

**Job's Journey:
From the Walled City
Job 1:1-5 (and more)**

Braves series: I'm sorry.

Magical thinking

Prayer

Childish

Mine: "Thank you for this world and everything in it. ... In Jesus' name."

Matt's "fishing prayer"

Do we leave such stuff behind altogether?

If I do right, will I also do well?

Prosperity Gospel

Faith and success in this world: Are they linked?

Is there a cause and effect?

Bernard of Clairvaux: three stages in development of one's love for God:

1. love of oneself (which is necessary if we are to have relationship with others)
2. loving God for one's own sake
3. loving God for God's sake
- 4.

And it isn't that we move from one stage altogether and into the next altogether.

They are all present to some extent.

Job:

The name: an invocation of God or the "persecuted one"?

Uz: Where is it? Not even the Israelites were sure.

Once, long ago in a land far away, there was a man named Job.

The description:

“blameless”: connected with integrity

“upright”: straightforwardness along a straight path

“feared God and set his face against wrongdoing”

loved his family: seven sons and three daughters: perfect numbers. Got together with them on their birthdays for feasts.

animals also complete numbers

This is a good and successful person. This man loved God and others.

v. 5: “Then, when a round of banquets was over, Job would send for his children and sanctify them, rising early in the morning and sacrificing a whole-offering for each of them; for he thought that they might somehow have sinned against God and committed blasphemy in their hearts.”

There. Is that fear? Is it faithfulness? Is it a little of both?

Is it possible to build a hedge around oneself and one’s family? If we live a good life, will God protect and bless us?

If we read on in this first chapter, that, in fact, is the topic of conversation between God and one of the members of his court, the one we call the Adversary or Satan.

vv. 6-11: Conversation between God and Satan

The Lord points out Job to Satan. (Thanks, Lord.) “Have you considered my servant Job? You will find no one like him on earth, a man of blameless and upright life, who fears God and sets his face against wrongdoing.”

Well, of course, Satan says. Look how you’ve protected him. Of course, he worships you. But what if things didn’t go so well?

It’s a good question. Why do we worship God? Why do we believe? Is it to protect ourselves?

Is pure worship of God possible? Or are we always really concerned about ourselves?

The behaviorist Edward O. Wilson on Mother Teresa: Her service to Christ was linked with the promise of eternal life. She acted on a selfish basis.

There is no such thing as altruism.

What are the benefits of faith?

Prosperity?

Mary

Peter and others

Priests killed in Communist Europe

Priests and nuns killed by military dictatorships in Central and South America

Even now, Christians imprisoned in China and other countries

Philip Yancey, *The Bible Jesus Read*:

“The most aggressively Christian continent on earth, Africa, is also the hungriest, while the most aggressively non-Christian region, around the Arabian Sea, is the wealthiest.”

See Job over there? Now, that is a person of true integrity and faith.

Really? You think so? Let's see. Strip away everything and see how much faith is left then. A man of integrity? Let's see.

And so they did.

Jesus said:

What does it profit to gain the whole world and lose one's soul?

I came that you might have life in all abundance.

“Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.”

“Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Paul

To live is Christ, to die is gain.

Suffering and participation with Christ

What did Jesus know? What did Paul know that was worth everything?

What is such faith? It certainly isn't safe.

Why should we believe? Why should we serve the way of Christ? What is truth worth to you?

So what should I tell you today?

That by faith your life will be blessed and enriched?

Or that your faith could cost you everything?

Yes.