

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Blessed Be Your Name, Great Are You Lord, Build My Life, It Is Well With My Soul

WELCOME

What was the toughest situation in life that you had to endure? Share with the group.

WORD

JAMES 5:10-11

¹⁰ As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

JOB 1:20-21

²⁰ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."

(Read **Job chapter 1 and 2.**)

When we speak about pain and suffering, one of the first Bible characters we usually think of is JOB. The pain that he went through was something so severe. Pain and suffering is part and parcel of life. Whether one believes in God or not, all will experience pain and suffering one way or another. We may ask, "If God is love and He is almighty, why does He allow suffering?" Through the life of Job, we will learn how to navigate through pain and suffering and still glorify God through it all.

The New Testament speaks highly of Job. He was used as an example of **ENDURANCE** in **James 5:10-11**. The Greek word used for endurance here is **HUPOMENO** and it means "**active anticipation**" and hope in the midst of pressure or pain. Biblical endurance is anticipation. It is clinging on to the Lord, not resignation like the Filipino "*bahala na!*" attitude. You hope and you patiently expect something from GOD. **LEARN FROM JOB, ENDURE!** How do we endure? Let's look at the life of JOB in three parts:

1. DILEMMA OF SUFFERING

At the beginning of **Job 1**, we are introduced to Job's real character. **Verse 1** describes him as blameless and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. It doesn't tell us he was perfect, but the direction of his life was clearly to honor the Lord. We also learn that he was very blessed with possessions and family members and that he was called "the greatest of all the men of the east"! (**vv. 2-3**). He was also a faithful and loving father who regularly interceded for his sons and daughters (**v.5**) – he cared for the spiritual well-being of his children. How does this contrast to many fathers today who focus only on financial affairs? We should be intentional parents to our children like Job!

In **v.6 onwards**, the scene changes with a view of the spirit world in a conversation between God and Satan. Satan has been roaming around the world. This confirms what Peter wrote about in the New Testament – the devil is constantly seeking someone to devour (**1 Peter 5:8-9**). In their conversation, God brought up Job as there was no one like him – blameless and upright (**v.8**). However, Satan in **vv.9-11**, concluded that Job was faithful only because God has been blessing and protecting him. Satan's thesis is this: nobody worships God for who He is. People just come to Him because they get something out of Him. This is shallow faith or consumerism – when people love God because of what they can get from Him. But God believed in the faith of Job. He allowed Satan to afflict him, but with limitations.

In **vv.13-19**, we witness Job lose everything, one after the other, with the last blow being the loss of his sons and daughters. Yet what was Job's response? In spite of everything he suffered, he responded in **WORSHIP (vv.20-21)**. When God allowed Job to be tested physically through his health, Job still looked at God with willingness to worship and commit to Him. It kept Job going (**2:7-10**), even after discouragement from his own wife!

2. DEBATE ON WHY

We eventually see Job being comforted by three friends, who sat with him in silence for 7 days (**2:11-13**). Yet these friends showed their shallow understanding of who God is in relation to our pain and suffering: the only explanation they could give as to why Job was suffering was because Job was a sinner. These friends, from **chapter 3 to 37**, engaged with Job in a debate to emphasize that what Job was going through was because of his sinfulness:

WORD (cont'd)

- **Eliphaz** – *sin causes suffering; only the wicked suffer.*
- **Bildad** – *you must be sinning, the wicked always suffers.*
- **Zophar** – *you are sinning. The wicked are short-lived.*

Like in **John 9:1-3**, people often view suffering as punishment for sin. Job still had a good view of who God is (**Job 13:15, Job 19:25-26**), but he was drowning from all the negativities that his so-called friends have thrown at him. Among his friends, God did not rebuke the youngest, Elihu, who in his discourse, emphasized that **God is able to purify us through our sufferings**. There are many reasons for our pain and suffering: it may be because of disobedience and sin (**Genesis 3:17-19**), or God's way to discipline us (**Hebrews 12:5-7**), and it may even be God protecting us from sin or pride (**2 Corinthians 12:7**) – the goal is always to develop our character, and to grow in intimacy with Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Do you sometimes question why God allows certain situations to happen in your life? What are your realizations after learning about the life of Job?
2. We learned that pain and suffering can be God's way to discipline us. Is there an area in your life that God might be calling your attention to for repentance? Take this opportunity to be accountable to your small group.
3. Are you currently going through pain and suffering? Share with the group and then encourage one another by reminding yourselves of WHO GOD IS (*You may read **Job 38** as a group*).

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Like Job, sometimes God would ask us to minister to others even while we are experiencing troubles or hardships. Who is someone in your life that needs prayers? Who can you share the gospel to? Pray for this person and start heeding the call to minister to him/her.

3. DIVINE RESPONSE

God answered Job after all has been said. He did not explain the WHY's to Job. It was more important for Job to realize **WHO GOD IS**. In **Job 38** the LORD emphasized WHO HE IS! In His discourse, we see God's challenge to Job (**Job 40:8**) — Job, in his humanity, cannot question or challenge God to justify Himself. After hearing from God and reminded of His sovereign wisdom, Job repented (**Job 42:1-6**). In turn, God redeemed the story by asking Job to pray for his friends who earlier responded in ways not glorifying to Him (**Job 42:8**); He also restored everything that Job lost two-fold!

Let us endure (HUPOMENO) like Job — wait for the LORD (**Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31**), continue to trust in Him in good and bad times entrusting all that we are to all that HE IS.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends