

The Christian's Response to Affliction, part 2

2005 Theology Conference

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Bible Text: Job 2:1-10

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Open your Bibles to Job chapter two. As you do so I want to add my thanks to pastor Fincham's to both sessions for the privilege of being with you again. As I said Friday night, it is something that I look forward to with a keen anticipation knowing that it might not continue and yet it is such a joy to be here with you to renew fellowship and to continue to meet new people.

I thank both congregations for your hard work. It has been a privilege to watch you work. The joy and enthusiasm that the people from the chapel have demonstrated in the back was just a great pleasure for me to watch you and then to be back there with you and to see the hard work that has been done by the people here at Covenant and the logistics and opening it up and closing and the registration.

I want to thank my two workers at the book table, Christopher and Andrew, for what they have done which made that much easier this year as well.

Please continue to pray for the work at the seminary. If you are not on our mailing list there is a sheet out there and you can give us your name and your address.

All right, Job chapter two, the first 10 verses.

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

And the LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?"

Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth, and walking around on it."

And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause."

And Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. However, put forth Thy hand, now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse Thee to Thy face."

So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."

Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!"

But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.¹

Thus far God's holy Word.

Let us pray.

Father, as we come one more time to look at some of your dealings with Job and how you deal with us, Lord, we pray that your Spirit will open your Word unto us, illumine our understanding and may your anointing be both upon the one who preaches and each of us who listens in Christ's name. Amen.

Be seated.

Perhaps you have had the experience when things were so bad you thought it can't get worse. And it did.

I have a friend—the Finchams and the Coughlins know him. This past year his house was hit twice by a hurricane. The second time it was destroyed with most of his furniture. Shortly after his house was destroyed, his father died. While he was tending to the funeral arrangements with his father he was notified that there was a movement in his presbytery to put him out of his church.

Any of those things would have been enough to knock us down. And yet the Lord knocked him down and here comes the next wave and the next wave.

And, fellow, you have had those experiences. Job had that experience.

¹ Job 2:1-10.

We talked this morning about the intensity of these afflictions in his life, how Satan had arranged it so that not only did they happen one upon the other, but the messengers were there, as Job set in the square or the gate of the city. As soon as one man finished telling Job that he lost his livestock, the next man comes and tells him about his ox and the next man comes and tells him about his camels and then the next man comes and says, "And your children have all been destroyed," all in a minute.

Job has been knocked down and almost devastated by Satan. And sure that he would have thought, as any of us would have thought, this place that can't be anything left. You know, it can't get worse. But it did get worse. And it got worse according to the malice of Satan, but the good purposes of God.

And so as we find ourselves in trials and tribulations and sometimes we find ourselves in that situation where it got worse when we thought it couldn't get worse, God directs our attention to how he continued to deal with Job.

Tonight we look at these 10 verses in the second chapter and we see that under the relentless intensity of trial and temptation that we hide ourselves under the protection of God's gracious and powerful sovereignty.

We will consider three things. We are going to look at the second challenge, the second attack of trial and temptation and the response.

The challenge, as you note, as we saw yesterday, again, it is from God. In chapter two:

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

And the LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?"

Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth, and walking around on it."

And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause."²

Now we noted yesterday that it seems to be these times of accounting God holds court. And when God holds court, he brings his holy angels before him. They report on their activities. They might report on segments of the Church or of the world for which they are responsible and the details of their service to God. We know he knows all those things, but it is good for God's servants to report just as the day of judgment. He knows

² Job 2:1-3.

all about us. But there is going to be an accountability, a detailing and we are going to answer for our stewardship of that which has been entrusted to us by the Lord God.

And, as before, God compelled Satan to come into his presence as well to give a report. And we see that by God's questioning Satan.

“And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Where have you come from?’”³

Again, God knows exactly what Satan has been doing, but he is holding him accountable. And this is repeated. Do you understand it is repeated because God wants you and I to understand and not forget that God holds Satan accountable. He can never slip out from under God's control and authority. And, thus, we have a great deal of reputation right here from what we saw yesterday morning.

“Where have you come from? What have you been doing?”⁴

And Satan gives the same evasive answer. Again, manifest to reveal something of his character, “From wandering about and walking around the earth,”⁵ showing his restlessness, his malignity, his actions as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Now, it is interesting. On his own Satan wasn't going to mention Job because Satan is smarting from defeat. It had been fine with him if something else probably had come up at this point.

