



Thru the Bible in 2012

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God endures forever. Isaiah 40:8

Ladies for Jesus Thursday Bible Study Lesson

Readings for March 23, 2012 – March 29, 2012

Class Discussion: Thursday, March 29, 2012

Comforting Others: Assumptions or Wisdom

The “Miserable Comforters” (Job 16)

Job’s friends were supposed to be comforting him in his grief. Instead, they condemned him for causing his own suffering. In response to their words Job called them “miserable comforters” and continues to describe several ways to become a better comforter to those in pain:

1. Don’t talk just for the sake of talking;
2. Don’t sermonize by giving pat answers;
3. Don’t accuse or criticize;
4. Put yourself in the other person’s place; and
5. Offer help and encouragement.

The best comforters are those who know something about personal suffering. Knowing that these suggestions were given by a person who was in need of great comfort, we may want to take Job’s advice in ways of comforting.

In what ways have you suffered in your life?
What suggestions would you give for comforting others who suffer in the same way?
Do you practice these ways of comforting others?

Assumptions: Where do they get us? (Job 4 - 26)

Job’s friends did a lot of assuming. Several times Job’s friends showed partial knowledge of God’s truth and character, but they had trouble accurately applying this truth to life. They accused Job’s sin as being the reason for his suffering. They even pointed out ways that Job was being an evil hypocrite (Job 20). Even though we can be conceptually right, our application to someone’s situation can be confused by assuming things we don’t know for a fact.

How do we know that Job’s trials were not the result of sin? (Job 1:1, 8)

Why did the Adversary want to bring calamity on him? (Job 1:9-12; 2:4-7)

In what ways have you made assumptions about others?
How have those assumptions affected the way you have been able to minister to them?

Where can wisdom be found?

Job and his friends differed in their ideas of how people become wise.

Person	His Source of Wisdom	Attitude toward God
Eliphaz	Wisdom is learned by observing and experiencing life. He based his advice to Job on his confident, firsthand knowledge (4:7, 8; 5:3, 27).	"I have personally observed how God works and have figured him out."
Bildad	Wisdom is inherited from the past. Trustworthy knowledge is secondhand. He based his advice to Job on traditional proverbs and sayings that he frequently quoted (8:8, 9; 18:5-21).	"Those who have gone before us figured God out, and all we have to do is use that knowledge."
Zophar	Wisdom belongs to the wise. He based his advice on his wisdom that had no other source than himself (11:6; 20:1-29).	"The wise know what God is like, but there aren't many of us around."
Job	God is the source of wisdom, and the first step toward wisdom is to fear God (28:20-28).	"God reveals His wisdom to those who humbly trust Him."

What is the main difference between Job's friends' way of obtaining wisdom and Job's way?

"Then you will discern the fear of the LORD and discover the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity."
Proverbs 2:5-6 (NASB)

"Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand all things."
Proverbs 28:5(NASB)

"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."
James 1:5(NASB)

In what ways do you seek wisdom?
Do you search for God to give you advice or do you search for man to give you advice?