Rock Valley Bible Church (www.rvbc.cc)

2026-034

August 16, 2026 by Steve Brandon

As For Me, I Would Seek God

Job 4-5

1. Practice What You Preach (4:1-6)
2. You Reap What You Sow (4:7-11)
3. God is Greater Than Man (4:12-21)
4. A Fool is Born to Trouble (5:1-7)
5. God Saves the Needy (5:8-16)
6. The LORD Disciplines Those He Loves (5:17-27)

On November 3, 2020, Tim Challies received the call that every parent dreads. He received the call that his 20-year-old son, Nick, had passed away suddenly. Nick was a student at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He was studying for the ministry, longing to be a pastor. On that day, Nick was outside with a few of his friends, playing some game on the lawn. Suddenly and unexpectedly, his heart stopped beating and never started again.

When Tim and his wife received the news, they cried and cried and cried until they could cry no more, until there were no tears left to cry. Later in the evening, he and his wife looked at each other in the eye and said, “We can do this.” He said, “We don’t want to do this, but we can do this—this sorrow, this grief, this devastation—because we know we don’t have to do it in our own strength. We can do it like Christians, like a son and daughter of the Father who knows what it is to lose a Son.”[1]

And since that time, Tim Challies and his wife have suffered greatly. But they have suffered well. Whenever Tim Challies writes about his son, I always read it. It is some of the most encouraging and stirring writing I have ever encountered.

About a month after Nick died, Tim wrote:

> Though I am a writer by trade, though words are my currency, I still lack the ability to express the deep sorrow of losing a child. How could I

> express the anguish of watching the body of my firstborn be lowered into the cold ground, the agony of choosing the words that will be carved onto his gravestone, the torment of knowing that behind his still-closed bedroom door is all that evidence of a life lived and lost? Truly, the sorrow is not only beyond description but also beyond my own comprehension.[2]

Anyway, his suffering was not so unlike the suffering that Job experienced. In Job, chapter 1, we read of the suffering of Job. He lost not just one son, but all seven of his sons, and his three daughters, suddenly, on the same day. A messenger came to his door and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you" (Job 1:18-19). He suffered even more greatly than the Challies family: he lost more than his children that day, losing all of his livestock either stolen by marauding bands or burned by fire that fell from heaven (Job 1:13-17). A short time later, Job lost his health, as Satan struck him with loathsome sores from "the sole of his foot to the crown of his head" (Job 2:7).

When these things happened, Job responded well. He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). Essentially, he was saying, "I can do this." Job was a godly man: blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil (Job 1:1). So Job knew that he wasn't going to suffer on his own strength. Rather, he knew that it was only by God's strength that he would be able to do this.

In the early days of his suffering, Job had some support. Job had three friends who traveled to see him so that they could show him sympathy and comfort him (Job 2: 11). When they saw his disfigured body, they raised their voices and wept, and they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great (Job 2:12-13). These friends cared deeply for Job. They came to be with him. They cried with him. They sat with him. Their presence comforted him.

Then, in Job, chapter 3, after a week of silence, Job broke his silence with his lament. We looked at this last week. It was not Job's finest hour. Job's suffering was so bad that he questioned the day of his birth. He said, "Why did I not die at birth?" The suffering was so bad that Job wished he had never been born. I think

the key to his lament in chapter 3 comes right at the end, when Job said, “For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me” (Job 3:25). Job chapter 3 was his way of dealing with the pain out loud. His spirit was not at ease, and he found no rest.

Then, as D.A. Carson says, “Job’s lament is all the encouragement his friends need to break [their] silence.”[3]

Job’s friend, Eliphaz, is the first to speak. His speech to Job is found in Job, chapters 4 and 5.

Many have thought that Eliphaz was the oldest of Job’s friends (Job 15:10). He certainly is the most prominent of them, as the LORD will single him out as a representative of the three friends at the end of the book (Job 42:7). Anyway, he speaks because he cannot keep silent.

> Job 4:1-2
> Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:
> “If one ventures a word with you, will you be impatient?
> Yet who can keep from speaking?”

Eliphaz and his friends had been silent for seven days, but now the silence was too much. He said, “Who can keep from speaking?” And for the next two chapters, Eliphaz speaks. And as we read his speech, we will see that Eliphaz says many right things, but Eliphaz gets it so wrong.

We can see this in chapter 5, verse 8, when he says.

> Job 5:8
> “As for me, I would seek God,
> and to God would I commit my cause.”

What a good exhortation to anyone who is suffering. Don’t find the comfort in your suffering in your own strength. Don’t find the solutions to your suffering in your own wisdom. “Seek God.” In fact, of anything that Eliphaz says, this is his best advice. This is the advice that I would give to you all by way of application. In your day of suffering, seek the LORD!

When Tim Challies was suffering the loss of his son Nick, this is the very thing that he did. About a month after the death of Nick, Tim writes that he found

confidence in the one who searches and knows the deepest recesses of his heart; in the Son, the very Man of Sorrows, who is intimately acquainted with grief; and in the Spirit, who intercedes with groanings too deep for words (Romans 8:26). Tim writes,

> I've found special comfort in these, the Spirit's groanings, for I myself have often been unable to do little more than that. My prayers have often been devoid of words, yet full of meaning. Sometimes the best I can say is, "God! God! You know."[4]

He then quotes Leon Morris,

> When we cannot find words in which to express our prayer and can do no better than make inarticulate sounds, the Spirit takes those sounds and makes them into effective intercession.[5]

That is the heart of one who doesn't have the answers, but knows and trusts that the answers are in God.

So, I say to you, church family, in your suffering, follow the counsel of Eliphaz and "Seek God!" This is the title of my message this morning, "As for Me, I Would Seek God." This is really my message every week to you all, as I open God' s word and share it with you.

Seek him with all your heart, and the promise of the Scriptures is that you will find him. The promise that Moses gave to Israel is true for us today.

> Deuteronomy 4:29
> You will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

So, church family, I exhort you: "Seek the LORD with all your heart." Believe in his Son, Jesus, who died upon the cross for those who would believe. Seek the LORD, who knows what it is to lose a Son. Seek the LORD, who gave his Son for us, to die for our sins.

Now, in the title of my message this morning, I have kept in the full phrase of what Eliphaz says, because it captures what is wrong with his counsel: "As for me, I would seek God." The undercurrent of what Eliphaz was saying here is that Job wasn't seeking God. "Job, what you need to do is what I would do if I were in

your situation! I would seek God!" As if Job wasn't doing that in his suffering. Remember, Job was a godly man, blameless and upright. For years, Job had walked with God, fearing the LORD and turning away from evil. And in this trial, Job was certainly seeking God, as we will see the book unfold. But this is what is wrong with the counsel of Eliphaz. He says many right things, but he says them with a twist that makes them wrong.

Here's his first exhortation.

1. Practice What You Preach (4:1-6)

This is true. We are called to be doers of the word and not hearers only (James 1: 22). We are called to avoid the error of hypocrisy, saying one thing and doing another. What we teach others, we are expected to follow ourselves. That's why those who teach will be held to a greater standard (James 3:1). Parents, as you tell your children to do things, you ought to be doing those same things yourself. Practice what you preach.

And this is especially true in our suffering. As Tim Challies has walked through his own suffering, he found the words of J.R. Miller, a pastor of a previous generation, to be particularly comforting and challenging. Miller writes,

> Ofttimes the primary reason why godly men are called to suffer is for the sake of witness they may give to the sincerity of their love for Christ and the reality of divine grace in them. The world sneers at religious profession. It refuses to believe that it is genuine. It defiantly asserts that what is called Christian principle is only selfishness, and that it would not stand severe testing. Then, godly men are called to endure loss, suffering or sorrow, not because there is any particular evil in themselves which needs to be eradicated, but because the Master needs their witness to answer the sneers of the world.[6]

Indeed, this was the case with Job. He wasn't suffering for his sin. He was suffering "because the Master needed him to witness to answer the sneers of Satan." Job was suffering because Satan had challenged God: "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face" (Job 2:4-5). Now, Job didn' t curse God to his face, but in his lament of chapter 3, he was walking down that path, cursing the day of his birth (Job 3:1), and questioning the wisdom of God in bringing him into the world only to suffer so greatly.

Tim Challies responded to Miller's quote with these words:

> In every age, we hear of professed believers who abandon the faith as soon as they are called to suffer. They are glad enough to express confidence in God as long as his will seems perfectly aligned with their own, as long as his providence decrees what they would choose anyway. But when they are called to lose instead of gain, to weep instead of laugh, to face poverty instead of prosperity, they quickly turn aside and fall away (Matthew 13:20-21). Like towers built on sand, many who stand strong in days of calm collapse in days of flood (Matthew 7:26-27). No wonder, then, that many unbelievers become convinced that the Christian faith is unequal to great challenges. No wonder, then, that even many sincere believers wonder whether their faith is sufficient for times of deep sorrow, whether it could withstand a dreadful shock.[7]

How important it is for us to suffer well. The world doesn't take note when everything is going your way and you give thanks to God. The great athlete who wins the Super Bowl and praises God is wonderful. But it makes far more of an impact when a news reporter hands the microphone to somebody who just lost their house in a tornado, and they say, "First of all, I just want to praise my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." That is what makes a difference to a watching world. This is what J.R. Miller is saying. Such is the importance of thinking now about how you will suffer when the time comes.

This is what Eliphaz was saying to Job: "Before you suffered, you told others how to suffer. But now you are in despair! You want to die! Job, I exhort you, follow your own counsel." That is what he says.

> Job 4:3-6
> "Behold, you have instructed many,
> and you have strengthened the weak hands.
> Your words have upheld him who was stumbling,
> and you have made firm the feeble knees.
> But now it has come to you, and you are impatient;
> it touches you, and you are dismayed.
> Is not your fear of God your confidence,
> and the integrity of your ways your hope?"

Job was a rich and wealthy man, a man of influence and wisdom. In the past, Job had the opportunity to counsel others in their affliction. Surely, Job would have told them to trust in God, "make the fear of God your confidence." Surely Job would have told them not to lose heart, "the integrity of your ways will be your hope." And now it seems to Eliphaz that Job had forgotten these things, as chapter 3 demonstrated.

And there is hope for us in this. For Job was not sinless in his suffering. In chapter 3, Job failed to uphold his initial resolve: "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). Instead, he was in despair and wished that he had never been born. The message of Job isn't: "Be like Job, who suffered perfectly!" No, Job was a man just like us, not practicing what he had preached.

I remember a Gatorade ad campaign in the 1990s that called us to "Be Like Mike." The advertisements showed the greatness of Michael Jordan playing basketball, who would then be refreshed by his big swigs of Gatorade. The message wasn't to "Be Like Mike" in your basketball playing; none of us can be like that. The message was to drink your Gatorade like Mike does after a hard workout. The message of Job is not "Be like Job." Few of us will suffer to the extent that Job suffered. Rather, the message of Job is this: "Even the best of men will struggle in their suffering."

And Eliphaz says, "Job, 1. Practice What You Preach." Good counsel. But maybe not the best thing to say as the first thing you say to a suffering brother.

Well, let's go on to see what Eliphaz says next. In verses 7-11, Eliphaz says,

2. You Reap What You Sow (4:7-11)

This is where the counsel of Job's friends is tricky, because Eliphaz gets it exactly right but also exactly wrong. Listen to what he says.

> Job 4:7-11
> "Remember: who that was innocent ever perished?
> Or where were the upright cut off?
> As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
> and sow trouble reap the same.
> By the breath of God they perish,

and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.
The roar of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion,
the teeth of the young lions are broken.
The strong lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the cubs of the lioness are scattered."

To be sure, you do reap what you sow. The hardworking farmer will indeed reap the fruit of his labor (2 Timothy 2:6). Whereas the sluggard who doesn't plow the field will have nothing in the harvest (Proverbs 20:4). What is true in the physical world is also true in the spiritual world.

Galatians 6:7-8
Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

If you sow sin, you will reap the consequences. But if you seek the Lord through the Spirit, you will reap eternal life. This is true! Eliphaz is exactly right, "You reap what you sow." Yet Eliphaz gets it exactly wrong, because "you reap what you sow" is proverbial. That is, it is true in the general case, but it is not true in every specific case. God is not a tit-for-tat God, as Satan thought he was. Satan thought that if you touch Job, Job would curse God. But God is not transactional like this.

And this is the crux of the argument of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. They will all look at what Job is reaping, the loss of his family, wealth, and health, and conclude that the suffering of Job must have come from his sin. Therefore, Job simply needs to repent, and all will be well. But we know from chapters 1 and 2 that Job didn't reap what he had sown. Job was blameless and upright. He feared God and turned away from evil. Job suffered these things not because he sinned, but because God was proving a point with Satan: that those who follow God will maintain their integrity, even if they suffer. In reality, Job was suffering because he was righteous, because he was the most righteous man in the land!

