rates we've never had higher teen pregnancy rates we've never had higher divorce rates we've never had higher sociological problems we've never had higher problems of every sort in every category than we have had since the atheistic, secular, humanist philosophy has gained ground and taken root and pushed Christ aside pushed Christianity aside and has come to dominate the media and dominate the press and dominate our culture. We were always largely Christian. It was a given.

You watch the old movies from the 40s and the 30s and people praying and referring to God it's a commonplace. Even in the series television from the 50s and early 60s it's just a given. Nobody blinks twice.

Now it's almost shocking and you can't imagine a movie or a series mentioning God without making some sort of slight or slam or parody or satire. It's never presented in a positive light. Well, this was Israel's problem.

And here's the big idea in this section of the book of Job. Job constantly returns to God. His friends constantly return to this is the way the world works.

And what happens when you get when you're sort of set in that mold and in that mindset it becomes harder and harder to learn something new. One of the things you observe in the Bible and stay with me. We're going to be back in Job chapter 19 and 20 real quick.

But this is the perspective we need to make sense of what Job is about to say in these two chapters. There is an unfolding of revelation in the word of God. This book, this story is set at a fairly early time.

Initially the promise of redemption the promise of salvation is incipient. The seed of the woman promise in the garden. The promises to Abraham.

That's about all that exists at this time. But what's going to happen with Moses and the Exodus with the five books of the law. And then you have the history and the poetry and the major and minor prophets.

Much more is going to be revealed. Much more is going to be made known. Now, if Old Testament saints get set in their ways and say, look, here's what you need to know.

It's the Eliphaz knowledge. It's the Bildad knowledge. It's the Zophar knowledge.

This is what you need. This is everything you need to know about God. What's going to happen? Well, you're going to be stuck like some great big overgrown kid who keeps repeating the third

grade.

Can't ever get to the fourth grade. Never does pass. Goes back and takes it over and over.

And now he's nine and he's ten and he's eleven and he's twelve and he's still in the third grade. Jesus told the parable of the new wine going into old wine skins. The old wine skins have already stretched and they have become inflexible and brittle.

And when the new wine comes it ferments and expands and has that gas that's given off. New wine has to go in new wine skins so that they can both grow together. Well, becoming hidebound and becoming intransigent and becoming unteachable was the problem in Israel.

What happened when Jesus came? Wait a minute. This is something new. This doesn't conform.

This doesn't fit our expectations. Well, Old Testament Israel as a nation teaches us things about New Testament Christians as individuals. So what is the point here? We can be coming to Bible class.

We can be gaining knowledge like Eliphaz. The older we get the more wisdom we have. But if our understanding doesn't stretch if our view isn't constantly looking at God how big does your understanding have to be to comprehend God? Well, it can never be big enough.

If you stop and say, Well, I've got a 4x4x4 box now. God will fit in that. There is an endless amount to learn about an endless and infinite God.

And if we settle if we say, Well, I know what I need to know. I know enough to get by. I know enough to make my life work out.

We're going to be Eliphaz or we're going to be Bildad or we're going to be Zophar. And we'll settle for, Well, I've got the inside track. I've got the wisdom.

Or, I'm in the line of tradition. I'm hewing to the thin red line here. Or, I've got what I need in practical terms to make life come out like I want.

And we settle for that. What are our eyes on? Our eyes are on circumstances. Our eyes are on people.

Our eyes are on self. I'm happy. My stuff is all in one place.

And I've got it organized. And I'm content. This was Israel's problem.

Why did the kingdom of Israel not survive? Why did it split? And why did it fragment? And why did it eventually go out into captivity? Because people settled for the status quo. They settled for what they knew. Job says, I am not content if I don't understand what God is doing.

God is doing a new thing here. When did God ever, from Adam until this present time, with Job, when had someone gotten undeserved suffering? Gone through the mill like Job for no earthly reason? Can you think of anything in the book of Genesis? You say, well, there's Joseph being sold into slavery. But you can sort of see the outcome of that.

