

## HOW NOT TO HELP A HURTING FRIEND

September 1, 2019 Job 4-27 by Bob Branch

Thinking about Suffering with Faith and Truth, part 7

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**MAIN IDEA:** Today, we want to glean from Job's friends on what NOT to do with a hurting friend.

Misguided DIAGNOSIS (*Why has all this happened?*)

- **What you did is coming back on you.**  
“...As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it.” **Job 4:7-8**
- **What you *did not do* is coming back on you.** (21:7-11)
- **Diagnose and accuse them of sin, wrong and wickedness, and even inflate their sinfulness.** (8:20-22; 15:20)
- **Tell them, God is doing this to you.** (5:15-19)
- **Debate with over the reason their hurting.** (6:13-17)

Give BAD ADVICE (*What you should do?*)

- **Get into Fixer Mode and deliver an Easy Fix: Seek God and he'll fix it in short order.** (21:21-23)  
“If you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him, if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, then, free of fault, you will lift up your face...” **Job 11:13-18**
- **Make it about their innocence or guilt.** (22:29-30)
- **Inflate God and make it all about him without acknowledging their pain.** (25:1-2)

Assert or Defend YOURSELF (*this is really about me!*)

- **Speak out of impatience and frustration.**

“My troubled thoughts prompt me to answer because I am greatly disturbed. I hear a rebuke that dishonors me, and my understanding inspires me to reply” **Job 20:1-5**

- **Tell them you know what's *really* going on.** (5:27)
- **Tell them what we'd do: “If I were you...”** (5:8)
- **Defend ourselves and make it about us.** (8:9)

Just PLAIN MEAN!

- **Tell them their words are meaningless, and to stop talking.** (8:1-8)
- **Blame them for their suffering—“you had it coming.”** (8:20-22)
- **Put words in their mouth.** (11:1-6)
- **Make them feel stupid, foolish or self-deceived.** (5:2-3; 18:1f; 15:31-32)
- **Poke the bruise.** (18:5)
- **“What do you matter to God anyway?”** (21:1-3; 25:4-6)
- **Tell them to “just suck it up!”**

**OUR RESPONSE**

- **Be grieved** (2 Cor. 7)
- **Ask God for forgiveness.** (1 John 1:9)
- **Reconcile with those we've hurt.** (Mt. 5:23-25)

**ASK WHY? Their helplessness makes us feel helpless.**

- **Stop relying on our own understanding.** (Is. 55:8-9)
- **Ask for wisdom, go slow, depend on God.** (Jn 5:19)