

**Job 14: 13-22; “Believers are Hidden in Christ”, Sermon #27 in the series entitled –
“Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall
on September 2nd, 2022, in the Afternoon Worship.**

Job was at a very low point in his experience here in these verses. He says in verse 13 that he wished that God would hide him in the grave. He meant that it was his hope that God would permit him to die. And then having been placed in the grave, that God would permanently hide him there from all the trial, trouble, and affliction which had come upon him; that trial and trouble which he thought that God Himself had deliberately brought upon him.

He did not know why God had brought this trial upon him. And the same may be the case with you. There may be times in your life when you may wish to die, as well. When bodily pain comes and stays with you, and the trial you are going through does not seem to end, but goes on and on. You, too, might wonder what God means by leaving you in it. It may bring you to this same point that Job found himself in, of great agony and discouragement.

What should you do? How should you respond? Well, I believe that if you find yourself sorely pressed like this, that you should respond in faith to what God brings to you in your experience. During your trial, you should remember all that Christ has done for you. And so at this time I will take the words of Job and I will place on them the very best construction that I can. I want us to think about them from the standpoint of every believer’s life being hidden with Christ in God.

3 truths of comfort I would bring to every believer here. 1st of all – Because your life is hidden with Christ in God, your service to God will not be a hard service. (verses 13 & 14) 2nd – Because your life is hidden with Christ in God, God desires the work of His hands; that is you, the believer. (verses 15-17) And 3rd – Because your life is hidden with Christ in God, your eternal hope is more and more established, because of Christ. (verses 18-22)

1st of all – Because your life is hidden with Christ in God, your service to God will not be a hard service. (verses 13 & 14)

Job says – “Oh, that You would hide me in the grave, that You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that You would appoint me a set time, and remember me!” “If a man dies, shall he live again?” “All the days of my hard service I will wait, till my change comes.” Job knew, what you and I should know, that God ordains all things after the counsel of His own will. And yes, it was true that God had permitted Satan to afflict him in this awful way that he did. But I want you to understand that God did not approve of what Satan had done, for He said to Satan in chapter 2, verse 3 after Satan’s first attack upon Job – “Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?” “And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

So, here is the truth of the matter. Satan demanded permission to afflict Job and God gave it to him. But God calls Satan’s gaining permission to afflict him, “inciting Me (or “moving Me” as it says in the KJV) against him, to destroy him without a cause”. God never approves of Satan’s cause of deception and murder. He does not approve of any of the unrighteous acts of the Devil. And since he is unchangeable in His Being, He knows everything of what He has purposed, and so it is only in this sense that God ordained that Job would be tried and tested by these things. God was perfectly holy and loving, in a holy way, in all that He ordained and all that He permitted Satan to do to His dearly beloved saint Job.

Let us see that all of God’s motives for permitting this trial were pure and holy and loving. In Lamentations chapter 3, verse 33, Jeremiah says – “For God does not afflict willingly, nor grieve

the children of men.” “To crush under one’s feet all the prisoners of the earth, to turn aside the justice due a man before the face of the Most High, or subvert a man in his cause – The Lord does not approve.” It is possible however, that a Christian who is being attacked by Satan may indeed faint in the spiritual battle, not realizing that Satan is trying to prove a great point with God, as was true in this case with Job. When a Christian faints, it may be because he or she has wrongly conceived that the wrath of God is upon them when it is not. In verse 13b Job states that God’s wrath was upon him, and he wants God to conceal him until His wrath is past.

He thought that God had forgotten him in the sense that He had forgotten to be gracious to him. He thought of his service to God as a hard service and that he would have to wait until his change came to relieve him of his distress. The change that he was thinking of, was his own death. He wanted God to appoint him a set time and remember him by allowing him to die. He could hide in the grave and God would conceal him there until His wrath was past. But this is not how Job would get through this trial, by doubting the graciousness of the Lord; by doubting that if a man dies, that he will live again. Job did not remember; he did not understand very well, that his life, and indeed all believer’s lives are hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3: 1-4. “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.” “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” What Job needed to desperately to see was that since he was a true believer, that His Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ, did indeed live. And even then, in those times, and He was taking cognizance of Job’s situation. He was even then interceding on Job’s behalf, based upon the redemption that He would accomplish during the time of His earthly ministry in the future. The benefits of this were already being applied to Job!

It is true that Job knew, as he says in Job 19, verse 25, “that his Redeemer lived, and He would stand at last on the earth, and after his skin was destroyed, he knew that he would see Him for himself...” But what he needed to know, or to remember, was that since he was a believer in this glorious Redeemer, that he had already died with Christ, spiritually, by faith in Him. His life was hidden with Christ in God, even then. Christ was anticipating, even at that time, all that He would do for Job. He was anticipating His living a perfect life on Job’s behalf before God His Father. He was anticipating what He would do for Job in suffering and dying for him on the cross. This joy of being Job’s Savior was, even then, in Christ’s heart.

