

SERMON: Life-Lessons from JOB!

TEXT: Job 1:21, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." [NKJV]

INTRODUCTION: The book of Job is the story of a normal human being who is beset by misfortune and suffering. In James 5:11, he is pointed to as an outstanding example of steadfast faith in the way he handled severe trials. He provides specific life lessons we can learn about responding to trials.

① **FIRST LIFE-LESSON**— "Naked I came from my mother's womb." All of us come into this world with the same number of possessions—NOTHING!

② **SECOND LIFE-LESSON**— "Naked I shall return there." "How much did he leave?" asked one to another at the graveside. "He left it all," was the reply. Possessions end at the cemetery. Cf. Luke 12:16-21; Matt. 19:23-24.

③ **THIRD LIFE-LESSON**— "The Lord gave." The Lord can give because all belongs to Him (Psalm 50:9-12). We must overcome pride's right hand—SELFISHNESS. Do you daily acknowledge God's gifts to you?

④ **FOURTH LIFE-LESSON**— "The Lord has taken away." Often our favorite word is MINE. Only when we truly TRUST the Lord can we accept— "The Lord has taken away..." We are clay in His hands. Cf. Romans 9:20-21. The lump does not question the amount of clay the potter adds. We must not cry out at the carvings done on us. How dare we lift up clay hands to heaven and question His works. We must trust His omniscience.

⑤ **FIFTH LIFE-LESSON**— "Blessed be the name of the Lord." We praise Him because He cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7) and has given us all good and perfect gifts (Jam. 1:17). We pour out our heart to Him in thanksgiving, love and praise.

► **QUESTIONS:** What are true riches (Luke 16:11)? What will last forever (2 Peter 3:10-14)? Where are you storing treasures (Matt. 6:19-20)? **NOTE:** Job possessed great riches, but his riches did not possess him. He remained faithful to God through good times and bad (Job 1:22; 2:10; 13:15).

-Mark N. Posey

SERMON: I want to be a Cheerful Giver! **TEXT:** 2 Cor. 9:7

Intro: Each Christian is a steward; a caretaker, overseer or manager. A steward is never the owner; he is always the manager of what's in his care! Giving is important!

1. **God watches us as we give - Mark 12:41a.**
2. **God watches how much we give - Mark 12:41b-42.**
3. **God brags about liberal givers - Mark 12:43-44.**

Con: There is only one to please - GOD! Let us strive to please Him by being cheerful givers! (MNP)

Pulpit Preview is sent for the purpose of sharing sermon ideas & useful illustrations. It is sent via email each month. Editor: Mark N. Posey D.D., preaching minister for the Austinville Church of Christ (2833 Danville Rd. SW Decatur, AL 35603) since 1994. Please send all comments to—pulpitpreview@austinvillecoc.org or address above. **Thanks, MNP.**



PULPIT PREVIEW

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SERMON: Shoe leather Christianity – the transferring of doctrine into action!

TEXT: Romans 12:1-2

Intro: Romans 1-11 (Doctrine of Eternal Salvation), Romans 12-16 (Disciplines of Eternal Salvation). Romans 12:1-2 makes the greatest transformation in all of Scripture. Have you been transformed into what God wants you to be?

1. What does God want from me?

- God wants my **BODY** (12:1). Give God your eyes, ears, mouth, hands and feet. Eccl. 9:10; Colossians 3:23.
- God wants my **MIND** (12:2a). Cf. "think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).
- God wants my **WILL** (12:2b). Pray and Practice "the will of God" (Matt. 6:9ff.). Cf. Matt. 7:21.

2. How does God feel about me?

- God sees my **SACRIFICE** (12:1b). This involves daily sacrifice (Luke 9:23).
- God sees my **HOLINESS** (12:1c). Holiness is Godlike (1 Peter 1:15-16).
- God sees my **ACCEPTABLE** (12:1d). Cf. 1 Peter 2:5—all spiritual sacrifices must be acceptable to God.
- God sees my **SERVICE** (12:1e). Service & true Christianity are inseparable (1 Cor. 15:58).
- God sees my **RENEWAL** (12:2b). Renewal is the product of "the newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).
- God sees my **EFFORT** (12:2c). Be the living demonstration of God's glorious will.

3. Why does God demand of me?

- God gives me **MERCY** (12:1a). Love, mercy and grace are precious gifts from God.
- God gives me **WARNING** (12:2a). Don't let the world squeeze you into its mold.
- God gives me **CHANGE** (12:2b). Transformation comes from God. Cf. John 3:3, 5; 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Conclusion: "I love BUTTERFLIES!" Metamorphosis is the principle Paul utilizes to illustrate the marvelous transformation (i.e., change) that occurs when one goes from wrong to right. How do you appear to God today?

- Mark N. Posey

SERMON: As a Christian, this is the way I WILL live! **TEXT:** 1 John 3:1-3

Introduction: Every Christian should always live a Holy life. John identifies three arenas in which every Christian should live while striving for Holiness: reality principle, future principle and the principle of expectation. Notice each...