And of course, Joseph, for years, didn't necessarily see it. But it's great as you read through Genesis and you can see what God is setting up and how God is preserving. But Job, over and over again, says, I don't see any hope.

You keep saying there's light at the end of the tunnel and that I've just been wicked and I need to repent. And I don't see it. And of course, the story of Joseph was probably unknown to Job at this time.

So, it's not referred to. We don't have any references to anybody in Genesis at all, really. This is all just wisdom about God, knowledge of God.

There's no reference to any real history here. But think about this. Think about this.

This is a new thing. What is our response when we encounter a new thing? Do we say, I'm going to force this new thing into my existing grid, into my existing understanding? I know how God works. I'm content with the level of knowledge I have about God.

So, whatever this new thing is, it's got to fit. I've got to make sense out of it based on the twelve things I know about God right now. Or, do we say, if I'm growing in grace and knowledge of the Savior, if this life is a set of story problems to advance my understanding and advance my knowledge, then this may be a new thing.

This may be something that ought to drive me back into the Scriptures, that ought to drive me back to put two and two together, to draw conclusions. This happens to me with software all the time. I will get into something like Microsoft, whatever, Word, Access, Excel, and I do the routine things day by day.

I can run spreadsheets all day long, fill out the rows and columns, total things. That's fine. But then suddenly I get a new requirement.

I need to not only total the things that I can see, maybe I've got rows and columns of items for a given month, but now I need totals for the whole year, and maybe I've got twelve of these spreadsheets, one for each month, and in that I've got these rows and columns, and they all total up, and I've been doing this two-dimensional stuff and getting these answers month by month. Well, but then I sit down with a pencil and paper because I have to go try to create some totally new spreadsheet for all of the months of the year and retype all of this information if I'm going to just use my skills. And then somebody looks over my shoulder and says, Sam, don't you know that there's a third dimension in Excel? You can make a thirteenth spreadsheet behind

these twelve, and you can add in the z-axis here.

You've got your x and your y, but you can go down and you can create a formula that will add this cell in those twelve previous spreadsheets and give you totals. And the light dawns, and you learn a new thing, and you gain a new capability. And you don't say, but now I've known plenty of people, and you have too.

You may be one of them that say, you know, I've got a skill set in this software, and that is the skill set I'm going to use. I don't have time to learn something new. Don't bother me with what this software might be able to do.

I can do rows, and I can do columns, and I'll just create a new spreadsheet, and I'll retype the data. I can cut and paste. I know how to do that.

Control C, Control V. I can do it, and I'll take the time because I know how to do that. Don't bother me with new knowledge. Well, that's fine, and that's another way to cope.

But it's not fine, and it's not another way to cope if we are believers. We are commanded to grow. We are commanded to bear fruit.

God is going to prune us and chop away branches. What did Jesus say to the disciples in John 14, 15, and 16? What does he say? I am the vine. You are the branches.

Abide in me, and you will bear much fruit. The Father is going to come and prune you so that you can bear more fruit. Pruning can be a painful process.

Job is getting pruned. Job has had some stuff snipped away. He's had a lot of stuff snipped away, and it makes no sense to him whatsoever.

But the one person that is really going to learn something in the course of this book is Job. There's no one on this scene who loves God as much as Job does. There's no one who is as pained at the interruption of fellowship and relationship with God as Job.

And that is a sign and a manifestation of his love for God. And God says, You know what, Job? I'm going to teach you something new. I'm going to stretch your understanding.

It isn't going to make any sense. It's going to seem wrong. It's going to be painful.

But in the end, you are going to learn things that you could learn and come to understand in no other way. I think about people whose stories I have read, prisoners of war whose wives waited for them for four, five, six years at home, people who have gone through severe medical problems, have been in crashes or have had some sort of accident. You remember Christopher Reeve and his fall from the horse and becoming a quadriplegic? And the woman that he married stayed with him and loved him.

