

# Companions on the Road

While they became friends along the way, it should be noted they joined the journey because they wanted something

**The Scarecrow wanted a brain**



**The Tinman wanted a heart**



**The Cowardly Lion courage**



They already had what they needed they just had to learn how to use it



# A Journey with Suffering

*A Study from the Book of Job*



# Profitable Comforting

***When Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him. When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.***

**Job 3:11-13**



# Profitable Comforting

Upon arrival they did **EVERYTHING** right

They saw his suffering and began to cry

They tore their robes, and sprinkled dust on their heads

They literally joined Job  
in his suffering

They stayed with him  
in his suffering



# Silence!



# Job Speaks

***After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth***

***Job 3:1***

**It's a pretty self-loathing speech**

**He has a case of the “Woe is Me”**

**After all he has been through,  
what else you expect?**



# Job Speaks

1. “Why did I not perish at birth,  
and die as I came from the womb?

2. Why were there knees to receive  
me and breasts that I might be nursed?

3. Why was I not hidden away in the  
ground like a stillborn child, like an  
infant who never saw the light of day?

4. Who are filled with gladness and  
rejoice when they reach the grave?

5. Why is life given  
to a man whose  
way is hidden,  
whom God has  
hedged in?



# Profitable Comforting

Is Job depressed, probably, but he is not pondering suicide, he is grieving

In 4 of the 5 questions Job asked he starts with the word “**Why?**” the other starts “**Who?**” and they are rhetorical

Job's friends attempt and try to answer Job's Questions

They are trying to help Job make sense of suffering

Job gets **accused**

**Arguments**  
break out

His "friends" become  
**self-righteous** and  
**judgmental**



# Miserable Comforters

***Then Job replied: “I have heard many things like these; you are **miserable comforters**, all of you! Will your long-winded speeches never end? What ails you that you keep on arguing? I also could speak like you, if you were in my place; I could make fine speeches against you and shake my head at you. But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief.***

***Job 16:1-5***





# More Questions

**For what hope have the godless when they are cut off, when God takes away their life?**

**Does God listen to their cry when distress comes upon them?**

**Will they find delight in the Almighty?**

**Will they call on God at all times?**

**Why then this meaningless talk?**



# Miserable Comforting

**They lacked understanding about suffering**

***“Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it. At the breath of God, they perish; at the blast of his anger, they are no more.”***

**All three men start with the premise that suffering only comes to those that deserve to suffer**

**Job 4:7-9**



# Miserable Comforting

**They lacked understanding about suffering**

**Their argument assumes that all suffering is caused by sinful action by the individual**

**This is not an uncommon thought, even the disciples struggled with this in *John 9:1-2***

**The statement is arrogant as what they are really saying is my sin is OK because I am not suffering yours is not because you are**

# Defensive



# Miserable Comforting

**Tinman: They lacked compassion for suffering**

***Then Bildad the Shuhite replied: “How long will you say such things? Your words are a blustering wind. Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right? When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin.***

**Job 8:1-4**



# Miserable Comforting

**Tinman: They lacked compassion for suffering**

***His sons used to hold feasts in their homes on their birthdays, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would make arrangements for them to be purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular custom.***

**Job 1:4-5**



# Miserable Comforting

## The lacked courage to face suffering

***“Yet if you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him, if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear. You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by. Life will be brighter than noonday, and darkness will become like morning. You will be secure, because there is hope; you will look about you and take your rest in safety.*”**

**Job 11:13-18**



# Miserable Comforting

**The lacked courage to face suffering**

**Job if you were just brave enough to admit your sin  
then suffering would end**

**You will forget your trouble**

**You will have hope,  
rest, and safety**

**The reality is they are not trying to face  
suffering they are trying to fix it**

# Sympathize



# Sympathy vs Empathy

**Sympathy:** an affinity, association, or relationship between persons or things wherein whatever affects one similarly affects the other

Job's friends cared for Job and their initial reactions were sincere

Sympathy is not bad, but sympathy can only take you so far

Sometimes sympathy is all you have but know, it is a place to comfort from but you will have difficulty caring for their suffering needs





# Sympathy vs Empathy

**Empathy:** The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another

**Empathy is not an emotion it is an action**

**It requires awareness and sensitivity; you seek to understand not explain and definitely not to fix**

**Empathy is why Jesus came *Hebrews 4:15***



# Sympathy vs Empathy

**If Job's friends had had empathy their goal would not have been to merely comfort Job, they would have sought to care for him**

**Their actions could have been many, and their words should have been few**

**Job had a lot of needs, did anybody else see an offer from them to clean those soars for him**

**Job's finances were a mess, did they come with assistance or even a meal?**





**Misery loves Company  
but never wants  
Miserable Comforters**