

SESSION 4

Kathryn and Job's Wife

“Then his wife said to him, ‘Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.’ But he said to her, ‘You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips (Job 2:9–10).

Job's wife hardly seems like a missionary; much less a woman with whom a Christian woman would confess to relate. After all, she tells her husband, “Curse God and die.”

That is not something I would intentionally prompt my husband to do. Yet, I do personally relate to this nameless woman in my constant need for being reminded of the truth in the midst of loss. I assume Job's wife was grieving as much as her husband at their losses in life, but she was kicking at the very support God had given her to help her through grief — both her husband and God. I, too, sometimes fail to recognize the support systems God has given me and push others away wondering, “What is the point?”

My husband and I live in Argentina where he was born and raised. He is a pastor of a small Lutheran congregation. We live in a tiny house inside the church. We have one child that we are raising in our not so “kid-friendly” house. We struggle to make ends meet financially with our meager salary (by American standards) stacked against the declining value of the Argentinian peso.

It is a daily struggle for me to adapt to this culture and way of living. I was comfortable being able to spend my own money, to drive wherever I wanted, and to get things done freely within my own country. I miss things like security and confidence that are easily felt when I am at home in the States. I want so much that my daughter know the traditions I was raised with that don't easily translate into Argentinian culture. I wish that people didn't look at me like some oddity when I speak in Spanish. All these wishes and frustrations I tend to unload onto my husband.

But I think out of all these challenges, the most challenging aspect of life in Argentina is just being poor.

Being poor doesn't only have to do with not having money. For me, it means being away from family. Being poor means being on the outside of a culture and not being fully embraced. It means not having friends with whom I can confide. Among all the aspects of being poor, the most frustrating is having to share my husband. Most pastors' wives will tell you that it is challenging. Some days I want to seduce my husband with a pizza into skipping house visits and worship services in the next town an hour away (sort of akin to “curse God and die”). Some days I want him to just give up on the task of caring for his flock and stay home and watch a movie or even better, have a deep and meaningful conversation. After he has spent most of the day counseling and confronting various members of the congregation, I am left with a tired and worn-out shell of a man. I begin to resent the people he serves. At times I even begin to get a bit angry with him and sometimes even start nagging.

We all need to be reminded, just like Job's wife, that in the midst of life's challenges, God has been good in the past and offers us goodness for the future in giving us a future, a hope, and salvation through His Son.

Maundy Thursday was a time when I saw my husband saying, “Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?” (not in words, but in actions). In remembrance of the Last Supper, our church has a tradition in which the pastor kneels down and washes the members' feet. I saw my husband's calling so clearly in this practice. As he knelt down at the feet of his members and washed their feet, it brought tears to my eyes to see the man whom I receive broken and tired every night, washing the muck and grime off his sheep's feet just as Christ did for His disciples.

As I approached the basin, I realized the weight of his call and service; and that mine is to support, love, and encourage him. Being the last to have my feet washed, I looked into the basin and realized that this too was my service — to receive what is left and thank God. I held back tears as I looked at my husband kneeling before me, serving even me, with sweat falling from his brow and a basin full of dirty water from feet washed before mine. Here in this church, my husband serves even me. He reminds me, through his

example, what treasures we cling to as a family. In the church I am not a foreigner, pastor's wife, or poor, but a rich child of God with the same inheritance as everyone there.

Being poor means leaning all the more heavily upon the grace of God, which is what makes us rich beyond all measure. At times, I might miss the point and question what is the purpose of this work. It is a humbling reminder, amidst the frustration, to think on Job's response to his wife, "Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?"

God gave me a loving husband and the challenge of living in a foreign country. In the midst of all the challenges thrown at me, God also has provided me with a home and a spiritual family. God has provided me with all that I need to support this body and life, and for that I thank Him, even in the midst of all the challenges that come from living far from not only my native land but my spiritual home.



KATHRYN'S BIO

Kathryn Ziegler Weber served as a deaconess and missionary before marrying and moving to Argentina to be with her husband, Rev. Roberto Alejandro Weber. The couple met over six years ago on the mission field in the Dominican Republic.

Today, they live and serve in Miamar, Argentina. God has blessed them with a beautiful daughter, Evangelina Lucia, and wonderful ministry opportunities.



Discussion and Study

What are your emotions telling you after reading Kathryn's story?

To you, what does living poor mean?

What might be your words of encouragement or advice for Kathryn?

If you have travelled or lived abroad, did you ever feel uncomfortable? Share what it was like.

Let's take a look at the Old Testament person named Job. Can someone give a summary of what happened to him? If you want, open your Bible and read the introduction to Job.

Reread the first three paragraphs of this story and listen to what Kathryn is sharing from her heart. Her question is "What is the point?" How would you respond?

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Job's wife is indeed an unnamed person in the story. We do know the names of his three daughters and three friends. In an article published in Christianity Today, author Daniel Darling called her "The Most Misunderstood Woman in the Bible" with the tagline of "Why Job's wife might have gotten a bad rap."

- Remember, she watched her ten children die (Job 1:13–19).
- She experienced living the "good life" with a wealthy man, but lost everything. (Job 1: 20–22). How did she sustain her life?

- She became the caretaker for her sick husband.
- In her despair, she is only quoted with these words in Job 2:9–10. What was Job's reaction?

Darling ends this article with these words, "Was her attitude perfect throughout the storm that engulfed her family? No. Did she say things she would later regret? Absolutely. But through it all, she endured, her faith in God remained intact, and maybe, just maybe, her service to her husband should be held up as a model of biblical character."

Each of us has trials in life. How do you respond and how should you respond?

† *Say a silent prayer asking God for His mighty help in your trials of life and give thanks that He is your God.*



