

Job – part 7

Daily dying to self, daily taking up my cross, daily surrendering my life to the Lord's Will: these are things that will bring us joy and peace.

--Would you consider Paul to be a loser or winner in life? Consider his life decisions:

Philippians 1:12; Galatians 2:20

--This is discipleship, this is a person who's not throwing his life away on good things by neglecting the best thing; this is the life that ends with no regrets.

We ended last time by considering the disturbing conclusions of Job and we only got through the first one: **life isn't fair.**

--Remember, if life was fair, all sinners would get what they deserve.

--So, already we're not dealing with a level playing field, because sinners are not being dealt with fairly.

--Life isn't fair and we don't want it to be—we want grace and mercy. Not justice.

--**How can we complain about getting the better side of unfairness?**

1. Our second disturbing conclusion is that **We are entitled only to hell and nothing more.**

--Sinners aren't in hell the moment they sin because God is administering mercy and grace.

--So, every day we wake up not in hell is a good day but certainly **not a fair day.**

2. The third disturbing conclusion: God doesn't owe us anything good—not even an explanation.

--Job wants an explanation for what has happened--I can't blame him -- I would, too, but we need to understand that it wasn't owed to him.

--God effectively refuses by saying to Job, "What makes you think you deserve an explanation?" That's all God says. Job never gets an explanation. He's never told why.

--God doesn't necessarily need us to be smarter; But we need to trust Him.

3. "Why God?" It's not a bad question.

--Do you have a lot of "why" questions? Me too.

--You may get an answer to your "why" questions because God's nice and deals with us as a kind father would His children.

--But please understand, God doesn't owe us any explanations. God doesn't owe anyone anything.

--Again, a law breaker doesn't deserve anything from God but Hell.

--Even if we weren't sinners, we are still His creation over which He is totally sovereign—He still wouldn't have any obligation to us.

--We are loaded with audacity, aren't we?

--Nevertheless, you may ask God why this and why that and you may get a gracious answer, but it's not guaranteed. You hold nothing over Him.

--If Job, a blameless and upright man, didn't get an answer, why should we? **That is part of what is disturbing about this book.**

4. This leads us to our fourth disturbing conclusion. God doesn't owe us anything because God's got a right to do whatever He wants.

--He's got every right to do what whatever He wants to do, in whatever way He wants and for as long as He wants. Are you okay with that?

--Is it okay for Him to do whatever He wants to do in your life? I hope so because He doesn't need your permission.

--We need to remember that God gives and God takes away whenever He wants and however He wants because it's all His stuff; it is all His universe.

--If He were not loving and kind, there'd be nothing we could do about it, but since He is the definition of love and kindness, we have so much to be thankful for.

--A common phrase today is, "It's my life." Are you sure about that? Seems like if it was our life, then we would get to keep it.

--Life is given by God; He didn't have to give it and He doesn't have to let us keep it for any set time.

--He decided to give it, and He can decide when and how He takes it back.

--Whatever God takes away and whenever He does, be sure of this, it is something He's going to take away anyway. So, we need to be settled with that.

5. This leads us to our fifth conclusion, and it may be the most disturbing of all: Good Deeds Don't Guarantee Good from God in Return

--I'm not saying that God will not give you good in return, but I am saying you haven't earned it!

--You may disagree with that one, but it is a clear implication of the book we are studying.

--Job did good stuff, he was a good person according to God's estimation and had an excellent reaction to catastrophe, surely, he deserved good in return, right?

--Maybe you think, "I've been really good, God." And, maybe, compared to others, you have been good, but does that make you deserving of good in return?

--You may think, "I'm making up for the things that I did when I was young." **No, you're not because they cannot be undone.**

--You cannot make up for a single sin, not for a single law that was broken. When it's broken, it's broken.

Not even God fixes the laws that we've broken!

--Laws can't be fixed; they can only be paid for.

--A broken law is an eternal offense since they are eternal laws; that's why hell is an eternal place and that's why it took the Eternal One to pay for our broken laws.

--The penalty has to be paid. Either we pay for it by spending an eternity in hell, or Christ pays that penalty for us. Those are the only options.

--**Even if we stack up enormous amounts of good deeds, we will not have paid God back for a single sin.**

--We can never merit the favor of God because we are sinners. All of our merit is in the person of Christ.

--Therefore, to think that we deserve good in return for our doing good is a falsehood.

--All of the good we experience will be because He has graciously decided to bless us and nothing more.

The finally disturbing conclusion is the disconnect between our actions and what we are currently experiencing.

We'd like to think bad circumstances can always be remedied by acting good, but it isn't always true.

--Understand, I'm not saying that there's never a relationship between bad behavior and bad consequences because, clearly, in the Bible, there is. I am just saying there **may not** be.

--Job leaves us with life being far more uncertain than possibly we have ever thought.

--This is why the televangelist theology is so enticing: "if you do good things, God will always bless you in this life."

The certainties are that God is sovereign, God is good, God is gracious and merciful to us and we owe everything to Him.