This is where Eliphaz gets it wrong. "Who that was innocent ever perished?" (Job 4:7). Eliphaz thought that was a rhetorical question with an obvious answer: "Nobody." But we know more than Eliphaz. We know that Job was upright (Job 1: 1). And we know that Job was cut off. But there is also another answer to the question, "Who that was innocent ever perished?" Here we have a sighting of

Jesus. Jesus was innocent. Yet he perished upon the cross. Jesus was the sinless sacrifice. This is a stumbling block to the Jews. Our world knows that you reap what you sow, just as Eliphaz said, but to many it makes no sense that Jesus, the righteous one, would perish. If Jesus were truly righteous, then God's blessing would have been upon him. But he died a cruel death on the cross, that we who believe in him might be forgiven of our sins! Jesus was like Job: the exception to the rule that you reap what you sow.

And so, as you consider counseling those who are suffering, be careful to jump where Eliphaz did. Because not all that we suffer is a direct consequence of our sin. In this way, Eliphaz gets it exactly right and exactly wrong at the same time, and as a result, his counsel was of no help to Job.

Eliphaz continues. In verse 12, we see Eliphaz share a vision that he passed on to Job.

3. God is Greater Than Man (4:12-21)

First, the lead-up.

> Job 4:12-16
> "Now a word was brought to me stealthily;
> my ear received the whisper of it.
> Amid thoughts from visions of the night,
> when deep sleep falls on men,
> dread came upon me, and trembling,
> which made all my bones shake.
> A spirit glided past my face;
> the hair of my flesh stood up.
> It stood still,
> but I could not discern its appearance.
> A form was before my eyes;
> there was silence, then I heard a voice."

A spirit appeared to Eliphaz. It was scary enough that Eliphaz trembled at the sight of it and had goosebumps. Beginning in verse 17, Eliphaz shares with Job the voice he heard.

Now, we need to pause here for a moment, because there are many Christians who like to use this same technique in giving counsel to others. They like to talk about

a vision or a dream that they received. They like to talk about how God spoke to them. They say things like, “God told me this,” “God told me that.” Beware of such people. Because, when someone says that, who are we to argue? People can use this sort of language to do anything that they want to do. A man says, “God told me to marry this woman.” And who are we to argue, even though you can see that she doesn’t fear the Lord. He goes and does what he wants to do, marries her despite the counsel of others, and soon finds it more pleasant on the corner of the roof than in the home (Proverbs 21:9). Because you cannot argue with a man who has heard from God.

A preacher says, “God told me that we should build a bigger auditorium.” Well, who can argue with that? And so, congregations are led astray, because a leader pulls out his trump card, as one to whom God speaks. And with this dream, I believe that Eliphaz was trying to intimidate Job. Job says later, “You scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions” (Job 7:14). But this is why you need to verify everything that people see in visions or dream in dreams or hear God say with the word of God. Because God will never contradict his word. If you have a word from God, just open the Scripture and read and explain it.

Now, in this case, the message that Eliphaz heard was nothing new. It was a bit of a letdown after the big lead-up. The message Eliphaz heard was this: God is Greater Than Man.

> Job 4:17-21
> “Can mortal man be in the right before God?
> Can a man be pure before his Maker?
> Even in his servants he puts no trust,
> and his angels he charges with error;
> how much more those who dwell in houses of clay,
> whose foundation is in the dust,
> who are crushed like the moth.
> Between morning and evening they are beaten to pieces;
> they perish forever without anyone regarding it.
> Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them,
> do they not die, and that without wisdom?”

I say that this was a big letdown because Job believed everything that Eliphaz said. And so did Bildad and Zophar. And when we hear from Elihu in Job 32, we will find out that he believes it as well. And at the end of the book of Job, God will affirm this: God is Greater Than Man. To be sure, verse 17, no mortal man can be

pure before God. That is why we need Jesus. To be sure, verse 18, God doesn't need or depend upon us. To be sure, verse 19, God can crush us in a second.

