

Letting Folks In

The Ties That Bind

Job 2:11-13

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

¹¹Now when Job's three friends heard of all these troubles that had come upon him, each of them set out from his home—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him. ¹²When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads. ¹³They sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

REFLECTION

Over the next two weeks, we will be looking at the relationship of Job with his three friends. The scripture that will guide us is a call to the practice of deep and intimate Christian community as we head into Lent. The Harvard Study of Adult Development, now 85 years old, has asked thousands of people questions to find the answer to what makes people lead happy, long, fulfilled lives. One factor has stood out: good relationships. Job's friends sit with him in his acute suffering and mourn with him for seven days. **Do you have people in your life that you know would do this for you? And who would say that you would do this for them?**

These three friends of Job, while imperfect, offer a glimpse of the power of community and how it can transform our lives for the better. Scientifically, we wonder why relationships are the most important contributor to happiness and fulfillment. Studies tell us that it's because relationships help us manage stress. There's no better picture of what this looks like than Job's friends simply sitting with him in his suffering. **What do you think is the key to building these kinds of relationships? Why do these relationships not just happen overnight?**

To build these types of relationships, we must start with letting others be a friend to us. We need not underestimate the importance that Job lets them sit with him. Most of us aren't comfortable with others entering our tough spaces; we'd rather be seen as able to fix things ourselves. This is the kind of church and people we're called to be. **How comfortable are you at letting folks in? Where do you need to let down your guard and let people sit with you?**