But, again, it is God who sets Job right out here in the midst of danger. God is gloating. And God can gloat. Jesus gloats.

Psalm two, “He who sits on the throne laughs and he holds them in derision and he vexes them in sore displeasure.”⁶

God is gloating over his servant Job. He uses the same language. “Have you carefully considered? Have you placed into your heart,” is literally the Hebrew language, “my servant Job.”⁷

Now he repeats the four things that we had learned about Job's character: blameless, upright, fearing God, turning away from evil. And then he adds this most remarkable testimony. He endured. He persevered. He held fast his integrity or his blamelessness “even though you incited me to ruin him without cause.”⁸ In other words, God is saying, “There was no reason for me to chasten Job. There was no cause in him for me to come

³ Job 2:2.

⁴ See Job 2:2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See Psalm 2:4-5.

⁷ See Job 2:3.

⁸ Ibid.

down on him with the harshness that I allowed you to treat him. There was no cause outside of your malice as far as you are concerned,” says God.

But he persevered. What a testimony.

Not only was Job exactly what God said he was before this happened, but he said, “He endured. He held fast his integrity even though you incited me against me.”⁹

You know, I often wonder about myself. In the mornings my special room is our little formal living room and a section of my books are in there and I am in there with my coffee reading my Bible and sometimes I think, you know, what if God took all of this away from me? What if tomorrow I had to walk away from this, my books, my comfort?

Let’s do it.

Do you serve God for what you get out of it or do you serve God because of who he is? That is really the question God would have each of us to ask. Why do I serve God?

Is he your God because of who he is, because you love him? And if he stripped you of everything would you hold fast your integrity? Would you love him and serve him?

Now, on the one hand it is one of those questions that we can’t really answer outside of that final thing that Peter says to the Lord, “Lord, you know, my heart and you know I love you.”¹⁰ And that is what we have to say. “Lord, you [?], but, Lord, you know my heart and I want you. I lose everything else. I want you.”

Is that where you are today or do you serve Christ for what you get out of him, for the security or the standing or the please your parents or 100 other reasons? And Job was tested by God as Abraham would be tested by God to see what was in his heart and that is: Do you fear me above everything else? You want to let go of your children? Your spouse? Your health?

The physical thing I dread is being paralyzed. You know, I just... I shudder at the thought of being paralyzed. Would I let go of God if that were the choice, let go of God or be paralyzed?

The thing you fear, will you keep God then? That is the great question that God puts to us and mercifully the tests he send us are to groom us and prune us and strengthen us. And we know that he will never test us beyond the point of what we can do. But we ought to ask ourselves the question, regularly. If I serve God for who he is, not for what I get.

Missionaries talk about rice Christians and that simply means that there are Christians in places where a missionary has labored that are Christians because of what they get: an

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See John 21:17.

education, clothing, food, security. And once persecution comes, that is what distinguishes between the Christian and the rice Christian.

You know, we have been unpersecuted, basically, for the entirety of the existence of our country. That is the best way for the Church to be winnowed and for us to know who we are, but what God does [?] then is our trials and his law.

You say, "I would die for Jesus."

Then, will you die, you deny yourself to obey? If you won't deny yourself to obey, you are not going to die for Jesus. If you are unwilling to keep the sabbath when something you want to do is going on on the sabbath, then you won't die for Jesus. It is just that simple, you see. It is easy to think of ourselves as heroes, but God gives us the test every day, every day. And that was Job's test here in a very severe manner. Would he take God at the loss of everything else? And would you and would I?

And so God gloats over Job's faithfulness. He rubs it in on Satan. He says, "Satan, you told me that if I let you do these things that man would deny me, he would curse me. And you are wrong. You are defeated. By my grace he prevailed and he holds fast his integrity."

But God knew what was coming and he was the one that was provoking it. And so when the challenge, Satan responds, "Skin for skin!"¹¹ It is a proverb and we don't know now probably exactly what it means. It is... the best idea that I have read is that skin was one of the forms of bartering. And a man would barter, he would give anything to save his skin, his life, his health. So that what Satan was saying, "Well, of course, I mean, anybody is willing to give up his livestock, even his children, if he can have his own life and his health." Skin for skin. People will sacrifice and pay because of their selfishness. "So all that a man has he will give for his life."¹²

"So God put forth your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face."¹³

Now, once again, we are reminded that even though Satan is going to be the agent of this illness, that it is God's hand. It cannot happen apart from God's sovereign good pleasure.

