

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
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Sunday:
8:00 AM: WGCY
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:
7:00 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofchrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship—26
Wednesday—11
Contribution—\$555

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 4.4–6
To be content in life
requires a balanced
approach. Can one
be too content with
his situation in life?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

What Job 1–2 says about suffering

**All which I took from thee I did but take not
for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My
arms.**

Francis Thompson, *The Hound of Heaven*

The problem of suffering can be understood generally but not specifically. What I mean is, we understand that suffering is the price we pay for living in a sin-cursed world (Gen. 3.14–19). If you build your house in a flood plain, don't be surprised if you're flooded out; floods happen. Evil men and "acts of God" (Lk. 13.1–5) can result in suffering, and most folks can wrap their head around that reality.

But no one can answer the specific questions: Why me? Why now? Why this? Why did the tornado hit my house and left my neighbor's untouched? Why do good people get incurable diseases while the wicked are as healthy as a horse? etc. Although no definitive answers can be given these questions, there are guidelines in Scripture meant to help us deal with specific suffering, and many of these are found in the book of Job.

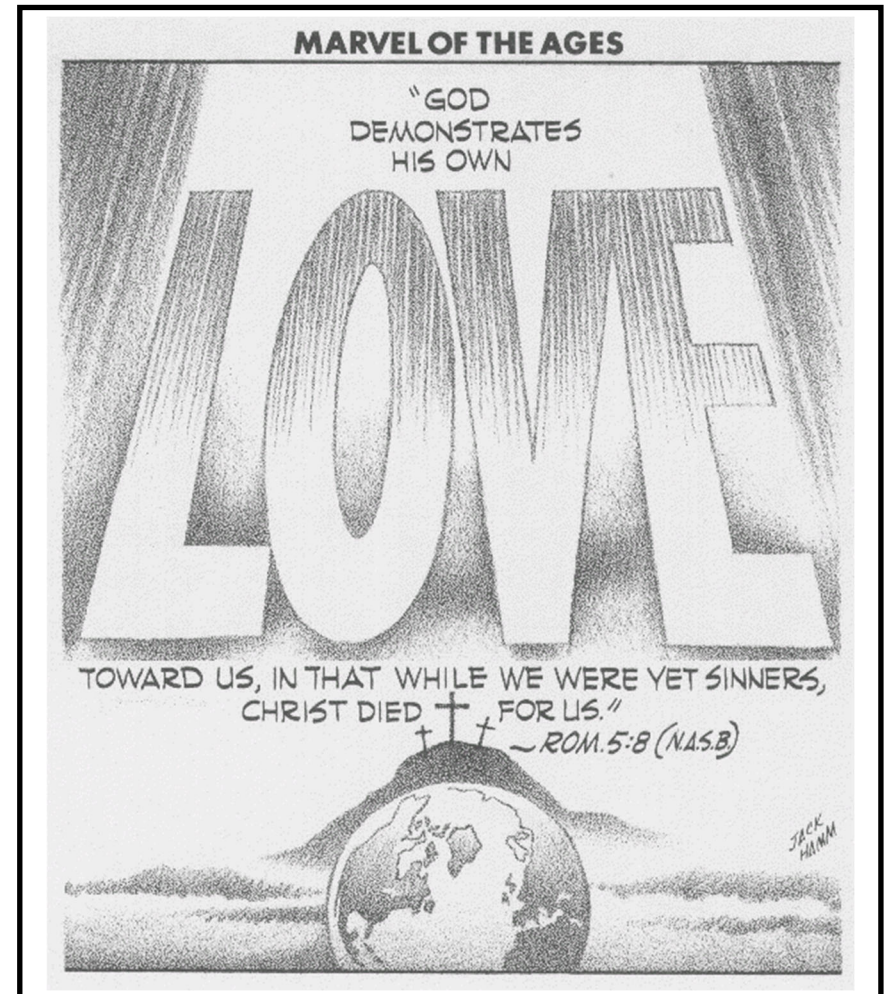
I'm going to borrow some of these guidelines from my friend Jim McGuiggan, taken from his book, *Life on the Ash Heap* (61–62)..

- Chesterton said Job wasn't tormented because he was the worst of men but because he was the best. God Himself testified to this (1.8, 2.3). <https://www.chesterton.org/introduction-to-job/>
- Job didn't suffer because God was angry with him but because God was proud of him.
- Job didn't suffer because God was punishing him but because He (God) trusted him.
- God refused to speak to Job for the same reason: He trusted Job.
- God didn't explain Himself to Job for the same reason: He trusted Job.
- "God trusted the Job who lived in the sunshine and he trusted the Job who writhed in the pain in the shadow" (McGuiggan).
- "[God] trusted the Job who worshipped and obeyed him and he trusted the Job who accused him of injustice and made the ash heap a shrine of protest" (McGuiggan).

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Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: Hebrews 2.1–4

Since Christ is greater than the angels

25 May 2025

Sweeter than all

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Three earlier the Israelites had gone through the Red Sea and celebrated their deliverance from Pharaoh. But a three-day march into the Sinai has left them hot, tired, and thirsty. When they finally came to water, it was bitter, undrinkable, and their singing turned to murmuring—that’s what bitterness can do to us.

Bitterness comes when things don’t go our way and we’re left discouraged, disheartened, and discontent; three emotions that pave the way for apostasy. How is it cured? By a tree.

Moses took a tree shown him by the Lord, cast it into the waters, and by this tree, “the waters were made sweet.”

It’s really hard for me not to see this as a foreshadowing of the cross, the tree on which Christ hung (Acts 5.30, 10.39) and bore our sins in His own body (1 Pet. 2.24). Was any experience more bitter than the cross? And yet it became the most glorious blessing God ever bestowed. Divine grace, embodied in the cross, is always the answer to the bitterness of life.

The forgiveness, joy, and hope found at Calvary can sweeten any life into which it’s cast.

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Blessed . . .

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night” (Ps. 1.1).

“Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matt. 5.3).

Here are two blessings, one Jewish, one Christian. The Jewish blessing is upon the obedient who stays on the strait and narrow and are utterly devoted to the law of the Lord. The Christian blessing, by contrast, is upon the disobedient one who knows how broken and bankrupt he’s strayed. Blessed is the one who is perfect, and blessed is the one who isn’t, knows it, and looks to God for mercy. “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Lk. 18.13).

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Notes on the passion of Christ John 18–19

19.1,4 Politics weighed heavily in Pilate’s treatment of Jesus. If his only concern had been justice, Christ would have been released unharmed, for three times in this section Pilate declares Jesus innocent of criminal or civil wrongdoing (18.38, 19.4,6).

But as often happens, politicians will subvert justice when politically expedient; this happens regularly in America. Had the chief priests called for violence, Pilate and his command would likely have been overwhelmed by the thousands and thousands of Jews in town for the Passover. Pilate ordered Jesus’ scourging hoping it would placate the Jews and satisfy their bloodlust, but it didn’t; they were “past feeling” and demanded death (v 6).

19.6 “You take Him and crucify Him” sounds to me like a dare, analogous to: “You mayors who want to declare your town a ‘sanctuary city’ for illegals, go ahead, I dare you.”

19.7 The Jews understood Pilate wasn’t giving them permission to kill Christ, which is why they explained, “By your laws He’s innocent, but by our Law He’s a blasphemer for claiming to be the Son of God, and our Law says blasphemers are to be executed.” The Jews’ law also said a blasphemer was to die by stoning (Lev. 24.16), but when the end justifies the means, legalists aren’t the sticklers for the Law they claim to be. Forget stoning, crucifixion will do just fine.

19.8 “When Pilate heard that”—heard what?—that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, “he was the more afraid.” Pilate was already skittish about his prisoner. His wife had sent word of a nightmare she had, warning him to “have nothing to do with that just man” (Matt. 27.19). The pagans often interpreted dreams as omens/divine communications and Pilate was spooked. Then he learns that his prisoner claimed to be the Son of God. The pagans had stories of gods “coming down in the likeness of men” (Acts 14.11–13); a divine incarnation was something they could believe. Bolstered by Christ’s demeanor (which was devoid of all groveling, begging, pleading), Christ’s divine claim, his wife’s dream his wife, etc., it seems Pilate suspicioned he had a divine being in custody—and the thought rattled him (cf. Matt. 27.54).

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