

2026-02-18 Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: Job's Righteousness and Our Own Opening Prayer

Begin by thanking God for His presence and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and reveal truth to each person.

Icebreaker Question

When have you done something good for someone and felt disappointed by their response or lack of appreciation? How did you handle those feelings?

Key Scripture Passages

Job 30-31

Philippians 3:1-14

Summary of Main Points

Job's Dilemma: Job was genuinely righteous and did good works, but he began to view them as leverage with God rather than as gifts of service.

The Danger of Self-Righteousness: Even good deeds can become problematic when we use them to justify ourselves before God or expect rewards.

Paul's Perspective: Paul considered all his accomplishments as "rubbish" (dung) compared to knowing Christ—including his religious pedigree and righteous living.

Preparing for Suffering: We need a plan for how to handle suffering before it arrives, or suffering will handle us.

The Importance of Humility: True righteousness comes from Christ in us, not from our own accomplishments.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message

Job's Good Works: Job lists many genuinely good things he did—caring for the poor, widows, orphans, and servants. Why weren't these enough? What was missing from Job's perspective?

The Celebrity Status Problem: Job mourned the loss of his reputation and how people treated him. How can our desire for recognition corrupt even our good deeds?

Paul's Radical Statement: In Philippians 3, Paul calls his impressive credentials "dung" compared to knowing Christ. What does this tell us about how we should view our own accomplishments?

Personal Reflection

Your Own Righteousness: If you were making a list like Job did in chapter 31, what good things would you list? Be honest—do you ever feel God "owes" you because of these things?

Suffering Without a Plan: The pastor said, "If we don't plan to suffer, suffering will handle us." How prepared are you for suffering? What would your plan look like?

Grieving for the Poor: Job 30:25 asks, "Have I not wept for those in trouble? Has not my soul grieved for the poor?" When was the last time you truly grieved for someone less fortunate rather than just feeling sorry for them?

Going Deeper

Forgetting What's Behind: Paul says he forgets what is behind and strains toward what is ahead (Philippians 3:13-14). The pastor challenges the common interpretation—what should we forget, and what should we remember? How do you balance these?

Knowing God's Nature: The sermon emphasized that much of Job's struggle

came from not fully knowing God's nature. How well do you know God?
What are you doing to know Him better?

The Power of Prayer: The pastor reminded us that when we pray, God doesn't have to be convinced—He just has to "say the word." How does this change the way you approach prayer for others who are suffering?

Key Takeaways

Good works done for the wrong reasons (to earn God's favor or recognition) lose their spiritual value

Our righteousness must come from Christ, not from our own achievements

Suffering is inevitable—we need a spiritual plan to handle it with faith intact

True compassion means grieving with and for others, not just feeling sorry for them

Knowing Christ should be our ultimate goal, making everything else seem worthless by comparison

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

Audit Your Motives: Review your recent good deeds. Ask God to reveal any areas where you're seeking recognition or feeling God "owes" you. Confess these and ask for a pure heart.

Grieve for Someone: Identify someone in need (poor, struggling, lonely) and don't just help them—actually grieve for their situation. Pray deeply for them. Let their pain touch your heart.

Create a Suffering Plan: Write down 3-5 biblical truths you will cling to when suffering comes. Include relevant scriptures. Keep this somewhere you can access during difficult times.

Lenten Practice: As we enter the Lenten season, ask God two questions:

Is there something You want me to give up for the next 40 days?

Is there something You want me to start doing that I haven't been doing?

Prayer Focus

For those suffering physically: Pray for healing, naming specific people mentioned (Mike, Tim Robertson, Karen Jones, Jill, Jason, and others)

For humility: Ask God to reveal any self-righteousness in your heart

For deeper knowledge: Pray for a greater understanding of God's nature and character

For compassion: Ask God to give you His heart for the poor and suffering

Closing Exercise

Silent Reflection (3-5 minutes)

Consider Paul's words: "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."

What in your life are you still treating as valuable compared to knowing Christ?

What "trophies" or "accomplishments" do you need to leave in the past?

What would it look like to truly "press on toward the goal"?

Share & Pray

Invite anyone who feels comfortable to share one insight from tonight's discussion. Close by praying for each person's specific needs and commitments.

For Next Week

Read Job 32-42 to prepare for the conclusion of Job's story, where the youngest friend speaks and God Himself shows up to address Job directly.

Additional Resources

Consider journaling your responses to the Lenten questions throughout the week

Memorize Philippians 3:8-9 as a group

Check in with each other mid-week about your practical application

commitments