And nowhere in the book of Job do you get any hint that God is not sovereign. There are many who deal with the problem of evil and suffering by saying that God means well but just isn't powerful enough to stop it. But the book of Job deals nothing with any lack of sovereignty of God. The whole book is saturated with the sovereignty of God. Job believed that the suffering came from God: "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away" (Job 1:21). Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar all believed that the suffering Job was experiencing came from God. That is what Eliphaz is saying here: "God is sovereign. You are being crushed by God." Bildad will later say, "Does God pervert justice?" (Job 8:3). That is, Job is suffering under the sovereign justice of God. Zophar will later say, "God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves" (Job 11:6). That is, God is the one punishing Job for his guilt. Elihu will later say, "If [God] should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust" (Job 34:14-15). That is, God is the one who gives us every second of our lives! And this is the point of the ending of the book of Job. God has created all things and exercises his sovereign control over all his creation.

And as it turns out, this is the solution to our suffering. Our suffering is in the hand of God! The powerful one who brought our suffering, can carry us through it. This is one of the reasons why Tim Challies has suffered well in dealing with the death of his son: he has trusted in the sovereignty of God. He writes that from the valley of the shadow of death he can profess that his Shepherd is good; that from a place of deep sorrow he can attest that God has provided sweet comfort; that while his heart is broken, his faith is intact; and that "a love for God formed in days of sunshine truly can withstand days of rain." He writes further that while their strength is small, God's is great; while their hold on him is weak, his grasp on them is strong; and that "The steadfast love of the LORD has not ceased; his mercies have not come to an end, but have been new every morning. Great has been his faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23). "We don't know all the reasons why God chose to take Nick to himself at such a young age, but neither do we have any right to demand answers from our God or to insist that he account for his providence. Our confidence rests not in his explanation but in his character, not in what he has done but in who he is—the one who knows 'the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose"' (Isaiah 46:10). And from the first moment of that first night of our sorrow, he has been present and kind, faithful and good. He has been true to his every promise. We love him more now than ever."

So, church family, realize in your suffering that God is Greater Than Man, and that he is ready to come and comfort you in your time of distress.

OK, we have to finish chapter 5 quickly. As Eliphaz continues, he is cruel to Job.

4. A Fool is Born to Trouble (5:1-7)

Job 5:1-7
"Call now; is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?
Surely vexation kills the fool,
and jealousy slays the simple.
I have seen the fool taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his dwelling.
His children are far from safety;
they are crushed in the gate,
and there is no one to deliver them.
The hungry eat his harvest,
and he takes it even out of thorns,
and the thirsty pant after his wealth.
For affliction does not come from the dust,
nor does trouble sprout from the ground,
but man is born to trouble
as the sparks fly upward."

Essentially, Eliphaz calls Job a fool who has suffered God's curse (verse 3). But from everything we have seen of Job, this is not the case. He feared God, and the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Even from the mouth of Eliphaz himself, he spoke of the wisdom with which Job has "instructed many" (Job 4:3) and has the wisdom to help others (Job 4:3-4). Job was not a fool. Yet, this is what Eliphaz calls him in order to fit him into his theology. There was no category in his mind for a divine reason for the suffering that was not caused by sin, so he comes up with this: "Job, you are a fool."

Then, Eliphaz speaks of Job's children dying because of the folly of Job: "His children are far from safety; they are crushed in the gate" (verse 4). How cruel is that? Essentially saying that Job's sin is what caused the death of his children. It is like going to Tim Challies in the midst of his grief and saying, "Tim, you have been a fool. The reason this happened is because of your fault. You are the one

who caused the death of your son." That would be cruel, absolutely cruel. But we know this wasn't the case. If anything, it was Job's righteousness that brought him to Satan's attention to ruin him without a cause.

And then Eliphaz continues to tell of the troubles of the fool (verses 5-7). Trouble and affliction don't just arise randomly from the ground. Trouble and affliction arise from your foolish behavior. Don't counsel people like that. But it's just not true what he is saying here.

5. God Saves the Needy (5:8-16)

Job 5:8
"As for me, I would seek God,
and to God would I commit my cause."

Again, this is great counsel. This is great counsel to anybody and at any time. The great testimony of many is that suffering has been the means to draw people to seek the LORD. Listen again to Tim Challies: "I want Nick back. But I don't want my old self back. I so badly wish that my son could be part of my life again. But I would so badly hate to lose all the precious ways in which God has been real to me and true to me and present with me in my sorrows. There is so much I have learned, so many ways God has drawn close to me, so many blessings I've received from the Lord. And all of these came through sorrow, not apart from it. In some ways my greatest gains have flowed from my greatest loss, my greatest joys from my deepest sorrow." This is why it is so important to seek God in your suffering. In your suffering, you can draw near to God in ways that you cannot when all is going well.

