

---

# SG021802

## The Whole Counsel of God – Job 3-37

Got questions? Email Pastor Jason at [jasonduff7@gmail.com](mailto:jasonduff7@gmail.com)  
(You can download this message as a podcast by searching Jason Duff on i-Tunes)

---

### Introduction & Overview of the Section

---

#### Introduction

Tonight we are going to continue our study in the book of Job. We are going to overview the vast majority of the book. The reason we are taking an approach to this week's text is number one God calls the majority of what is said in this section, "Words without wisdom" (Job 38:2). Another reason we are taking this whole section together is the same lesson is repeated over and over again in the text. Job's friends believe Job has done something wrong and that is why Job is going through trials. Although each of Job's friends arrive at the same wrong conclusion, they get there different ways and that is the basis of our study tonight.

#### Outline for Tonight's Study

##### The Problem with Job's friends and their arguments

- #1 – Eliphaz the Temanite – (Personal Experience)
- #2 – Bildad, the Shuhite – (Tradition)
- #3 – Zophar – (Legalism - God always works this way)
- #4 – Elihu – (Truth without love)

#### General Overview of Job 3-37

##### Job 3 – Job's Lament

##### Job 4-7 – Eliphaz's 1<sup>st</sup> Speech & Job's response

##### Job 8-10 – Bildad's 1<sup>st</sup> Speech & Job's response

##### Job 11-14 – Zophar's 1<sup>st</sup> Speech & Job's response

##### Job 15-17 – Eliphaz's 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech & Job's response

##### Job 18-19 – Bildad's 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech & Job's response

##### Job 20-21 – Zophar's 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech & Job's response

##### Job 22-24 – Eliphaz's Final Speech & Job's response

##### Job 25-31 – Bildad's Final Speech & Job's response

##### Job 32-37 – Elihu's Monologue

### Some Important Verses from Job 3-37

---

**Take time to read through these key verses found in this section.**

**What do these verses mean? How do they relate to the rest of scripture?**

Job 5:7 - "Yet man is born to trouble as sure as the sparks fly upward"

Job 9:32-33 - "For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him. Oh that there would be a mediator between us, who may lay His hand on both of us"

Job 14:14 - "If a man dies, shall he live again?"

Job 23:10 - "when He has tested me I shall come forth as gold"

Job 23:12 - "I have treasured the Words of His Mouth more than my necessary food."

Job 31:1 - "I have made a covenant with my eyes, that I should not look upon a young woman to lust after her"

### Homework 4 Next Week – Read Job 38-42

---

# **Job 3-37**

## **Job's Counselors**

### **Introduction**

**The book of Job divides nicely into 3 sections**

#### **#1 - The Prologue – Job 1-2**

- Where we are introduced to Job, his background and the trials he faced
  - Trials of lost possessions, trials of lost loved ones, trials in his marriage, and trials of his friends
  - That leads us to the second section

#### **#2 - The Dialogue – Job 3-37**

- Job and 4 friends argue back and forth for 35 chapters concerning the reason Job is suffering
  - Job's friends have this basic premise – God judges sin, God has judged you – therefore you are in sin
  - Job the whole time maintains his innocence and in fact challenges God to come down and show him what he has done wrong
- That leads next week to the third section

#### **#3 - The Monologue – Job 38-42**

- God comes down to speak with Job, not to inform him of what he has done wrong, for God already told us that Job was blameless in chapter one
  - But everybody has been giving their opinion, what they think God is doing and now it is God's turn to talk
  - And we will get to that section next week

### **Tonight we are going to overview the content of 35 chapters**

- And I want you to understand why we are doing it this way
- First of all – This middle section of the book of Job is an argument between Job and his four friends.
  - And for most of the time they are speaking out of frustration versus inspiration –

### **God calls this section of Job - “words without knowledge” – Job 38:2**

- You see the Bible records accurately what they said, but that does mean what people say is accurate - if you compare some of their conclusions with other Scripture –
  - Some of what they have to say is simply not true

