

**The Book of Job**  
**Part One**  
**Balanced Doctrine**

**Acts 20:27 (ESV)**

**<sup>27</sup>for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.**

- *Paul summarized his ministry by saying that he presented to them the whole plan of God. He did not shrink back or withhold anything from them in an attempt to candy-coat the gospel.*
  
- *The Greek word for “gospel” literally means “the good news” and in a number of languages it must be rendered by a phrase such as, “news that makes one happy” or “the information that causes one to joy” or “words that bring smiles” or “a message that causes the heart to be sweet.”*
  
- *The gospel is the most wonderful and joyful news in creation. Certain parts, however, may appear distasteful and even down right hostile and offensive to the carnal, selfish mind.*
  
- *Preachers can be tempted to skirt around those issues that can be contentious.*
  
- *One of those subjects deals with the area of believers experiencing apparently meaningless suffering and tragedy.*
  
- *Especially in Western Society where one of the prime objectives in life is personal comfort, the idea of suffering and tragedy seems like the antithesis of Good News.*
  
- *If believers ignore the reality that in this life we will experience times of suffering, then we will develop unbalanced doctrine with the result that we will be ill prepared to face times of difficulty and suffering.*
  
- *Doctrine is not simply a set of teachings or beliefs. Doctrine defines who God is, how we relative to Him, and how we are to live our lives.*

**Titus 2:1 (ISV)**

**<sup>1</sup>But as for you, teach what is consistent with healthy doctrine.**

- *The Greek word translated “healthy” means “the state of being healthy, to be accurate, ‘whole’ meaning a proper balance or complete.”*

- *Here Paul exhorts Titus to teach healthy or whole doctrine that paints a complete picture and not a partial or distorted one.*
- *Doctrines that are blatantly in error are easily spotted.*
- *The worst types of wrong doctrine are:*
  - 1) *Those which are nearest to the truth.*
  - 2) *Those which are not wrong in what they say, but in what they fail to say.*
    - *If we teach only about Heaven and never address the issue of Hell and eternal damnation, then we leave open the door for the error of universalism—that everyone will be saved.*
    - *If we teach only about God’s love and never about God’s standard of holiness and His chastisement, then we open the door for the error of sexual and moral impurity—even depravity.*
    - *If we teach only about man’s responsibility, it will lead to self-effort, anxiety, and an inability to trust God.*
    - *If we teach only about God’s sovereignty, it will lead to irresponsibility.*
    - *Balanced doctrine is healthy doctrine.*
    - *An over emphasis in one area produces imbalance.*
    - *The key for us to have balanced doctrine is to focus on the centrality of Christ.*

**Colossians 1:16 (NKJV)**

**<sup>16</sup>For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.**

- *Any doctrine, no matter how biblically based, without a central focus on Jesus Christ is somehow unbalanced and will result in a loss of rest and peace.*

**Proverbs 11:1 (ESV)**

**<sup>1</sup>A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.**

- *A false balance, in terms of doctrine, is where people react to unbalanced doctrine by overemphasizing the other side in an attempt to bring balance. They actually end up producing unbalanced doctrine in the opposite direction. The pendulum always swings too far.*
- *For example, if someone only focuses on signs and wonders, someone else reacting to that may teach that God no longer performs miracles today.*
- *Two principles that need to go hand in hand for us to have balanced doctrine are sorrow and joy.*
- *Doctrine that majors on prosperity and God's blessings produces self-centeredness and selfishness.*
- *Doctrine that majors on suffering and trials produces passive Christians who do not step out in faith to expect great things from God.*

**Matthew 6:31–33 (NKJV)**

<sup>31</sup>“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

<sup>32</sup>For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

<sup>33</sup>But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

- *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” – The central theme of our theology should always be seeking God and glorifying Christ, without being self-seeking or self-centered.*
- *“and all these things shall be added to you” - However, even though our lives are not to be centered around ourselves but Christ, God is not unaware of our needs, and He delights to meet our needs and to bless us.*
- *God did not save us to give us wonderful lives. He saved us to glorify His Name.*
- *However, living lives whose central goal is to glorify Christ will result in us having wonderful lives.*
- *Unbelievers seek to please themselves and pursue the prosperity of this world. We, as believers, are to first seek to glorify Christ, and then to seek the things we need in this life.*

### Romans 15:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup>For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

- *If Christ sought to please Himself, He would never have gone to the cross and died the most painful, horrible, and cursed death.*
- *Jesus sought to please the Father and chose to suffer for our benefit so we could be saved.*
- *Are we willing to follow Christ’s example and not seek to please ourselves, but to please God?*
- *As Christ hung on the cross, the world misinterpreted His agony and concluded He had been a wicked man. To His followers, His crucifixion appeared to be a completely meaningless tragedy of epic proportions.*
- *The reason Jesus’ followers saw His suffering as horribly meaningless was because their messianic theology included no place for suffering.*
- *They saw Jesus only as the conquering King, and not as the suffering servant.*
- *Why is the Gospel so maligned by non-believers?*
- *Because so many Christians are self-seeking.*

