

The purpose of this weekly discussion guide is merely to be a framework that you use in your small group, family, or personal devotion to help you apply the sermon to your life, live it out more effectively and incorporate the truths in 'real life.' Feel free to use it as you wish, in its entirety or in bits and pieces.....for the glory of God.

With human glasses on, suffering does not make sense. In heavenly realms, with God's glasses on, suffering has purpose. The 'Who' is the 'Why'. That is Job's initial conclusion as his suffering is introduced in his life. His understanding of who God is sustains him and his suffering becomes a platform to celebrate God's goodness, not to suffocate it.

1. What conclusions are you making in your own suffering now that two weeks of Job are complete? Have you determined that suffering doesn't come about because of us, but because of God? Have you concluded that there is purpose in our suffering and that it isn't just occasional happenstance, void of God's control? Discuss what truth is being formed in you.
2. In the sermon, it is stated that the 'abundant life' is a hard life. Is this news to you? Has your concept of the abundant life one of ease, lack of hardship and suffering? If so, how does that affect your 'Gospel presentation'? When you share Christ with someone, does it reflect the warnings of the four soils and that a life in Christ does bring trials or do you leave a person believing that in Christ everything will be easy?
3. A great point was brought up in the sermon. The first round of suffering had mainly to do with Job's wealth and how Satan was after Job cursing God: the very thing that Job wanted to insure his children never did or at the least a sacrifice was made for them if they had. Have you ever considered what it would take for you to curse God? What would it take for you to deny Him? Do you make agreements with God and say 'God, you can do this, but don't do that, or I'm gone?' Think through this and draw the conclusions of what you are really saying in your heart.
4. Have you ever considered that you could love God just for His gifts and not for just Him? How can you begin to test yourself on this? Are you willing to be tested on this? Do you want your love to be genuine or superficial?
5. If you were in Job's position, without any of God's gifts, how would you choose to express love to God and why? How would you start? Without any gifts, how would you love God and what is it about Him that would propel you to love Him?
6. When the next trial hits your life and home, what should you be doing now, so that your first response is to arise, tear your robe, shave your head, and fall down and worship. Maybe we don't go the distance of tearing robes and shaving heads, or maybe we do, but what do you need to incorporate in your life to be at a place spiritually so that you can not only handle it

when suffering comes across your doorstep, but actually worship your way and celebrate God through it?

7. How has the philosophy that we can receive good from God, but not evil (hardship) pervaded your life and walk with God? Has it eclipsed the truth that God can do whatever He wants when He wants, for His glory, and we don't have to understand it?
8. Delving into the four stones slide, how do you plan to:
 - a. Refocus your FOCUS: Why are you here? Can you love God just for Him?
 - b. Refocus your THEOLOGY: What do you believe about Him, His hard providence and how He initiates His love in many ways upon your life?
 - c. Refocus your AFFECTIONS: What do you Really Love? Will you love Him through luxury and loss?
 - d. Refocus your TRUST: Will you see evil and hardship as gifts and as platforms to praise and worship and celebrate His goodness in the midst of pain?
9. What do you long for God to do in your heart right now in light of what He is teaching you through the study of Job? This is personal. This is between you and Him. Make some time to initiate some one on one with Him and do business.