



**The Nourishing Vocation Project  
Near and Now:  
*Holy Tending: the Art of Paying Attention –Job***

**Warm-up Question**  
*When do you feel most alone?*



"[62.365 i know it hurts to feel so all alone, #292 in explore !](#)" by [ashley rose](#), is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#).

**Discussion Questions**

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

## Where were you?

Read [Job 38](#)

### Bible Story Reflection

After leading a godly and righteous life, Job has lost everything, and he cannot understand why. For 26 chapters Job only spoke of God's goodness and mercy regardless of what Job himself endured. His friends have been harassing him this entire time. Job's wife insists that he curse God and die. Yet, Job remained steadfast in his responses. But finally, Job has had enough and begins to let God know that he feels abandoned and betrayed. It took a long time and a lot of harsh and untrue words said by his friends for Job to get to the point of breaking. When God finally answers Job, it is not with the gentleness that we expect. It seems that God is joining in with the accusations made by Job's friends. But is this really the case?

God responds to Job with a series of questions, asking "where were you when the world was set in motion?" Where were you when creation sprang forth? Who made all that was made? Who knows your innermost thoughts before you do? These are questions that Job can only answer by saying "you, God did all of these things." It seems unsatisfactory after all that has happened to Job. It is like Moses not getting to go to the promised land because of one mistake.

However, is God directing these questions to Job or to Job's friends? It is Job's friends who have been questioning both Job's and God's actions. It is Job's friends who have behaved as if they themselves have never committed any sin. It is Job's friends who speak as if God cannot and will not restore Job to his former life. Job's friends seem unable to accept or understand that sometimes bad things simply happen through no fault of our own. They seem to think they know more than Creator God.

When life is getting the best of someone, God calls us to sit with them in the midst of the storm. It is in the eye of the storm where peace is found. Chaos is swirling all around, but in the very center of the storm all is well. In time, the storm will pass and all will be well again after some debris is removed and healing takes place. All the while God is right there with us – never leaving our side – because it is God who can speak calmness to the storms in our lives. It is important to surround ourselves with people who do not accuse, but instead are a calming presence in our lives. Storms need chaotic energy to maintain their path of destruction. When the people who do not have our best interests at heart are removed, then harmony can once again be at the forefront. God calls us to be peacemakers and people whose energy brings quietness to stormy places.



### Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do you identify with Job?
2. Where does Job focus his attention?
3. To what does God direct Job's attention?
4. Have you ever felt abandoned by God? Give examples.
5. When bad things happen, what makes it difficult to focus our attention on God?
6. Are there people you had to cut out of your life for your own well-being? How did you move through the pain and loss?
7. How do you think Job would tell his own story?
8. How do you walk alongside someone going through a hard time through no fault of their own?
9. When have you behaved like Job's friends?
10. Name times when it was hard for you to pray because you were angry at God?
11. What would it look like for someone to respond to Job in a Christlike manner?

### Activity Suggestions

Make a list of times you later realized God had never left your side.

Write a letter from the perspective of Job's wife talking to God.

In a group, create a link prayer where each person adds to the prayer by praying for people on the margins of society who often have no voice but have not been forgotten by God.

### Prayer Concerns

When bad things happen unexpectedly, grieving families, marginalized groups

### Closing Prayer

Teach me, O God, to regard your work in all creation and to pay attention to the words I use toward my fellow humans. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.