I remember a little interchange when Francis Schaefer was dying with cancer that he and Dr. Kupat and Dr. Kupat is the one that talked about it. He said Schaefer tended to talk about what Satan was doing to him. And Kupat tended to talk about what God was doing to him. Now they both were right, but Kupat is more right.

It is not wise if what Satan is doing to is and things get bad you say, yeah, Satan was thwarting the ministry of Schaefer and he would die, but it was God that took his life.

¹¹ Job 2:4.

¹² See Job 2:4.

¹³ See Job 2:5.

And so, you know, if Satan is a better theologian than our evangelical neighbors, then Satan says, “You put forth your hand. I can’t do it. You put forth your hand.”

Satan knows that God is sovereign. He knows everything that even he does, all of his malicious acts cannot be done apart from God’s good pleasure.

In the *Institutes* Calvin makes this very important point that it is not a bare permissiveness. No, God is not the author of sin. But it is not a bare permissiveness, oh, well, you go ahead. No. It is God’s holy will and it is a holy will. And that is what we see here. “You put forth your hand and touch him. Bone and flesh. Attack his person. Bring him in a severe illness. Fill him with pain and depression and he will curse you to your face.”¹⁴

And the Lord says to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power [in your hand], only spare his life.”¹⁵

Again, God puts up the barriers, you see. God says, “You can do this much, but no more.”

Now, spare your life... it is really spare your soul and it can mean spare your life. And what God is saying you may not bring him to a point of suicide or to kill him in moment of despair. Or it could be, as one writer [?] said is that you may not cause him to lose his rationality. You may afflict him physically, but you may not touch his mind. You may not bring him to a point of irrationality where he might do something then and say something he didn’t mean. So God clearly laid out the parameters of what Job could do. Challenge number two has been thrown down.

Satan, you know, he is so... he is so foolish. He rises to the bait. He always rises to the bait because he hates God so much and he hates us so much. You know, things like the coyote and road runner. Every time he does something it is going to be his own destruction and yet he just keeps coming back. And that is what we see here.

He is not going to admit defeat. He is not saying, “Well, God, you are right. Your grace has prevailed. This is a remarkable product of grace.” Those words will never come out of his mouth willingly. Perhaps in the day of judgment when he is beaten down at the feet of Christ and will be extorted from him, how wonderful Christ is and how powerful grace is. But never will he utter those words of his own volition.

So he thinks he is provoking God. He is simply playing into God’s hands. And so the challenge.

Well, we come, then, to the second attack of trial and temptation. And it is more severe.

¹⁴ See Job 2:5.

¹⁵ Job 2:6.

Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself.¹⁶

Notice, in the first place, we talked this morning about the suddenness, that how, you know, here is... Job is reeling and we have no reason to think that this is weeks later, that the text flows in such a way that here is Job in the depth of despair, so to speak, under these trials and now immediately... you see, you know, Satan would have to do some orchestration before in moving the hearts of the Sabeans and move the hearts of the Chaldeans and to orchestrate all of this to happen all there in a few moments.

But, boy, he came right now. And he smote Job with boils. Have you ever had a boil? One boil? The pain of one boil as it erupts and burns. Can you imagine being covered with boils from the top of your head to the sole of your foot? Every one a flaming sore with pain searing through your body.

Now, as we look at the book of Job we learn an awful lot about this illness. We really can't diagnose it, but the symptoms are horrendous. I mean, the boils are bad enough. But just look at some things about it in chapter seven. It came with insomnia.

“When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’ But the night continues, And I am continually tossing until dawn.”¹⁷

Notice what happened to his flesh. “My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt; My skin hardens and runs.”¹⁸

Thus, the potsherd scraping away at the scabs.

When he did sleep he had nightmares. In verse 13 of chapter seven:

If I say, “My bed will comfort me, My couch will ease my complaint,”
Then Thou dost frighten me with dreams And terrify me by visions; So
that my soul would choose suffocation, Death rather than my pains.¹⁹

How many times have we sought respite in sleep? You have insomnia. Finally you go to sleep and now what do you have? Nightmares, nightmares that make being asleep worse than being awake.

Go over to chapter 13 verse 28. “I am decaying like a rotten thing, Like a garment that is moth-eaten.”²⁰ His flesh is dying.

