

Introduction:

A man and his wife pulled into a local gas station to refuel their car. As the tank was being refilled, the station attendant washed their windshield. When he finished, the driver of the car said, "The windshield is still dirty. Wash it again. The station attendant looked closely for any bugs or dirt he might have missed. When he finished, the man in the car became angry. "Hey, it's still dirty!" He criticized, can't you clean a window? It is still filthy! As he was about to get out of the car, his wife reached over and removed his glasses. She carefully wiped them with a tissue then put them back on his face. The driver embarrassingly slumped down into his seat as he observed a spotless windshield. Critical people often view others through their own dirty glasses. There are folks who just have critical spirit and always have a critical perspective. It appears that Zophar was this sort of character. Poor Job had to deal with his mudslinging and verbal abuse. Of all his friends Zophar is the worst and it appears that God spared Job a third round of his insults` since he spoke only two discourses.

Abraham Lincoln once said," He has the right to criticize who has the heart to help. Fault-finding is not difficult. Critics talk much and do little that is constructive. Theodore Roosevelt noted, "It is not the critics who counts but the man who is actually in the arena. It was George Burns who said it best, “Too bad that all the people who know how to run the country are busy driving taxicabs and cutting hair.” You know them, your always wrong they are always right.

I. Zophar speaks with dissent. Vv.1-6

1. Zophar is the third friend of Job and his name means "sparrow" yet it is derive from the word “impudent” or rude. Zophar begins his tirade calling Job a liars, a mocker and a big bag of wind. In his mind, all of Job’s complaining shows him to be a man full of talk, one who should not be vindicated. Therefore, Zophar continues with a rebuke of Job (when you mock, should no one rebuke you?). he thinking was, “I have the right to do so!”

He speaks the most arrogantly and confrontational to Job. To his way of thinking he had enough of Job’s whining he was not a man given to compassion. We all need to heed the message this morning about being too critical of others. Jesus said in **Matthew 7:1-5...**

“Zophar is the most adamant of Job’s accusers, and mostly speaks without feeling or kindness. It may have been idiosyncratic for him to be sarcastic and abrupt. The discussion is heating up now and things have reached such an impasse that all Job’s comforters are prepared to level direct accusations at Job.” “Job’s misunderstanding and his outbursts are natural; in them we find his humanity, and our own. Zophar separates the words from the man, and hears them only as murmur and mockery.” In verse 4 he states, **For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.**

2. Zophar did not truthfully characterize Job’s words here. Job did not claim to be pure and clean, as if he were sinless and perfect. However, in fairness to Zophar, Job did claimed to be in the right and this was virtually a claim to be pure and clean in this matter. Job

knew there was no special or specific sin on his part behind the loss of his children, his health, his servants, and his material wealth. He knew that he was a sinner in a universal sense and could not be considered righteous compared to God.

Zophar continues with the verbal onslaught and said if God opened his mouth you would get an earful. This reminded me of my mother saying to us kids just wait until your father gets home”. What is unmerciful here is he has the gull to say in verse six that God is not punishing you with all that you deserve. That God was actually giving Job less than was justified. Zophar adds insult to injury by implying Job does have his theology correct, and so...

II. Zophar lectures Job on doctrines of God vv. 7-12

1. After instructing Job of his total depravity he moves on in verses 7-12 to instruct Job about the perfection of God. In Zophar’ mind Job was wrong to question God. Not an assumption we should make. Everyone at one time or another questions God; it is human nature...

Who can hinder Him? You note that in verse 10? He states that if God calls the court to order or orders a person in prison; is there anyone who can stop him? The next lesson in Zophar’ theology was the sovereignty of God. Zophar believed that the best thing Job could do was to accept his punishment from God instead of protesting the unfairness of it.

2. God knows deceitful men (verse 11) he sees all wickedness, and you are one of them! Zophar here implied that what Job wanted was for God to turn His head aside from justice. Zophar wanted Job to know that it was wrong – and wicked – to wish that God would not consider the deceit and wickedness of man and not punish him. ---- **gospel**
A final blow comes in verse 12 with the statement, “**For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.** Here, Zophar simply called Job *stupid* and relates that he cannot become a person of wisdom that would be like a donkey becoming a man.

For Zophar there was no mystery in Job’s situation at all. God was sovereign, God was just, Job was a sinner, and therefore he should be thankful that he wasn’t worse off. We need to beware of passing judgement or even being overly critical, only God sees and knows everything. All judgement and suffering is not always due to someone’s sin. We have said this before and the theme continues...

III. Zophar pleas with Job to repent. Vv. 13-20

1. Given Zophar’ theological understanding of Job’s situation, the answer is easy. Job should simply repent and seek the mercy and goodness of God as stated in verse 13-15 and then in verse 16 Zophar makes an accusation that he is wrong and needs to get it over it.

Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: is what Job longed for; to be so restored and blessed again that he would forget all this ever happened to him. Zophar said – falsely – that this could be Job’s portion if he would only repent of the great sins that brought this disaster upon him.

Though Zophar was wrong in understanding the cause, he did know what the cure would look like – to be able to forget your misery, and remember it as the waters that have passed away.

2. I quote, “We seem to lie all broken in pieces, with our thoughts like a case of knives cutting into our spirit; and we say to ourselves, ‘We never shall forget this terrible experience.’ And yet, by-and-by, God turns towards us the palm of his hand, and we see that it is full of mercy, we are restored to health, or uplifted from depression of spirit, and we wonder that we ever made so much of our former suffering or depression.” (Charles Haddon Spurgeon)

3. Zophar tells Job to confess and repent by warning him of the consequences if he did not. Surely, he would not escape a greater display of God’s displeasure. He believed that God would forgive a sinner and takes him back into favor if the sinner responded correctly to the punishment God appointed. The facts are true but the situation is different. These beliefs about how life, God and the universe work were completely wrong in Job’s situation.

In verse 15 Zophar tells Job he could look upon God again and not fear, There would be an end to his misery in verse 16 and follows with it would be morning again in verse 17. Job’s life would be full again with hope and security and finally as stated in verse 19 he would not be afraid and many will look to him for help. Zophar concludes in verse 20 noting that the wicked will be blinded by God and will not escape His judgement having only hope in death. Thank God He is a merciful God, One who is long suffering...

**With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;
Psalm 18:25**

God desires His people be people of mercy and he will grant us His mercy. Are you merciful to others or are you always critical and passing judgement? God loves you and He loves you very much. No matter your nature. He knows why you are the way you are and offers Himself to you and his mercy. His desire is that you want to be an encourager like Him and not a critic. He wants better for you but you have to rid this poison of a critical spirit out of your life and God will bless you with a new morning. He will grant you a refreshing that you never had before.

Conclusion:

People criticize their church, their Pastors, their friends, their boss and their government. It happens because we typically judge others more harshly in areas where we ourselves are the weakest. We hear and give criticism all the time. We must know the hearts of the people around us so that we can be sure that we walk in love toward those people, in selfless self-denying love as Christ loved us.

Communion: