

Job 13: 12-19; “Job’s Confident Trust in God”, Sermon # 24 in the series entitled – “Remember to Magnify His Work”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 5th, 2021, in the Afternoon Worship.

In each of these Communion sermons that I have preached to you on Job, I have tried to show you how Job’s sufferings and sorrows, which were so very great, were taken upon our Lord Jesus Christ when He went to the cross. They were borne by Him there, so that Job could endure this great trial that he went through. People are saved and they become a part of the people of God, in the same way, from Old Testament to New. Job was a saved man. Indeed God says to Satan of him in the first chapter, that in regard to him, that there was none like him on the earth, a just man who feared God and who turned away from evil. Christ’s sacrifice, although made thousands of years after Job lived, was the basis of Job’s receiving grace so that he could endure, and be taught the lessons that God wanted him to learn, during that awful time.

The grace that Job received was the same form of saving and sanctifying grace that we receive today. He learned from Christ then, and we learn from Christ now. And so before we partake of the Supper, I want to open up for you the 3 statements of confident trust that Job makes here, so that together we might see how important faith in Christ is, when we are going through our trials. If we will think about these statements, when we go through any trial, we shall find that by faith in Christ, He will enable us to overcome the world, the flesh, and Devil.

1st of all – The Statement of verse 15: Though He slay me, yet shall I trust Him.

In verse 13, Job says to his friends, “Hold your peace with me, and let me speak, then let come on me what may!” “Why do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my hands?” “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” So Job is questioning here. He is not questioning God. He is questioning His friends having taken the approach that they they did, to come to Him and not to really sympathize with him in the way that they should have, but rather to look carefully at his situation to find out the reason that he was going through this. Unfortunately, no one knew the reason at that point, except for God and Satan and the other angels. So, even though his friends thought that they knew, after they looked at it for a while, they didn’t know. And so they began to question Job’s integrity.

Whereas, Job is questioning why it was that he, a righteous man, was suffering in this unusual way that he was. Job knew what every believer should know, that God is essentially good in His great Being. He is faithful in His goodness. And He is full of lovingkindness and tender mercies towards His people. He does them good each and every day of their lives. Job had experienced that goodness in a very obvious way, for many years, and he had walked with the Lord closely. He had not been a worldling. He had not lived selfishly to himself. He had developed a personal relationship with God where he prayed and sought the Lord every day. He had also been thoughtful in regard to instructing his children in the ways of the Lord. He prayed for them often. He had been full of good works towards other people.

And then suddenly one day, all this all changed, and his 10 children died; all on one day, in a wind storm. And then, on the same day, his great possessions were taken from him later that same day. The Sabeans made a raid and stole the oxen and the donkeys and killed the servants who were watching them. The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants also. The Chaldeans also raided the camels and took them away and killed the servants. In response to this, Job had worshiped the Lord, and said – The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. In all this he did not sin, the scriptures tell us.

And then, a few days later, according to God’s permissive will, Job was struck by Satan with sore boils all over his body. As if this were not enough for him to take in, his 3 friends came to him, and we should notice that they did sympathize with him by sitting down with him on the ground for seven days, and not saying a word. That no doubt was a help, at first. But then when

Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth, and questioned why all these things had happened, they immediately drew the wrong conclusion. They thought that nothing this bad could happen to a righteous man. And so they were telling him that these things had come because he was a hypocrite; that if he would just repent, that things would be better for him once again. It is no wonder that after a few interactions with them like this, he became tired of their speaking to him.

In verse 12, he says to them, “Your platitudes are proverbs of ashes, your defenses are defenses of clay.” With friends like this, he thought, I do not need friends. But he really did need friends. And so I would have you take notice of the fact that this book teaches us, that there is a right way and a wrong way to be a friend. Job was questioning God in regard to the way that He was dealing with him. He was right in some of his words, and wrong in others. But he did not know that there was a spiritual contest going on in the heavenly places between God and Satan over his integrity. But his friends were actually greatly aggravating his grief and pain while he was going through this trial. And at a number of points they were not speaking right of God.

All of us, in order to be faithful to God, and to be a good Christian friend, we need to learn to hold our peace. We should not draw fast conclusions when a brother or a sister comes into a great trial. We may wrongly conclude: This was their sin that brought these awful things upon them. But it may not be true at all. In Job’s case it was just the opposite. Job knew that his friends should hold their peace and not draw wrong conclusions about himself. He was telling them that he wanted to speak. He wanted God to give him an answer as to why this had come upon him. He was in so much sorrow and so much pain that he wanted to die. He wanted to speak, and then let come on him what may, he says. “Why do I take my flesh in my teeth” was an expression of his putting the question before them. Why am I in all of this grief and pain?

Why do I feel like tearing my own flesh with my own teeth? What is really marvelous, and is a good example for us, when we come into a great trial, is this statement that follows – Though He slay me, yet I will trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him. He is saying that he wanted so much to have an answer from God, so that he could do what was right in relation to his trial, that he was willing to accept the idea that even though God might slay him, that he would still trust in Him. He would still defend his own integrity. But he would continue to trust in God. That is strong faith, my brethren, when a man can say such a thing.

Let me say this. There is much that every Christian needs to be taught by God Himself in how to live their life to God’s glory. The person who is willing to learn what God would have them to learn is desirous to have God teach them, no matter what the cost. Job was one of those men. He would trust in God, even if He slew him. Here in our New Testament times, we need to remember Christ. We need to remember that God slew Christ; that is, according to His predetermined plan and foreknowledge, He had Him slain. He delivered Him into the hands of wicked men so that they would crucify Him. He offered Him up as a sacrifice for your sins. He did this for you the sinner. He did this out of love to the whole world.

Perhaps Job did not know exactly what it would take to redeem him, but he knew that he had a Redeemer. And if he would have known more of what we know now, in New Testament times, He would have better understood that he had a Friend who was sticking closer to him than a brother; even though his friends were being unfriendly. That verse that I am bringing to your attention is found in Proverbs chapter 18, verse 24. It says – “A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” In the case of Job, this verse was very much the truth. His friends, during his deepest trial, during the darkest time of his human experience, failed him. But the Lord Christ did not.

Friends may fail me, foes assail men; He my strength, my victory is, the hymn-writer said. It was not Job who God would slay, it would be that God would deliver up His only-begotten, much

beloved Son for Job. In the end, defending his own ways would be something that he would repent of, eventually. We will read about it at the end of this book. But you and I should defend God's ways, which are the ways of Justice and love, truth and faithfulness to His promises. He will never leave you nor forsake you. He will work all things together for your good if you trust in Christ.

2nd – Let's think together about the Statement of verse 16: He also shall be my salvation.

Verse 16 says – “He also shall be my salvation, for a hypocrite could not come before Him.” We have been thinking about friends in our first point. Let's continue to think about them in terms of these words of Job's – He shall be my salvation. These words that Job said are true; that if he had been a hypocrite, he could not have come before God. He would have deserved what he was going through if he had been a hypocrite. That is, he could not have come before God and have asked Him to deliver him from what he was going through. But he knew that he was not a hypocrite. He was not play-acting at walking with God and keeping His commandments. He was God's friend, and as such, he would continue to trust in Him.

He would have agreed with the words that David penned in Psalm 66, verse 16-20, and he would have said them by memory if he had known them. “Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul.” “I cried out to Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue.” “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.” “But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer.” “Blessed be God, who has not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me!” You can see the issue here can't you? It is not as though God does not save sinners who call upon His name. He does. But the issue here is stated plainly. It is whether you will be heard by God in prayer and answered favorably, while regarding iniquity in your heart. It cannot be, as long as you hold to sin in your heart.

It is only when you come to God in prayer with a repentant heart, then when you pray to Him, God will hear. Then God will most certainly hear you hear, for Jesus' sake, and forgive you of your sins, and restore you to fellowship with Himself. What is the basis of your friendship with God, as a believer? Is it not your sincerity in relation to your walking with Him; that when you find any sin in your thoughts or actions that you repent of it? That you think about what God thinks about you at all times, and try to live a consistent godly life, walking in the fear of the Lord? Everyone who truly knows God knows that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Only fools despise wisdom and instruction.