### **In fact some cults derive their theology from one simple verse out of the book of Job**

- One example of that is Job 3:13 –

### **“For now I would have lain still and been quiet, I would have been asleep, then I would have been at rest.” – Job 3:13**

- the whole idea of soul sleep comes from this verse – that we don't go to either heaven or hell, no until the resurrection our soul is asleep – but

that idea flies in the face of so much other of the revealed Word of God – Abraham was gathered to his people, Jesus told the thief – ‘today you will be with Me’ – and Paul who said “I would rather be absent from the body and present with the Lord”

- so some of these are words without wisdom

**Another reason we are going to overview this section tonight is this section teaches the same lesson over and over again – “Be careful how you counsel someone with what you believe to be the heart of God – you might not be right”**

- And even if we did five chapters week – that would be our study for seven straight Wednesdays

- I am a little too easily bored for that

**And probably the best reason we are going to overview this section is it seems to me whenever I teach something, God allows me to experience the lesson personally, so the teaching is real, not words without knowledge**

- And so we don’t have to spend 2-3 months in sever trials we will finish the book next week

- [But for context let’s begin tonight in Job 2:11-13](#)

**The outline for the section is also in the study guide**

**Job 3-37**

**Job 3 – Job’s Lament**

**Job 4-7 – Eliphaz’s 1<sup>st</sup> Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 8-10 – Bildad’s 1<sup>st</sup> Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 11-14 – Zophar’s 1<sup>st</sup> Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 15-17 – Eliphaz’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 18-19 – Bildad’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 20-21 – Zophar’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 22-24 – Eliphaz’s Final Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 25-31 – Bildad’s Final Speech & Job’s response**

**Job 32-37 – Elihu’s Monologue**

- the chapters are divided by Job’s first, second and third discourse with his friends and Job’s response

- but we are introduced to 3 of the 4 friends in chapter 2

- and before we get to what was wrong with what they had to say, I first want us to consider what Job’s friends did right

**Verse 11 says, that these 3 friends came to Job**

- And we need to commend them for that

- I’m sure Job, being wealthy, had many more than 3 friends, but these were the ones who were willing to come

- This is so important for us to consider and learn from

- When those around us go through troubling tuff times – it is important that we as Christian brothers and sisters reach out

- So often we think – I don't know what to say, I don't want to bother them – but I tell you, it's not a bother to drop a note, make a call – “I'm going to stay by your side and never leave”, some things might get old – but reaching out never does!

### **And don't worry about what to say to someone who is going through trials, that is the second thing I want to point out**

- At first, all Job's friends did was sit with him, verse 13, not even saying a word
  - It does not matter that you don't know what to say, in fact, that is probably better
  - When we feel the need to speak often times it does not help at all – We say dumb things like - “I know how you feel”, - “no you don't,
- I know when I have gone through some of the darkest times in my life, I have appreciated so much those that would just be there, pray for me, encourage me in the Lord
  - Those who didn't feel the need to share every theology point about every issue going on – but just to be there
- For Job's friends, they came (good), they sat and were just with Job (awesome), then they opened up their mouths...
  - Oh no....

### **All four of Job's friends basically make the same summation of the situation**

- God judges sin, God has judged Job, so therefore Job must be in sin
  - And though their argument makes sense logically, it is simply not true
  - And what I want to do is examine each of the friends, because even though they basically all have the same premise, they arrive to that premise in different ways

### **The Problem with Job's friends and their arguments**

#### **#1 - Eliphaz the Temanite – (Personal Experience)**

- He, like the others has a basic premise that Job is hiding some secret sin
  - But he comes to that conclusion by personal experience
- **Read chapter 4, verses 12 thru 21** – Eliphaz tells of a vision that he received that led him to believe this about Job
  - And so he begins to share with his friend, Job you're in sin, I know you are because this is what the experience of my life has taught me – it is only the sinners who are judged

