

Scripture: Job 16:5

"But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief."

Insight

Job experienced devastating loss in a short period of time. On the birthday of his oldest son, he lost his possessions, his business (all his income producing animals), all but four of his workers, and most painfully, his children. Any one of these would be a crippling blow, but each loss was worse than the next. A short time later, Job lost his health.

Many people focus merely on the losses experienced by Job. However, his wife experienced the same losses. During this time of pain in their life, they allowed the circumstances to push them apart; instead of, drawing them together. His wife's response to the hardship was the Job should curse God and die. It is no wonder that one of his greatest struggles became his desire to live.

The very thing that Job needed (encouragement and comfort) was the very thing his wife failed to provide. We don't know much of their relationship after Job's trials ended, except that they had more children. In some respects, it is not surprising that there is not more said of their relationship. How much more powerful would the account of Job have been, if Job and his wife had drawn closer together through their trials?

Job is not only a story about being faithful in our relationship with God, but it is also a story about a missed opportunity in marriage. God was faithful to Job, and demonstrated the same faithfulness we should give to our spouse. We all go through challenging times in life. We need to use those times to draw closer to our spouse by encouraging and comforting each other and demonstrating our faithfulness. It is also important for us to keep in mind that the trials we experience may be the very thing that God wants to use to draw us closer to him.

Sharing

During the week, talk about the challenges you could encounter in life and discuss the following:

- What losses in your life would be the most difficult to handle?
- What actions by your spouse would show the greatest love?
- How do you best receive encouragement and comfort?
- How do you currently encourage each other to grow closer to God?