

What is the most infamous line in the Bible? I suppose there are several candidates. But I am talking about 4 words a woman uttered that represents the low of lows in terms of a person's attitude toward God. "Curse God and die!" Job's wife. (**Job 2:9**) She actually asked this question first: "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!"

This is all the Bible records her saying. And she has been demonized for saying it. Like she is the evil, red tailed voice on Job's shoulder. And what she said was sinful. But... why did she say it?

I don't believe she said it because she was evil or godless; she was simply: "**Secure Behind the Hedge.**"

**Job 1:6-8** – God and Satan have a conversation. God wanted Satan to observe true faith.

**1:9-11** -- Satan explains why Job served God: "*a hedge around him.*" You have surrounded him with protection on earth, in the physical realm, by giving him many things and keeping him from loss.

**1:12** – So, God removed the hedge. At least he reduced its scope. No longer was anything around Job kept from Satan's influence. The hedge was no larger than the protection of Job's body and life.

**1:13-19** – We know what happened. In a single day he lost: all of his children, servants, and livestock.

**1:20-22** – But Job's faith was about more than physical provisions. He wasn't living for God because of some hedge around him... but in full trust of God's wisdom.

**2:3-5** – God says, "*See, true faith.*" Satan's response? "The hedge is still up, protecting his body from sickness and pain. It is that hedge of protection that keeps him clean."

**2:6** – So God removes it; or at least shrinks it in to just protect Job's life.

**2:7-9** – So, Satan afflicts Job with boils: terrible pain and agony. As Job's wife observes that their hedge of physical protection has been removed, she sees no purpose left in life and tells him to give up, "*curse God and die!*" She was not evil; she was simply materialistic! She was exactly as Satan expected she would be: tied to God by fleshly blessings. When the blessings were gone, so was her faith.

And let's not be so prideful as to think that her case is unique. There are many people who believe in and serve God, largely motivated by what God has given them here on earth. Prayers are full of thanking God for house, job, and family. I do that. Don't you? But for some this is all that matters, and their hope is tied to what they have here on this earth. That makes them a very easy target for the devil!

Maybe a man loses his job. We tell him: "Listen, you still have your home and family and health." His house is foreclosed on: "Hey, you still have your family and health." His wife leaves him: "It's okay, you still have your health." It is almost as if we are saying that faith is still worth it because he still has things to show for it! So, when he is on a hospital bed shortly after, all that's left to say is: "Curse God and die!"

*Our purpose, our joy, our sustenance has to be based on more than just what we have in flesh!*

*That was God's point, right? Take from Job whatever you wish: there is something else that drives him!*

**2:10** – Listen to Job's response. You are foolish (carnal, fleshly, materialistic). Shall we accept good and not adversity? Family, servants, animals, health were not EVERYTHING to Job, they were good things from God. And if God saw fit to remove them, Job wouldn't waver, because he wasn't living for the physical hedge, but secure behind 2 things infinitely greater:

- 1) TRUST in GOD – **Job. 42:1-6** – I know nothing, you know everything. I ask for knowledge. I repent for thinking I had the answers. I Trust in You!
- 2) HOPE of HEAVEN – **Job. 13:15; 14:14** – What in the world is there to hope for? Your kids would come back? No, life after death. Heaven!

Men and women who failed in the New Testament were quite simply: more like Job's Wife!

(John Mark / Demas / Rich Young Ruler): **Matt. 19:16-26** (trust in riches, not God!)

Men and women who held their faith firm unto the end, however, were more like Job!

(Apostle Paul: **4:12-13** - The secret is Christ! **3:7-11** – Jesus' Blessings were all he needed!)

I don't know what your hedge situation is, nor how much God has protected your physical goods and blessings. But regardless of your circumstances here and now, who are you more like?

- **Job's Wife** – Who loved and trusted God, but needed physical provisions to keep that faith.
  - o *The Rich Young Ruler* – Who wanted to serve Jesus, but not at earthly cost.
- **Job** – Who loved and trusted God and appreciated the physical, but lived for the Spiritual.
  - o *The Apostle Paul* – Who counted all things as nothing, for the sake of being saved.

I know what we should say. I know what we probably would say. But can I challenge you to be like Job and Paul, not just in answering the right questions the right ways but in daily application?

How can we prove whom we are more like? Well, if you have lost things here, you might be proving it by your commitment to God today. But for most of us, do we give up things, force loss to show faith? Certainly not.

But we can do this: reflect the hedge we live for in...

### 1) Our Prayers

- a. I am all for thanking God for the hedge around us. I thank God every single day for:
  - i. Wife, kids, home, job, and health. Every day. But is that all I should pray about?
- b. Shouldn't there be a greater emphasis? **Matthew 6:9-13 – Sp, Ph, Sp, Sp.**
- c. **Ephesians 3:14-19** – Now that is a prayer. What can Satan do to stop these things from coming to pass? How can he taint or disappoint in these things?
- d. God will know what matters most to us by what sits in the center of our prayer life. And the devil will hear that as well.
- e. Let our prayers be spiritual first, then physical. These physical provisions, from home to family to health are gifts from God for our life, but His Spiritual blessings are our Life!

### 2) Our Conversations

- a. It is not materialism to talk about material things, or our families. But it becomes such when that is all we talk about: what we HAVE, what we WANT, and our accomplishments.
- b. When it becomes awkward and uncomfortable to just talk about the Bible, it may indicate our lives are built behind the wrong fundamental interests and values.
- c. Let's talk about the Bible. Let's talk about His will, His Son, the things that are eternal and eternally important. Let's be well versed and inspired beyond my son's homerun and to the great Truths that will make my son a man of God.
  - i. **I Timothy 4:7-10** – Stories, diet programs, stuff around us. These are interesting to discuss, but not profitable for all things. Godliness is!
  - ii. **I Timothy 6:6-8** – Money and things and security can make for interesting conversation, but what about contentment? What about the sufficiency of the kingdom and what Christ is doing through what we already have?
- d. **Deuteronomy 6:7-9** – God's people talk of Him everywhere and in all situations.

### 3) Our Goals

- a. What are your goals this year? What do you want to accomplish? What would make next year a success? We'd be quick to talk about: (Saving money), (losing a few pounds), (getting a raise), (going on a trip), (buying a new car). And those things are around us, but they don't define us!
- b. If we want to keep from the fickle faith of Job's wife, we mustn't define a successful winter by such standards... for God may allow Satan to strip us of all of them.
- c. **II Peter 3:10-11** – Goals based in the physical may betray us... by death, failure, or judgment... yes it is coming... So, what is the final message of Peter to these brethren?
- d. **II Peter 3:18** – GROW and GLORIFY! There are some goals that transcend physical provision. (Read the NT / Teach a Class / Teach Kids / Start a Good Work – GROW)
  - i. Even if Satan took away my home, family and health, I could still reach all of these goals, and they would bring me the one thing nothing else can: salvation!

God removed the hedge of protection in the physical. They were her identity. So when removed, she had nothing left; she was nothing. Job loved his family and goods. But they were not his life. TRUST in GOD and HOPE of HEAVEN defined him: in his prayers, words to others, and reason for living.

-- Can you say the same? --- *Truth is: this is all going away: what will be left to show the Lord?*

And what can you SAY, DO or BECOME right here and now to show God where your allegiance and peace is?