1. **PRINCIPLE #1 - What we are (v.1):** God has not only saved us through His Son, but He has made us a part of His family. What we are is God's children according to the Father (2 Cor. 6:18), the Son (Heb. 2:11) and the Spirit (Heb. 8:16).
2. **PRINCIPLE #2 - What we shall be (v.2):** John is talking about a future glorified state. What we shall be is conformed to the image of Christ when we get to Heaven. Paul confirms this in Romans 8:29. God's ultimate goal is to make us like Jesus and John points to the fulfillment of the aim. Thus, our motivation is strengthened to be more like Jesus each day we live (1 John 2:5-6). Thus, Christlikeness is our obligation: John 13:15; Philippians 2:5 and 1 Peter 2:21.
3. **PRINCIPLE #3 - What we should be (v.3):** What we should be on the basis of the previous two are Christians who live pure lives! When we know that our destiny will be conformed to the image of Christ, which motivates us to be more like Him right now, it should motivate us to be ready for His return, striving to serve and please Him now!

Conclusion: John repeatedly uses the example of birth as an illustration of salvation (i.e., becoming a child of God). Cf. John 3:3. The phrase "born of Him," found in 1 John 2:29, indicates a family relationship and thus identifies that there are family obligations. 1 John 3:1-3 answers the question: What does it mean to be in the Family of God? **(MNP)**

SERMON: The Nature of God in John's writings! **TEXT:** John 4:24; 1 John 1:5; 4:7,8,16.

Introduction: There are many false gods, but only one true and living God, the God of the Bible (1 Cor. 8:4-6). We know much about him from the general revelation present in the natural world, but most of our knowledge of him comes from Scripture. Of the many qualities of God revealed in scripture, John reveals three qualities about God's nature in his writings.

1. **God is Spirit (John 4:24).** God as spirit is invisible (1 Tim. 1:17; Col. 1:15). This means his true essence cannot be seen by the eyes of created beings (1 Tim. 6:16). The concepts associated with God's spirituality are life (breath) & personal (personhood). Thinking of God as impersonal or lifeless is a denial of Jesus' affirmation that God is spirit.
2. **God is Light (1 John 1:5).** This statement has three very powerful implications: first, it is a description of the visible manifestation of God's glory; second, it is a reference to God's self-revelation to man; and third, it refers to the moral perfection of God. Taken together, we come to understand that God is absolute perfection. There is not one blemish, stain, mark, or sin on the character of God. He is absolute holiness and purity. Cf. Psalm 139:1-24 – God's Omniscience (vs.1-6), God's Omnipresence (vs.7-12), and God's Omnipotence (vs.13-24).
3. **God is Love (1 John 4:7,8,16).** To understand what love is, we must trace the stream of love to its source – GOD. First, we cannot reverse this statement and say "love is God." All love is not Godlike love. Love doesn't define God, God defines love. God cannot fall in love; he is love. Second, God's love is more than mere emotion or good will. It is his settled disposition toward us that flows from his being, nature and divine attributes. All of God's activity is loving activity, even his judgment.

Conclusion: To God be the glory now and forever! **(MNP)**

SERMON: SEVEN SOBERING CERTAINTIES!

TEXT: *John 8:32—The truths found in the Bible are absolute and without error. The Bible is God's inspired, inerrant Word representing Absolute Truth and our final authority in all matters.*

Introduction: We live in a changing world. Yet amid all the changes there are something that never change, such as: God (Mal. 3:6), Christ (Heb. 13:8) and the Gospel (John 12:48). We need certainties upon which we can depend: certainties that will awaken and sober us to things that are real, lasting and valuable. Consider the following Bible certainties:

1. **The certainty of EXPOSURE**—your sins will find you out (Read: Num. 32:23; Eccl. 12:13-14; Heb. 4:13; Rom. 14:12; Josh 7:10-26). Examples: David (2 Sam. 12:1-14), Jonah (Jonah 1&2) and Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). All must realize that public sins are always exposed.
2. **The certainty of LEAVING OUR EARTHLY POSSESSIONS**—we will leave this world the same way we entered it (Read: 1 Tim. 6:7; Matt. 6:20; Col. 3:1-4). Job 1:21 says, *"And he said: Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."*
3. **The certainty of HARVEST TIME**—we will harvest the fruit of our behavior (Read: Gal. 6:6-9). Our character today may not be what it should be, but it can change. We have but two choices, which shall it be...Sow to the Spirit, and reap eternal life OR sow to the flesh, and reap corruption?
4. **The certainty of DEATH**—(Read: Eccl. 8:8; Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:22; Josh 1:2). It is clear that man is intended to be alive. The living God made man as a "living being" (Gen. 2:7) with the intention that he should live forever in fellowship with his Maker; but when sin entered, so did death (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12). Therefore, man became a dying creature in need of salvation.
5. **The certainty of JUDGMENT**—(Read: Acts 17:30,31; Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Rom. 14:12). There is only one final judgment (Rev. 11:18). It involves all people, good and bad (sheep and goats), at the same time. The goats are arranged to the left of the throne, the sheep to the right (Matt. 25:31-33). Judgment is a public vindication of God's justice and mercy. No one will be able to argue with God about where they spend eternity. Each person is personally accountable to the commands of God's Word (John 12:48; Rom. 14:12).
6. **The certainty of SEPARATION of the wicked from the righteous**—(Read: Matt. 25:31-33; Jn. 10:27-28). It is a public separation of the good and the bad, whereas in this life all remain together (Matt. 13:24-30).
7. **The certainty of FINAL REWARD**—(Read: Heb. 11:6; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Matt. 25:34-46). This final event is the inauguration of the eternal state. The wicked are condemned to eternal torment in hell (Rev. 20:14, 15), but God has something wonderful in store for the faithful Christian (1 Cor. 2:9).

Conclusion: Life is short, death is sure, sin is the cause, Christ is the Cure!

- Mark N. Posey