¹⁶ Job 2:7-8.

¹⁷ Job 7:4.

¹⁸ Job 7:5.

¹⁹ Job 7:13-15.

²⁰ Job 13:28.

There was an offensive odor about him. He said his breath was offensive to his wife.²¹

And then in chapter 30 verse 16, “My soul is poured out within me; Days of affliction have seized me. At night it pierces my bones.”²²

This wasn’t just an external pain. You see, his bones, his joints were aching. “And my gnawing pains take no rest. By a great force my garment is distorted; It binds me about as the collar of my coat.”²³ It seems to pass over swelling that also accompanied this illness.

In verse 30, “My skin turns black on me, And my bones burn with fever.”²⁴

Had enough? Whatever this disease was, would take the fiend of hell to invent it.

There seems to have been no cure. Job, have you even thought about this? There is no ointment. There is no physician.

Now he didn’t live out in the middle of nowhere. He lived in the town. No physician, no treatment. He is scraping himself with pieces of broken pottery.

So it appears that he has an illness that is incurable with a pain that is insufferable, that makes him not only odious to himself, but to those around and there is no rest found in sleep. Now that is the illness of Job.

Some of you have had severe illnesses and painful illnesses, painful arthritis, painful shingles. The pain like this, unrelenting pain with no alleviation from the pain, no alleviation from the sores, scraping himself with a piece of broken pottery.

That is just the circumstances. That is not the temptation. The temptation is afflict him in bone and flesh and he will curse you. So, once again, Satan begins to suggest to the mind of Job, “You really think God cares about you? Could a loving God do this to you? Could he have any thought about you and let these kind of things happen to you? Are you not truly forsaken of God?”

Thus, those thoughts. You know how it is at night when you can’t sleep? Everything is worse. That is when Satan comes. This is when he comes to you and me, when he comes at Job and, oh, you see how despised and rejected you are.

Now, after you have had enough. But then we read that his dear wife—I think she gets a lot of bad press. This is the wife of the godly man who helped him rear 10 godly children

²¹ See Job 19:17.

²² Job 30:16.

²³ Job 30:16-17.

²⁴ Job 30:30.

and who would be the mother of your children. And we forget about poor Mrs. Job. She lost all of her possessions. She lost her children. She groaned.

And she comes to Job on his ash heap and she says, “Quit holding fast your integrity. Curse God and die.”²⁵

In verse nine, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!”²⁶

What was she saying here? She is not an evil woman. She is not a pagan, but she is come [?] Job, “God has cursed you. Why persevere? Why keep trying to serve God? For some reason he has hast you off. Bid him adieu. Give up. Die. You are under his hand of punishment. Why persevere? Why bless this God? How can you worship him when he has done this to you? He has no place for you.”

I think that is the thrust of what the poor woman is saying and I understand her, don’t you? And Job understood her, too, as we will see. But you feel the intensity. Have you ever been tried like this? I haven’t.

Remember the cumulative effect. He had lost everything. He had lost his children. He is under this temptation of Satan that God has rejected you. You reject God. He perseveres and now he is attacked in his physical being with this devastating, incurable, odious disease.

And Satan is still saying, “Give up, man. You have no place in God for you. What kind of God is this?”

And his wife chimes in.

And this brings us to the response of the godly.

Now in the first place, it is remarkable that what Job is confessing here by his actions is that he is a sinner and he deserves nothing good. [?] He sits in an ash heap. And when you look in the rest of the Bible it is those that either put ashes on their head, it is not some foolish thing like Lent, but who really put ashes on their head are set in the midst of ashes. It was a sign of abject mourning, of brokenness and humiliation.

It seems to me that what Job is saying here is by his actions what he goes on to say with his words and that is, “I am a sinner. I don’t deserve anything from God. I sit in ashes to confess my sin and to break my own heart before God.”

Is that how you respond to your trials, often as minor as they are? Is your first thought, “I am a sinner and I deserve worse”? Or is your first thought like my thought often is? I said this morning, “I don’t deserve this. Oh, this isn’t fair.”

²⁵ See Job 2:9.

²⁶ Job 2:9.

I mean, God has never given you and me what we deserve, has he? Blessed be his name that he gave us the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been gracious to us.

But Job wasn't saying, "I don't deserve this," was he? He sat in an ash heap saying, "I deserve whatever God... whatever evil God sends to me." That is remarkable.