She just died, I think, within the last year or so of cancer, I think. And she was fairly young. But she was a really extraordinary lady.

And Christopher Reeve learned things about the love that his wife had for him through his quadriplegia that would have never had the occasion to be manifest. The devotion and the dedication and the hard work that she put in on his behalf when he could do nothing but sit there and say thank you is really impressive. If you are not familiar with that story, I would encourage you to find it somewhere and read it because that was one amazing lady.

And that was an amazing marriage in both directions. And nobody would wish quadriplegia on anyone. But if the Reeves are believers, and I believe they are, for the eternal future, they are going to know things about each other through that experience here in this life that they could have learned in no other way.

And they experienced a depth of relationship that few people ever know. It was painful. It isn't something that one would choose.

But sometimes it is in circumstances like that that you learn things and come to appreciate things that can come in no other way. As I said last week, the great thing is God has enshrined the experience of people like Joseph and Job and David and the Lord Jesus and the Apostle Paul in the scripture so that we can vicariously, if you will, through their suffering, through their experience, learn these deep truths about God and about His character and about His love and His grace. And it is not necessary for God to put us through similar situations if we pursue an understanding of it through the Word.

But sometimes, for some of us in different areas and in different ways, we will suffer as Job does. Well, this is the challenge. Do we love God? And do we love Him enough to stretch our understanding? Now, I prefer to learn by observing others.

I think if some other guy tried working on his big garage door and the spring came loose and chopped his arm off, I would rather read about his experience, learn from it, and go thou and not do likewise rather than reinvent the wheel and learn things the hard way myself. This is why we get on the web and we say, well, who else has had this problem and how did they solve it and what are the things not to do? And we gain benefit through the experience of others. Well, the scriptures are a God-given way to learn from the experiences of dozens of great believers and learn great things about God.

This is what Job is doing and because Job loves God, Job is learning something about God that Eliphaz and Zophar and Bildad are never going to understand. And in the end, Job is twice blessed. He has that double portion blessing.

Why? He's a man after God's own heart. He's a man who loves God and has pursued that understanding. And there is a time of hardship, there is a time of setback, but in the end, the

dividends and the rewards are extraordinary.

And above all, the greatest reward is Job comes into a fresh and much deeper relationship with God than he ever had on his best day of prosperity before his time of suffering. His capacity is much deeper and much wider and much more profound having lived through this time of suffering. And I am confident that if you go up to Job in the Millennial Kingdom and say, if you had to do over again, would you go through that suffering deal? Would you sit there and listen to your three friends? Job would say, without question, in a heartbeat, look at the things I learned.

Look at the way God was able to use my life as a result of these things. Well, this is the perspective. It's the difference between subjectivity and objectivity.

What do you want out of life? What is your goal? If you just want a reasonably smooth path, if you want to settle for a reasonably happy go in this life, you can be Eliphaz. You get some wisdom, get some knowledge, you come to an accommodation in your understanding with God, you avoid divine discipline, but you don't get to join that elite group of overcomers who want to walk with Christ in white, who want to share the hidden manna, who want to be given that gift, the white stone, the new name, to understand and have that intimacy and that proximity to the Lord Jesus Christ. What's our goal? What are our values? What are our priorities? If we are subjective and we reach a certain level of accommodation and understanding, we say, this works for me.

I'm happy. Leave me alone. I don't want to stretch.

I don't want to grow. I don't want to risk suffering. I don't trust God enough that the suffering is going to work out for good.

We're going to peel off. We'll be like Old Testament Israel. We'll be like these three friends.

If we really understand what's going on, if we recognize the potential that is ours in Christ, in this life and in this age, we'll do what Job does. And we will constantly be hungry. We'll constantly be thirsty to be closer to God, to understand Him better, to see what He means in our life more and more day by day.

That's what comes out in each of Job's speeches. Watch for it. Now, when we come back from the break, in chapter 19 especially, we're going to see this.

And we're going to see the contrast with Zophar in chapter 20. Let's pause here and take our break.