### 2 Timothy 2:4 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup>No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

- *We are not to seek to please ourselves, but the One who redeemed us.*
- *The analogy of a soldier signifies a life that is not only one of discipline, but a life that encompasses hardship and suffering in the line of duty.*

### Philippians 3:10–11 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup>that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

<sup>11</sup>if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- *“the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” - Paul understood that his goal was not prosperity—but Jesus.*

- ***“if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead” - “if, by any means” – Paul is signifying that he doesn’t care what it takes, he is willing to go through whatever it takes to fully identify not only with Christ’s death, but with His resurrection life!***
- ***Paul knew that the key to a wonderful overcoming life is not to shun suffering, but to walk with Jesus through whatever experiences he had to, including times of suffering.***
- ***“The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10) - A theology without joy lacks strength.***

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**Romans 5:3–4 (NKJV)**

**<sup>3</sup>And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;**

**<sup>4</sup>and perseverance, character; and character, hope.**

- ***A theology without suffering lacks depth.***
- ***A theology that majors on prosperity leads to disappointment.***
- ***A theology that majors on suffering leads to lack of expectation and passivity.***

**Psalm 30:5 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup>For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.**

**Psalm 126:5 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup>Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.**

- ***Sorrow and suffering actually produce enduring joy.***
- ***If we try to eliminate suffering we will eliminate joy.***
- ***If we spend our time and energy trying to avoid suffering at any cost, we may fail to pursue God, because we’re so busy trying to shield ourselves.***

- *Joy based on external things is a joy as fleeting and unreliable as the winds of our circumstances.*
- *Joy based on eternal things will be as stable and reliable as the unchangeableness of God Himself.*

**Mark 4:33–41 (NKJV)**

<sup>33</sup>And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it.

<sup>34</sup>But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.

<sup>35</sup>On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.”

<sup>36</sup>Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

<sup>37</sup>And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

<sup>38</sup>But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

<sup>39</sup>Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

<sup>40</sup>But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?”

<sup>41</sup>And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

**Mark 4:33–41 (NKJV)**

<sup>33</sup>And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it.

- *Jesus spoke to the people in parables, but not in plain speech.*
- *Why does God often speak to us in parables and not in plain speech?*

<sup>34</sup>But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.

- *“and when they were alone He explained all things to His disciples” – For us to understand what God is really saying requires two things:*
- *A willingness and commitment to spend time with Him alone and learn to hear His voice.*

- *A willingness not to be self-willed, but surrender our wills to Him and become His disciple.*
- *The disciples were now going to experience a storm. Although this was an actual event, it also was a parable from which we all can learn something about God and how we are to relate to Him.*
- *If we turn to Jesus during times of suffering and hardship we will learn things about God and ourselves that we could never learn in any other way.*
- *“and when they were alone He explained all things to His disciples” - During times of suffering, God can draw us into a very precious and intimate time where we are alone with Him. He can explain many things to us that otherwise we could never comprehend.*

<sup>35</sup>On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.”

- *“Let us cross over to the other side.” – God has a plan for our lives that He intends to fulfill—if we are willing to trust and obey Him no matter what we may face, or where that plan may take us, no matter what is on the other side.*

<sup>36</sup>Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

<sup>37</sup>And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

- *The storm arose even though the disciples had been fully obeying Jesus’ commands and were travelling to the place Jesus had set for them.*

**John 16:33 (NKJV)**

<sup>33</sup>These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

- *Jesus never promised we would have a storm-free life.*
- *Jesus, in fact, assured us that there would be times when we would face great storms. However, He promised we could have peace and inner joy through the storms, if we remember that He has overcome the world and He is the resurrected Saviour.*

- *There are many reasons we can experience trials, sufferings, illnesses, and setbacks in life.*
- *Sometimes it can be a consequence of our own wrong choices and self-will.*
- *However, we see many examples in the Bible where godly men and women who were following the leading of God experienced trials and sufferings, even though they were being led by the Spirit.*
- *Jesus Himself was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by Satan for forty days. (Matthew 4:1)*
- *Jesus was not tempted because He had missed God. It was part of His spiritual journey to fulfill the will of the Father and become the Saviour of all mankind.*

<sup>38</sup>**But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”**

- **“But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow”** – *The stern is the place from which one steers the boat.*
- *There may be times we feel God is not with us or life is out of control. We need to remember that He is the One who is steering our boat.*