And then his answer to his wife. And the thing that strikes me, in the first place, is his tenderness and his patience because when are you and I the most churlish and irritable with our loved ones? When we are sick or we are tired. That is when we are impatient. And when we snap at no provocation, right? And you give us a little provocation when we are sick or tired or weary and we can really snap.

But here is Job, on the ash heap, under the affliction of God and his help meet, the one who should have been his human source of comfort and encouragement says, "Why do you still hold fast your blamelessness? Go ahead and curse God and die."²⁷

And he is so patient and kind. He doesn't bite her head off. He doesn't say, "You are a pagan. You are a reprobate. You are..." He doesn't even say, "You are a foolish woman."

He says, "Wife, you are speaking like the foolish women."²⁸ He is so tender under that provocation.

You see, he has got control of his heart and his will. Not falling to pieces. He has subdued himself under the awful hand of God.

And then we see his confession as he responds to his wife.

"You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept [evil]?"²⁹

A confession. That is really what he said when he sat on the ash heap, you see? God has wonderfully blessed me. I have had these 20 or 30 years of prosperity with my family and my business and all of these things and it is all from God. I didn't deserve it. There have been plenty of other people that weren't blessed the way I am. I could think of plenty who lost their children at childbirth or who have been plundered and robbed and who have never had the crops that I have had and whose business success had never been my successes. You know, God gave me all of this, dear wife. God gave us this. Do we only accept good from his hand? Oh, must we not also be willing to accept evil from him?"

And actually the word here that is translated "adversity."

Again, Job, like Satan, had no doubts about who is in control. He doesn't need to go around blaming Satan. He understands that this could not have happened to him apart

²⁷ See Job 2:9.

²⁸ See Job 2:10.

²⁹ Job 2:10.

from his God's sovereign, wise and loving good pleasure. And so he humbles himself before God and before his wife. He confesses. "Do we accept God and are we unwilling to accept evil and the adversity?"³⁰

And as he rests there in that sovereignty of God, once again, the Lord gives us this inspired applause.

"In all this Job did not sin with his lips."³¹

He did not curse God. He did not deny God. He did not sell his soul for a moment's rest in his difficult adversity.

Now, he will come and say some very unkind things about God's treatment of him and he is wrestling through what all this means, remember, having no Scripture. But he never curses God. He never denies God. He never thinks that God is not holy in righteous and all that he does.

A remarkable man, he is an example to you and me. But when I say, that ,that can be a little daunting. I am not a Job, are you? Can Job really be a help to me?

Well, he is a help because he teaches me where I am to look and what I am to rest on in the midst of my trials. But by himself Job would be very discouraging to me. But, remember that Job is a picture of someone who actually suffered more, the only person I know that suffered more and revealed Scripture or in human history, that is, he was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ who not only was blameless, upright, fearing God and turned away from evil, he was sinless. And yet he subjected himself to a level of temptation that surpassed anything that Job could even imagine.

I said this morning in the Sunday school, because he was sinless, he was tempted with an intensity that exceeds anything that would ever approach the intensity of a temptation that you and I could bear without being destroyed [?] and that his temptations, like Job's, came with growing intensity. They came from unexpected sources so that they came from Satan directly. They came from his good friend Peter. And, by the way, beware of where temptations will come from sometimes. They will come from Christian friends. And at the point we will have our guard down it will be a Christian friend or a spouse or a child or a parent that becomes the form of temptation. We must guard our hearts.

But also beware of your friend that you are not the tempter, you are not leading someone else astray by your behavior or by your words. But our Savior.

And then the physical pain of the crucifixion surely was more severe than the physical pain of Job's illness. The mental pain of the crucifixion wasn't just the wife saying, "Give up," but that there were all of these unrighteous and self righteous people saying, "You say God loves you and cares for you, well, come down and we will believe in you."

³⁰ See Job 2:10.

³¹ Job 2:10.

Do you feel the force of that? You know, we hate to be misunderstood. We want to vindicate ourselves. It is a natural feeling. Here is the just and perfect Savior who is the Son of God and all he has to do is come off the cross to prove it. That is a powerful temptation. Or to flee the hell bearing aspects of Calvary's cross.