### **The problem is that we can not always trust that which we learn from personal experience**

- in other words, just because it has happened that way in your life before, is in no way a guarantee that is what will happen again, or why it is happening now

I think of Samson in the book of Judges – you remember he was a man extremely gifted by God, the Spirit of God was upon Him. But he was also a very sensual man, in bondage to lust. And this sin led him to Delilah, who wanted Samson to reveal the secret of his strength. And she begged him, you don't love me, tell me. So he lies to her and says, "seven new ropes" so he goes to sleep and she ties him up, "the Philistines are upon you. He gets up, whops on them all over. "you lied to me... tell me." Okay take my hair and weave it into the web of loom, and I will be weak. "Go to sleep, Samson the Philistines" and he whoops them. A third time – I would be getting a complex, Samson blinded by sin – tell me, what is the secret, "I am a Nazirite, if you cut my hair, that's it. So Delilah puts him to sleep cuts his hair, and "the Philistines are upon you

**Judges 16:20, "I will go out as before at other times and shake myself free" –**

- But he did not know the Lord had departed from him"
  - No big deal, I have always sinned and then be able to get out of it – that has always been my experience
  - Experience is not always right

When I was a high school pastor there was a girl who wasn't really surrendered to the Lord and she would date this guy and that guy. But as she began to mature, she was all of sudden concerned about God's heart for her relationships. So when another one was brewing on the horizon, she came to me and asked, what do you think. He doesn't know the Lord, but he is so nice. And I told her, the Bible says, "don't be unequally yoked" – and she responded, but it has never effected me in the past."

- In other words I hear what the word of God is saying to me, but that is not my experience
  - My heart is telling me to go for it...

**Friends, that is a dangerous place to be in – because the heart is deceitfully wicked (Jeremiah 17:9), who can know it**

- experience is not a good indicator of truth
  - and Eliphaz uses it to prove to Job, you are in sin
  - well, next..

**The Problem with Job's friends and their arguments**

**#1 - Eliphaz the Temanite – (Personal Experience)**

**#2 -Bildad, the Shuhite – (Tradition)**

- the shortest man in the Bible – get it Bildad...
  - he was at least 1.5 feet shorter than Ne-high-miah
  - ha ha ha – never mind that wasn't funny
- Bildad, like the others makes the point starting in chapter 8, Job you are in sin, you need to repent

**He comes to that conclusion because of the logic, everyone knows that is the way it is, tradition says so**

- In chapter 8 verse 8, he begins to bring up wisdom from the former age – [read chapter 8:8](#)
  - And so he begins to share with his friend, Job you're in sin, you need to repent. I know this because tradition says it is so

**The problem is, tradition, like personal experience is not always the indicator of truth**

- I think of Jesus dealing with the Pharisees as an example

**In Matthew chapter 12 Jesus goes into the synagogue and in the congregation there is a man with a withered hand. A man suffering because of a physical infirmity**

- Now Jesus goes up to the man, and as he had been doing all over Israel, He heals him
  - The Pharisees interrupt what are you doing – I'm healing, this man is sick – but you can't heal – no I just did, I can
- No – you can't heal because it's the Sabbath
  - Who says I can't heal on the Sabbath????
  - Well – everyone – everyone knows you can't do that, that's work – tradition holds that you can't heal someone on the Lord's day
  - That is the way it has always been
- But you see that doesn't make it right

Christy reminded me of this last night – when we first were married, she had some serious problems with me, one was because at night I would always sleep with a fan on. And not just any fan, but I had since I was about 16, this mini swamp cooler that you put water in the bottom, it was great. Loud but great. And everyone in my family used one. My Mom and step dad, my sister, everyone. And the first night in our apartment I crank that baby up. And I'm ready to sleep. She says, what's that. It's a fan! What are you doing with it? Going to sleep? With that noise? Yes – don't you. It had never occurred to me that someone would sleep without a fan, that was the way it always had been

