

Whoever finds his life will
lose it, and whoever loses
his life for my sake will
find it.
Mt 10:39

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

June 29, 2007

Comforting the Suffering

6:00 – 6:05	1) Coffee & Donuts 2) Opening Prayer
6:05 – 6:30	1) Prayer for Rich 2) What do we fear in offering comfort to those suffering? 3) A case study of suffering: a) Story of Job b) Who is the conflict between? c) What is Job's response initially? (Job 1:20-22) Later? d) What is Job's friend's initial response? (Job 2:11-13) e) What are the friend's later responses? i) Eliphaz: The wicked ultimately experience calamity ii) Bildad: Job will die because of his sins as his children did unless he gets right with God iii) Zophar: Job is a mocker of God iv) All finally agree that Job's lack of humility is evidence of great sin v) Young Elihu: God is transcendent, we can't know. (Good message, but he becomes overbearing in his argumentation) f) What is God's role in this?

	<p>4) A few lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) There are good philosophical arguments for why evil exists; Elihu framed one. Elihu was truthful but began admonishing Job during his suffering. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Philosophy helps us answer the atheists and our own intellectual struggles ii) Theology helps us answer our hearts b) Unlike Job's friend's points-of-view, God is not a cosmic vending machine; he is sovereign over his creation. The friends were talking to make <i>themselves</i> feel better about the uncertainty of life! c) Pray to God for the right response. You cannot let yourself become paralyzed; you may be the only one there! (Remember Adam's paralysis in the Garden, Moses excuses, etc.) d) Respond initially like Job's friends initially responded—sit with the person. e) Ensure we understand suffering for those times when we are suffering. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ecc 12:6 ii) Rom 5:3-5 <p>5) Things not to say...</p>
6:30 – 7:00	<p>1) Recall a time when you were confronted with suffering and didn't know what to say.</p> <p>2) Recall a time when you were suffering. What was said to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What was helpful? b) What was not helpful?
7:00	Closing Prayer

Further reading:

- The *Bible*