**“But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow”**

- *The Greek word for “asleep” means literally “to lie down to rest” and therefore by implication means to fall asleep.*
- *The Greek word for “pillow” literally means “something for the head.”*

**“Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”**

- *Looking at the Greek, we can grasp why the disciples questioned if Jesus cared for them.*
- *It was not that Jesus was fast asleep and then the storm arose and He was unaware of it. In the middle of a storm, Jesus stretched out in the back of the boat, laid His head on a pillow, and went to sleep.*
- *As Jesus was lying down in the back of the boat with His head resting on a pillow, in the midst of the storm, He was actually acting out a parable.*



- *Jesus was showing them how they need to come to a place of fully trusting God even in the most difficult and chaotic circumstances.*
- *Another profound truth seen in Jesus going to sleep during the storm is that sleep is meant to refresh and unravel the cares of this life.*
- *The Scriptures do not say simply that Jesus was asleep in the back of the boat, but that His head was resting comfortably on a pillow.*
- *We need to come to such a place of rest and confidence in God that no matter how great the storms around us, we don't need to have a storm within us.*

**“Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”**

- *The disciples misunderstood what Jesus was trying to teach them by His example of resting in the midst of the storm.*
- *The disciples thought that Jesus' apparent inaction reflected a lack of care and concern for their well-being.*
- *Jesus was trying to teach them, by His example, to have total confidence in the perfect love and power of the Father.*
- *One of the things that can cause us to experience torment as we go through a time of suffering is when we feel God is distant or uncaring. In fact, He is with us and intimately involved in every detail of our lives.*

**<sup>39</sup>Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.**

- *The Greek word for “peace” means “silence, muteness, involuntary stillness, inability to speak rather than a voluntary refusal to speak.”*
- *The Greek word for “be still” means “to muzzle.”*
- *The Greek word for “calm” means “tranquility.”*
- *Jesus stood up against the storm, rebuked the wind and the sea, so it was forced into silence and tranquility resulted.*
- *This parable also teaches us how to deal with the inner turmoil that can arise in our hearts.*

- *We are to stand up against the storms within and silence them, whether they are caused by spiritual attacks of the enemy (the winds) or the circumstances of life (the seas).*

<sup>40</sup>But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?”

- *Jesus did not rebuke them because they did not have faith to silence the storm without, but because they did not believe in the goodness of God and failed to silence the storm within.*
- *Jesus was not teaching them that they should have enough faith to quiet the winds and the sea every time external circumstances become difficult.*
- *Jesus was teaching them that they could cultivate such a faith and confidence in God that they could have peace within their own hearts independent of the external circumstances.*
- *The apostles eventually learned to be men of great faith and to walk with God in total peace, through whatever circumstance they faced.*
- *Jesus didn’t teach them they could quiet every external storm.*
- *Jesus taught them they could trust God so fully that they never needed to fear of the storms of life.*
- *All the apostles except for John died a martyr’s death.*
- *They didn’t have the wrong theology that if they had enough faith they would never encounter suffering and hardship.*
- *However, each one of them believed they were going to “the other side of the lake” and that God’s perfect will for their lives could be fulfilled. No man or no circumstance could thwart God’s plan if they were willing to fully trust Him and obey.*
- *The disciples had such faith that they were willing to pray for the sick and see them healed.*
- *The disciples had such faith that they were able to see God perform great miracles through them.*
- *The disciples had such faith that they were willing to preach the gospel and see the power of God released even if it meant imprisonment, torture, and even martyrdom.*

<sup>41</sup>And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

- *However, before the disciples could be those great men of faith they needed freedom from their superstitions and distorted views of God.*
- *If we teach only that God wants to bless us and that we will never face sickness, financial challenges, persecution, and possibly even martyrdom, we are painting a rosy picture of life that is not biblical and will lead to disappointment.*
- *If we teach only that life is filled with sorrow and pain and only in Heaven will we live in victory and experience the power and glory of God, then we are creating passive Christians who will never pray for the sick, believe for great miracles, or see the Church fulfill the Great Commission.*

#### **Job 1:1 (NKJV)**

**<sup>1</sup>There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil.**

- *The Book of Job is the true story of a godly man who God described as “blameless and upright” who experienced terrible suffering.*
- *Although the Book of Job is not the first book in the Bible it is thought to be the oldest book in the Bible and it deals with the question, “Why do the righteous suffer?”*
- *Unbelievers have justified their refusal to believe in God because of the existence of evil and the great suffering so prevalent in this world.*
- *Some Christians have even walked away from their faith in Christ and the Bible when confronted with what appeared to be pointless suffering.*

#### **Hebrews 10:35–36 (NKJV)**

**<sup>35</sup>Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.**

**<sup>36</sup>For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:**

- *In the coming weeks we will study the Book of Job as we come face to face with the question, “Why do the righteous sometimes experience suffering?”*