

**JOB SERIES FIVE**  
**JOB AND HIS “COMFORTERS”**  
**DR. ROGER BARRIER**  
**JOB 2:11-14; JOB 4:1-31:40; PROVERBS 25:20; MATTHEW 5:4; ROMANS 12:15**  
**(SERMON 1585)**

This morning we will examine how to minister care and compassion (and what doesn't help) to those around us who are suffering loss, turmoil, grief and depression. Job lives on in too many of us—and way too often.

I was surprised at how many folks approached me last week thanking me for affirming that it is right and proper for Christians to work with their doctors and take medicine to help control brain chemistry imbalance induced depression. Taking prescription drugs under the close supervision of a wise doctor does not demonstrate a lack of faith. Too many Christians are made to feel guilty for taking this course of action. Enough of this poor understanding of Christianity! James 5 gives a marvelous theology of the healing relationship between faith and medicine in producing health and wholeness.

By the way, next week we will explore the issue of why people suffer as enunciated as theology both in Job and as progressively revealed by God on into the New Testament.

Let's begin by examining Job 2:11-14.

Job's three friends were gracious in coming to minister to him in his time of need. Their intentions were praiseworthy. After the grieving and mourning of Job 3 it is time for someone to put his arms around Job and say, "I am sorry." But that is not going to happen.

Over the next thirty chapters we will see that the attitudes and words of these three friends leave Job hurt, wounded, and bewildered—emotionally sliced up, cut and bleeding by the side of the road. Three rounds of discussion occur—three cycles of increasing intensity—from mild to intense to antagonistic tirades. After each speech Job is left reeling. Round four begins in Job 32 when another friend, a young Elihu, lends his thoughts on the matter. When he is finished, Job is left speechless. Finally, God speaks.

Job's response to the quality of his friend's ministry is summed up in Job 16:1-6: "Miserable comforters are you all."

Unfortunately, it is possible to handle the emotionally hurt and distressed all wrong.

*Proverb 25:20: Like one who takes away a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on soda, is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.*

The proper response to the emotionally hurt and distressed is to help them mourn and then comfort them.

*Matthew 5:4: "Blessed Are Those Who Mourn, For They Shall Be Comforted."  
Romans 12:15b: "Mourn With Those Who Mourn."*

NOTICE WHAT JESUS DID NOT SAY: "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN..."

"...For They Shall Be Told Why They Shouldn't Feel That Way."

Job 4:1-6

“...For They Shall Receive A Pep Talk.”  
Job 8:20-23

“...For They Shall Be Given Logic And Reasons.”  
Job 20:1-29

“...For They Shall Be Told How To Do It Better Next Time.”  
Job 22:6-11

“...For They Shall Be Told Why It Is Really Their Fault.”  
Job 8:1-4; 22:1-5

“...For They Shall Be Told How To Fix It.”  
Job 5:8

“...For They Shall Be Argued With.”  
Job 11:1-5; 20:1-3

“...For They Shall Be Told Not To Cry. ‘Buck Up, ‘Bucko.’”  
Job 15:7-13

“...For If you leave them alone it will all be OK.”

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*Only Mourning And Comforting Heals Hurts.*

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMFORT.

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1. Comforters Care Enough To Come Uninvited.
  2. Comforters Listen Carefully So They Can Minister To The Emotions And Not React To The Words.
  3. Comforters Openly Express The Depths Of Their Feelings.
  4. Comforters Are Not Turned Off By Distasteful Sights.
  5. Comforters Understand, So They Say Very Little.
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