- but that didn't make it right
  - tradition, is not always a good indicator of truth

**And by the way – this is something we need to understand, not only when we are sharing advice with one another, but also when we are understanding doctrine**

- I hear often – well that is not what the 1<sup>st</sup> century church believed – they didn't believe the trinity, they didn't believe in a literal return of Jesus
  - And because they are the 1<sup>st</sup> century closer to the time of Christ, that makes them correct

**But you see, though that sounds logical, it isn't right**

- In the book of Revelation, Jesus writes seven letters to the first century church, less than 60 years after his death
  - And yet in those letters, Jesus is correcting doctrine – they were already doing weird things

- And that is a lesson to me
- Just because something has been done that way, that does not always in all cases make it right
  - And that was the truth for Bildad
  - Well.... Friend number 3

### **The Problem with Job's friends and their arguments**

#### **#1 - Eliphaz the Temanite – (Personal Experience)**

#### **#2 -Bildad, the Shuhite – (Tradition)**

#### **#3 -Zophar –(Legalism - God always works this way)**

- He, like the others, has the premise that Job is harboring some secret sin that needs to be repented of
  - But Zophar arrives at that conclusion because of his legalistic view of God
  - He believes God works this manner, with this situation, in every case
- You can read the opening verses of chapter 11 and see Zophar's heart
  - [Read Job 11:1-6](#)

### **Job what is the matter with you? You know, you understand – God always works this way –**

- He blesses the righteous and curses the wicked, and if you are saying that you are righteous, that doesn't make sense.
  - So Job, you must be in sin, that is the only way it can be

### **The Problem – God doesn't always fit into the little boxes we try to squeeze Him into. And our theological boxes are not always indicators of truth**

- again, I think one of the greatest examples of that is when the Pharisees brought the woman caught in adultery before Jesus
  - now – the law was clear on what to do with her, she was to be stoned to death – cut and dried
- and I wonder what I, or you would have done to her?

### **I wonder because Jesus didn't stone her**

- and what that teaches me is God doesn't always do things the way we think He will or the way we think He should even...

### **I have often had to do some self evaluation – of whose side I would have been on, if I had lived in Jesus' day**

- Jesus was radical – Jesus did things different than the religious people did
  - Now – I'm not saying, He wasn't holy, He was
  - But so often He went the other way of what the mainstream religious community would have thought He would do
- And I want to remind us of that before we counsel, before we comfort, before we open our mouths and defend our scared cows, those things for

which there is no room or reason to pray, we think – it is obvious what to do

- That was the heart of Zophar

When I was in high school I wasn't allowed to be in leadership in our youth group. You know why – I didn't attend church on Sunday mornings. Now at first glance you would say, well of course. A Christian leader sees the importance of Sunday Morning fellowship. But in reality, My step dad made me work, there was no option for honoring my father, and attending church on Sunday. Now I went every Wednesday, Thursday night discipleship, Sunday night prayer meeting. I lead the largest high school Christian club in California 600 students. Yet I could not be in leadership in my youth group, because the rule was clear. You must be a regular on Sunday Morning.

- now maybe you agree with that – and certainly the Lord used it in my life to teach submission. But I feel I and the youth ministry missed out – I wasn't allowed to pray with kids after the service, to disciple the younger kids – all because of the letter of the law
  - may we be careful that we don't miss out on a chance to minister, on a change to develop the gifts of those around us because we are blinded by the letter of the law

