

Job 18

Read Job 18:1-21: Bildad won't be satisfied until Job agrees with him; and Job recognizes his input and unsolicited analysis as valuable. The conversation has become more about who is right; than helping Job. Some people fight us until they feel that have been heard and respected. The hard feelings over someone's indifference to counsel many times causes worse problems than the purpose of the initial conversation. This is why anybody who counsels others to be thoroughly immersed in God's word. It is not about the helper or his opinions. Bildad is doing damage by insisting the importance of his input.

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. (Proverbs 14:12)

A good counselor will find a way to get the person to enter into conversation and discovery with God. God has all of the answers. In essence, the discovery of a solution is the process of discovering more about God. We need to find our identity in the scriptures. Men will try to get us to believe all kinds of crazy things.

Job's friends are giving inaccurate advice. Some people equate their acceptance to bringing something of value to the table. The pride of a critical spirit won't concede any points. This is one reason why our political environment won't cool off. For many people a disagreement is all about winning and losing.

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. (Proverbs 26:20)

Bildad is thinking in the most-simplistic terms that sinful living brings more trouble. That basic concept is true; but there is much more to consider.

...if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth .And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God
(Deuteronomy 28:1-2)

"But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you

today, that all these **curses** will come upon you and overtake you: (Deuteronomy 28:15)

Bildad is not able to assess righteous behavior. He is letting the *circumstances* of a man's life direct his conclusions.

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. (Job 1:1)

Bildad is missing an important point. Every set back is not a curse. God uses pain and loss to motivate and bless us. Some scary and heavy loss situations can be blessings too. God also delivers us in the final moments after we have lost hope.

I am the Lord, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things. (Isaiah45:7)

“The **LORD** will cause **your enemies who rise against you** to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. (Deuteronomy 28:7)

Why doesn't Job tell his friends to *get lost* if they are not helping? The middle-eastern culture is more argumentative and interconnected and dependent than ours is. ***The dignity culture*** is exemplified by the culture **in the United States**. In a dignity culture, a person's sense of self-worth tends to be intrinsic; it is determined by the person's own beliefs about his or her worth and **not by what others think**. Furthermore, people in dignity cultures tend to believe that they are, at least theoretically, socially equal to one another. Western individualism allows people to just stand alone amidst dissenting opinions. ***The honor culture*** may be dominant in Middle Eastern countries. In such cultures, a person's sense of self-worth depends both on the person's own intrinsic estimation and on the **recognition of that worth by society**. “Honor cultures tend to develop in competitive environments of rough equals”. In the Middle East everyone lives in a more tribal community. You have to gain public acceptance. People feel they have the right to talk about you.

It is interesting that Job is thought to be a contemporary of Abraham. Abraham was called by God in Genesis 12. Moses placed the historical scrolls into the

book of Genesis many years later. All of these moral beliefs preceded any scriptures. Men knew the truth long before the scriptures recorded the events.