And his whole life was a life of sorrow and temptation. He is called a man of sorrows. And, as a perfect child, he is living in a world filled with sin. Does the sin around you vex you at times? Not merely is it off, but you know, something of that, don't you, of being vexed by unrighteousness and sin and immorality?

Think of our dear Savior, perfect, living in the midst of this.

And then in his three years of public ministry increasingly bearing the weight of the growing shadow of Calvary's cross, the thrust of the powerful temptations of Satan, the pain that was physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. And we understand, then, from Hebrews chapter five that he went through all of this to be prepared for that final act of offering himself.

“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.”³²

He wasn't ready for the cross at 12. I mean even at 30. He was only ready for the cross when he came at 33. He went through all of that because he loved you. Because he was going to go through all of that, die and be raised from the dead that Job could hold fast his integrity. And it is because our Savior has done that, that you and I can live through anything that our loving Father sends us.

In Hebrews two we read in verse 17 that:

He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.³³

He took within his sufferings.

And in chapter four, “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”³⁴

Actually go to verse 15. “We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”³⁵

³² Hebrews 5:8.

³³ Hebrews 2:17-18.

³⁴ Hebrews 4:16.

³⁵ Hebrews 4:15.

Tempted in his sufferings, tempted in all things as we are yet without sin.

My dear friends, if we only had Job I think it would be very discouraging. I think we could say he was a remarkable man and I could never do that. But we have the one of whom Job was a type, the one who not only suffered beyond that which Job suffered, but the one who, in his suffering, not only inflicted a small measure of defeat on Satan, but the one who defeated Satan, the one who by his resurrection indwells us and gives us all the grace that we need.

And so he says to us, “Yes. I want you to look at Job and I want you to learn these lessons. I want you to learn that you must rest in God regardless, that you take hope and comfort in his sovereignty, his power, his wisdom and his love. I want you to see in Job that a sinful creature like you can endure in the midst of horrendous trials and I want you to know that you can do this because of my perfect work on your behalf.”

[?] Job that we have is a Savior and he is one [?]. I hope you understand a little more how wonderful your Savior is. For we do not stop at this confidence with Job or ourselves. We lift our eyes now to this one, the Lord Jesus Christ, our beautiful and glorious Savior. Do you know him as your Savior? Are you resting in him, trusting in him and delighting in him?

Do you know the pardon of sin that comes from him and do you know the power over temptation and trial that comes from him?

Oh, my young people, my old friends, trust in nothing else but Jesus Christ. Go has given you great privileges. He has placed you in his Church and he has set before you this wonderful Savior. But he says to you children that you must believe in Jesus. Take him as your Savior. Find him now in the youngest days of your life. Never let go of him, knowing he will never let go of you. And each of you tonight, do you know in your conscience, in your heart of hearts that you are resting in Jesus Christ and him alone?

What hope, what glory, what life.

Then, as we are in Christ we are equipped and the confidence that our God never gives us more than we can bear, with what he gives us always gives us the grace and the way out and we have Christ in us as the great means of power.

So, as I began Friday night, our advantages far exceed Job's. Every one of us should be more godly than Job. Equipped, then, by God's grace to take whatever it is that he sends us, yes, as he chastens us, as he refines us, as he makes us this grand demonstration.

As God lifts you and me up in our various trials and difficulties and he says, “Have you considered my servant? Do you see what my grace is doing? Do you see how he is beginning to become more patient and more kind and gentle? How she is becoming more loving and tender and compassionate? Do you see how they are beginning to love me

more and to delight more in my...? Do you see my people?"

Ah, he loves us. He takes pleasure in us and he loves to pull us up in front of the angels and say, "Look at what my Son is doing. He has taken that piece of garbage, Pipa, and slowly but surely he is transforming him. You know what he would have been like if we had left him alone. You see what grace does?" That is what he says.

And so you are part of this grand demonstration. See your life as part of the great fabric of the whole of God's glorious purposes of redemption and know that God will give you grace to take you through whatever it is that he sent. Amen.

Almighty God in heaven, thank you for your Word, for Job, but most of all for Jesus Christ who not only is to us an example of what is possible, but who is to us the accomplisher of that which is so that wherever you lead us we know that we can have the faith and grace of Job because we have the Lord Jesus Christ and we thank you for that. Bless these things to us. Cause us to love you and to love our Savior and grant that every person here tonight, young and old, will know that he or she is trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation, for eternal life, for all hope and grace. Amen.

Let us respond.