But it is more than this. It is that we must remember the basis upon which God hears our prayers and answers them favorably. It is that we consciously remember what Christ has done for us to save us from our sins; the whole body of our sins which we have committed over the course of our life, we must be saved from them all. And we are saved from them all, when we come to God in prayer on the basis of what Christ has done for us. His living a perfectly righteous life for you at every point, and then sealing it by becoming a sacrifice for your sins on the cross, that is the basis upon which you are heard. And he will attend to the voice of your prayer.

In Job's case, it was so very difficult because it appeared to him that God was not having regard for his sincerity, or the fact that he had walked with Him closely for many years, even though he knew that he did fear Him. He did love God and had been keeping His commandments. But now, in his experience, it seemed to him that God had forsaken him and was judging him. This is where it is so very important that, when you go through the most difficult trials in your life, that you exercise faith in God. Though He slay me, yet I shall trust in Him, should be our attitude. That you will remember to say to Him that He is your salvation.

That is what you are doing when you partake of this Supper. You are saying that He is your salvation, and you are remembering, once again, anew and afresh, everything that He has done

for you in His finished work, on your behalf. You were not able to save yourself when you first came to Him through Jesus Christ your Lord. You cannot deliver yourself from your trials, but you know and believe that because Jesus is your Friend, that He the Friend of sinners, and the One who is making you into a saint, that He will bring you through this trial. He will bring you out on the other side of it, because He is the Friend who sticks closer than a brother. Let's come down front now and partake of the Supper.

3rd – Let's think about that statement which Job made that he knew that he would be vindicated.

Listen carefully to my speech, and to my declaration with your ears." "See now, I have prepared my case, I know that I shall be vindicated." "Who is he who will contend with me?" "If now, I hold my tongue, I perish." This confident faith of Job in God, this was the basis of his believing that he would eventually be vindicated. If your heart does not condemn you, you will have confidence before God. If you will confess your sins, or ask God why He seems to be hiding His face from you, if your heart does not condemn you, you eventually will receive wisdom. Some people say that it is not good to seek to find out the reasons why God has providentially ordered things in your life the way that He has. I would say just the opposite. God wants you to think about the way that He has led you, and He wants you to interact with Him over it.

But let this not be an obsession; your thinking about the why. Or think hard thoughts about God. What you need to focus on is your faith, whether you can have the kind of confident faith that Job had, when things were at their worst. Job was still declaring the truth; that he had not sinned or done anything to deserve what he was going through. It is enough that you ask to be taught by God as to how you can demonstrate to others the faith in God that you do have. This was where Job failed for a time, in the way that He viewed God. He asks God in verse 26 of this chapter 13 of Job he says – "For you write bitter things against me, and make me inherit the iniquities of my youth." "You put my feet in the stocks, and watch closely all my paths." But God was doing no such thing.

Yes, God was watching closely, all of Job's paths. But He was not making him inherit the iniquities of his youth. He had forgiven those long before, and now was leading Job on the path of righteousness for His name's sake. Make sure, my brethren, that you do not attribute to God, the works of the Devil, or think that He is against you, when He is really for you because you have Christ as your Savior and Lord. Make sure that you do not go about to justify yourself and your own righteousness, and fail to justify God who has justified you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is not wrong to ask God, as Job did, how many are my iniquities and sins, or to ask Him to make you to know them, what they are.

But do not ask why God is hiding His face from you. If you would know the reason, it is because He would have you to live by faith in Him more and more until You see Him face to face. The just shall live by his faith. It says in Hebrews 10: 38 – "Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." When you go through trials, remember that Christ died so that you might pass the test. What is the test? It is this. God is saying – Will you trust Me, and know that my Son has died for this; so that you might learn and grow, and live to My glory? This is what God loves the most; that childlike faith that will rest in Him, and leave all in His hands. And remember that Christ went to the cross so that you would pass this test. So therefore, live by your faith in the One who loved you and gave Himself for you.