And then Eliphaz continues with some great gospel truth.

Job 5:9-16
"Who does great things and unsearchable,
marvelous things without number:
he gives rain on the earth
and sends waters on the fields;
he sets on high those who are lowly,
and those who mourn are lifted to safety.
He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
so that their hands achieve no success.
He catches the wise in their own craftiness,

and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end.
They meet with darkness in the daytime
and grope at noonday as in the night.
But he saves the needy from the sword of their mouth
and from the hand of the mighty.
So the poor have hope,
and injustice shuts her mouth."

This is almost psalmic. God does great and unsearchable things. He sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety (verse 11). That is why "blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). God promises that in our mourning, in our trial, as we are broken in heart, that is when he comes and lifts us and helps us. He deals with the crafty and the sinful. But those who submit to the LORD, he helps them. And he saves the needy (verse 15). That is why the poor have hope (verse 16). This all should cause us to seek the LORD, because "he saves the needy."

6. The LORD Disciplines Those He Loves (5:17-27)

Job 5:17-27
"Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves;
therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty.
For he wounds, but he binds up;
he shatters, but his hands heal.
He will deliver you from six troubles;
in seven no evil shall touch you.
In famine he will redeem you from death,
and in war from the power of the sword.
You shall be hidden from the lash of the tongue,
and shall not fear destruction when it comes.
At destruction and famine you shall laugh,
and shall not fear the beasts of the earth.
For you shall be in league with the stones of the field,
and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you.
You shall know that your tent is at peace,
and you shall inspect your fold and miss nothing.
You shall know also that your offspring shall be many,
and your descendants as the grass of the earth.
You shall come to your grave in ripe old age,
like a sheaf gathered up in its season.

Behold, this we have searched out; it is true.
Hear, and know it for your good."

Again, we see biblical truth put forth. This is almost the exact parallel of another passage in Scripture.

Proverbs 3:11-12
My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights.

This is quoted in Hebrews 12:5-6. When things are going difficult in your life, know that it might be the disciplining of the LORD. C.S. Lewis said, "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." When the Lord brings discipline into your life, he is shouting to you. Parents, when you discipline your children, you are shouting at them, "Pay attention. Come back. Seek the Lord."

But verse 18 reminds us that discipline isn't pleasant: "He wounds, but he binds up; he shatters, but his hands heal." Discipline isn't pleasant. "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11). Parents, in your discipline with your children, that is where you need to end up. You need to end with love and healing and kisses, so that it might yield the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

In verses 19-27, Eliphaz puts forth many promises for the one who submits to God's discipline and turns back to him. While they may seem good, some are actually insensitive to Job. For instance, in verse 25, we read, "Your offspring shall be many, and your descendants as the grass of the earth." Eliphaz is telling Job that his children are dead as a result of God disciplining him. But if he would repent and turn back, he would have great offspring. How cruel!

The grand summary statement in verse 27: "Behold, this we have searched out; it is true. Hear, and know it for your good." That is, we know that all of this is true and for your good. Not all of what he said was true. There is some of what he said that was not helpful to Eliphaz.

Nevertheless, his main command to Job comes to us, "As for me, I would seek the

Lord." I encourage you, church family, to seek the Lord. Seek the Lord in your suffering. Seek the Lord even when your friends give you bad counsel filled with half-truths. Be discerning enough to embrace what is right, and discard what is wrong.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on August 16, 2026 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rockvalleybiblechurch.org.

---

[1] Tim Challies, “My Son, My Dear Son, Has Gone to Be with the Lord,” challies.com, November 4, 2020, https://www.challies.com/articles/my-son-my-dear-son-has-gone-to-be-with-the-lord/.

[2] Tim Challies, “Singing in the Dark,” challies.com, December 2020, https://www.challies.com/articles/singing-in-the-dark/.

[3] D.A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), 161.

[4] Challies, "Singing in the Dark."

[5] Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 322.

[6] J. R. Miller, *The Ministry of Comfort* (New York: Thomas Crowell & Company Publishers, 1901), 59. You can read the book online here: https://archive.org/details/ministryofcomfor00mill/page/n7/mode/2up.

[7] Tim Challies, "When God Took Away His Goodness in My Grief, July 9, 2022, https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/when-god-took-away.