If Job had realized this better, if he had had his faith engaged in Christ His Redeemer at this very point, he would not have fainted as badly as he did at this time. This is why Christ says to all of us here, at this time, what He said in Matthew chapter 11, verses 27-30. He said – “All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father.” “Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

When Jesus said this, He was not meaning to limit it to those coming to Him for salvation. He meant it for all those who labor at trying to understand what they are going through as Christians as well; all those who are heavy laden, not just with the burden of sin, but with the burden of trying to understand why you think that God has forgotten you, when you are in the midst of the most difficult trial. Come to Jesus, weary one, and you will find rest for your soul. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Come to Him now and cast all of your cares upon Him, for He cares for you. When you come to Him you will find that His service is not a hard service, for He is with you in it.

2nd – Because your life is hidden with Christ in God, God desires the work of His hands; that is you, the believer.

Verse 15 says – “You shall call, and I will answer You; You shall desire the work of Your hands.” “For now You number my steps, but do not watch over my sin.” “My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and You cover my iniquity.” When Job says this, once again we need to understand that he is speaking of God’s calling him to come to Him through death. Job says that he will answer this call, for God shall desire the work of His hands to give an accounting of himself before Him. But there is an indication in the various translations that Job has a good expectation of how God will receive him when he dies and has to give an account.

Take, for example, the ESV. It says – “All the days of my service I would wait, till my renewal should come.” “You would call, and I would answer you; you would long for the work of your hands.” “For then you would number my steps; you would not keep watch over my sin; my transgression would be sealed up in a bag, and you would cover over my iniquity.” This translation seems to be saying by the use of the word, “renewal”, that Job is simply looking forward to the end of his trial, to the time when he would be renewed in his spirit and have confidence in serving God once again.

If this is true, we see that God desires the work of His hands, not only in His making believers completely and totally perfect in the life to come, but also in relation to His work in them in this life. And so we can say that God does desire the work of His hands in relation to all believers in both this life and in the life to come. His desire is that their salvation, which is the work of His hands, be begun in this life in regeneration, and that by His Spirit we would be transformed from one degree of glory to another. It is we ourselves which He desires.

If a Christian becomes worldly, there is a Scripture which God has for them in James chapter 4, verse 4 – “Adulterers and adulteresses!” “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?” “Whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” “Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously?” In other words, God righteously yearns and longs for the work of His hands to respond to Him in loving Him more than the world. God’s desire is bound up with your being perfected in this life, dear believer, so that when you die, He will be pleased with His work in you; that is, in your transformation. The reason that God can desire the work of His hands in any of us who are believers, is because of Christ Jesus His Son.

As it says in Ephesians 2: 4-10 – “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Once again, we need to see here that it is you who the Lord desires; you, the work of His hands. His greatest desire is that you would be holy and blameless before Him in love. This is why Paul says in 1st Thessalonians 5: 22-24 – “Abstain from every form of evil.” “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.” As we come down front now to observe the Lord’s Supper, let us remember that God desires us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He desires the work of His hands; that is, for us to become

more like His Son. When we go through various trials and difficulties we need to remember that He is doing a good work in us to conform us to Christ's image and likeness. Let us rejoice in His good work no matter what situation we are going through of difficulty and distress, knowing that we are His.

3rd – Because your life is hidden with Christ in God, your eternal hope is more and more established, because of Christ.

Verse 18 says – “But as a mountain falls and crumbles away, and as a rock is moved from its place; as water wears away stones, and as torrents wash away the soil of the earth; so You destroy the hope of man.” “You prevail forever against him, and he passes on; You change his countenance and send him away.” “His sons come to honor, and he does not know it; they are brought low, and he does not perceive it.” “But his flesh will be in pain over it.” “And his soul will mourn over it.” We see here that the hope of a worldly man, an ungodly man, shall perish. God has His ways of showing men the vanity of life apart from Himself.

You and I who have come here to remember Christ must take notice of the fact that Christ had to die in order for any person to have hope that is eternal. In Proverbs 14: 32, in the King James version, Solomon says – “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death.” How can a person who does not know God have any hope at all at the time of his death? Even though he may have had the hope that all of his plans for his house and his children would succeed and last, and he himself held in honor by many people, yet God will not establish that hope for it is not built on the Rock of Christ. Even as, over time, an earthly mountain falls and crumbles away, and as an earthly rock is moved from its place, even so God will destroy the hope of man who lives for anything or anyone else than for Christ.

Even if he is told on his death bed that his sons have come to honor, he will not be able to rejoice over it. But if they are brought low, his flesh will be in pain over it and his soul will mourn over it, but he will not have a lasting hope for himself or for them if they do not know Christ. On the other hand, listen to how it is for the person who trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ for hope. 2nd Thessalonians 2, verses 16 and 17 say this: Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work. This is why we remember Christ at this time. This is why we remember Him not only in the Supper, but every day of our lives. We have Christ Jesus, the hope of glory in our lives.