### **The Problem with Job's friends and their arguments**

**#1 - Eliphaz the Temanite – (Personal Experience)**

**#2 -Bildad, the Shuhite – (Tradition)**

**#3 -Zophar –(Legalism - God always works this way)**

**# 4- Elihu – (Truth without love)**

- After the dialogue between Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, young Elihu comes to share – [Job 32:1-5](#)
  - Knowing his place as the younger, he does not interrupt the older man, he waits his turn
- Elihu, if you read it, he is very eloquent, makes a lot of sense
  - In fact of all of Job's friends, he is the closest to the truth
  - He still believes Job's in sin, but he believes God also brings trials into our life to shape who we are
- So Elihu, though not entirely correct, is much closer to the truth than Job's 3 other friends

**But his problem – as was the problem of the other 3 as well – although he was closer to the truth,**

- the truth is given to Job without a genuine concern for Job

**And as we counsel, as we exhort, this way of bringing the truth can be just as devastating as exhorting people in something that really isn't truth at all**

- **Love without truth is hypocrisy**



- If all I did was teach love to my kids, but I never taught them the truth of what it means to be Christian, to be a young man or woman after God's heart
- I might be the most popular dad of all time when they are young, - but I also be the most foolish dad of all time – because love without the truth accomplishing nothing – it's a sham
- However – **Truth with out love is brutality**
  - You see if I tried to teach my kids, but never let them climb up on my lap and give them love, I would be a brutal parent
  - **Truth with Love is Charity**

**And we need to understand this when sharing with one another**

- does the truth need to be shared – absolutely
  - but does it have to be done in love – you bet, other wise it will not be received
- Paul writing to the Corinthians about the importance of love in their ministry said... (I Corinthians 13)

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.” I Corinthians 13:1-3– heavy

**Job often cries out – I know, I know these things, but horrible comforters are you**

When I was a high school pastor, early on I inherited counselors from the previous high school pastor. And there were a few of them that drove me crazy. Reason was, for years, we only reached out to our school, and I started these on campus ministries and kids from the public schools started flooding into the youth ministry. And it was true, some of the girls that started coming were wearing very inappropriate clothing. Yet I would notice they would come, and then not be back the next week, and then a new group would come and then not the next week. And I couldn't figure it out for the life of me, until one of the counselors almost bragging shared with me – I love the ministry God has for me. I don't know if you have noticed, but we have been having some real worldly girls show up here, and I have made it my ministry, to pull them aside and teach them how to dress. I am protecting our boys. Isn't that wonderful????

- actually I like you to repent or get out this ministry – because those girls come out of a world where that is all they know, and just maybe they will come here, get the word and God will change their hearts – and until then I would rather you shut your mouth and have our guys learn to take every thought captive than for you to share your ministry and drive these girls away

**I don't think anything fires me up more than this – the church should be a place where the world can come and hear the word and then be changed by the power of the word**

- and if we as believers crush them because we are so concerned with truth, that we forget about love
  - then our truth profits us nothing
  - and we have taken on the attitude of Elihu, and all of Job's friends for that matter.

**Job's friends, knew they were right**

- because of their experiences
- because of tradition, it had always been that way
- because they just simply knew it was right
  - but they were wrong, really wrong
  - and even more so in the way they delivered the supposed truth to Job

**And friends, we need to learn from this**

- the longer you are around, the easier it is to open up your mental file of problems you have encountered, of people you have known
  - and flip on to the answer because "I have dealt with this before, I know what to say in this case"

**I find it interesting that Jesus handled each situation, each person differently -whether it was healing or sharing the gospel, or rebuking or encouraging**

It was done differently, individually for each one

**The same Jesus is in you**

- I have not left you orphans, I have given to you the Holy Spirit, another of the same kind, God, in you
  - That is why we are exhorted to abide
  - That is why we are exhorted to be filled – Eph 5
  - We need to pray, how would you handle this Lord
- Because that is how God deals with me – sometimes I need correction, sometimes I need Him to tell me He loves me
  - He knows – so listen and obey and speak with no "words without wisdom or love"
  - But Speaks Word of life as an instrument of ministry

Next week – we will listen to God – chapter 38-42 – "Spirit of the living God, fall...."