January 25, 2015 – Chris Dolson
Series: Wrecked: When Life Falls Apart
Sermon: Hubris Doesn’t Help
Scripture: Job 29-37
Main Idea: When our lives are wrecked our egos can be bruised.
Purpose: To warn the congregation about the fact that difficult times can bring out pride in our lives.

I. Movement One: Introduction
- Pain has a way of grabbing our attention and focusing us like nothing else.
- Illustration: Chris studied passages and put time into the sermon, however, if he hit his hand with a hammer, right now, he would forget the next thing he was supposed to say. He wouldn’t think about anything except the pain in his hand.
- Just like physical pain when something happens in our life that is devastating (e.g., loss of a loved one, divorce, financial ruin), the things we call “wrecks.” They have a tendency to focus our minds as well.
- If one of our children dies, or some “wreck” happens, we are going to scream WHY? One author calls it the question that never goes away.
- When we ask that question a couple of things might be taking place:
  - First, we might have bought into the Retribution Principle. The righteous prosper and the wicked suffer. If we suffer, we must have done something wrong.
  - Second, our egos may also have been bruised. Why is this happening to ME? I don’t deserve this bad thing. Where are you God? Don’t you care about ME? This is something that we don’t talk about out loud. We don’t like to admit that this is happening.
- Most of us struggle with pride; and when bad things happen to us our pride and our egos can be bruised. We can quickly spiral downward into a negative relationship with God or we can walk away from Him altogether; and it has a lot to do with our bruised pride.
- It doesn’t happen all the time; but it can happen. It can even happen to the very best of us. It is something that we hardly ever talk about.
- Read Job 29.

II. The Pride of Job
First: This book is not a good book to read when we are currently suffering. It prepares us for suffering.
- Bad things are going to happen. This book prepares us for those bad times. It helps us to see what might happen. How we could respond and how people around us are going to respond.
- The time to read Job is not when we are in a wreck, but before. It’ll help prepare us.
Second: The structure of the book.
- Remember Job is not on trial. God is on trial.
- In the beginning of the book Satan comes to God and say: “Does Job fear God for nothing?” (Job 1:9)
  - The challenger has come to God and said: “It is bad policy that righteous people prosper.” Who wouldn’t be righteous if you always reward them?
  - Then bad things happen to Job all at once and Job responds impeccably.

Job 1:21 (NIV)
21 “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.”
Job 2:10 (NIV)
10 Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?"
In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

- Then Job’s three friends show up.
- Job’s friends say Job is suffering because he must have done something wrong. This is called the Retribution Principle. However, Job and the reader know that Job has done nothing wrong.
- Job says it is bad policy for the righteous to suffer.
- God is caught in the middle of two difficult things:
  - Satan says: It is bad policy for the righteous to prosper.
  - Job says: It is bad policy for the righteous to suffer.
- In last week’s message (Job 28) there was an “interlude,” as if the author was saying: “You have been focusing on the wrong thing. The foundation of the cosmos is not based upon God’s justice but upon God’s wisdom.”
- Today’s focus is the three long discourses: Job’s – 29-31; Elihu’s – 32-37; God’s – 38-41.
  - Throughout Job 29 Job wallows in nostalgia, pining for his lost prosperity, honor, and dignity. This melancholic focus contrasts with his indignant posture in the book’s dialogue section, where he expounded on his righteousness rather than his lost prosperity. While his mood and subject matter have shifted, Job still refrains from attempting to regain prosperity and thus maintains his integrity.
  - In 29:1-6, Job acknowledges God as the source of his former prosperity. This is the last explicit reference to God in the discourse until Job begins his oath of innocence. Job’s attention is fixed on himself and his plight.
  - 29:11-17.
    - Job thinks that God has wronged him. He is a righteous man.
    - Job is saying: Your policy stinks. If a righteous person suffers that is a bad policy. Job is defending his righteousness.
  - 30:16-23.
    - Job feels like God is out to get him for no good reason. He cries out to God, but God doesn’t answer.
  - Job 31.
    - Job just finished 3 chapters of defense and Chapter 31 is his oath of innocence. He hasn’t done anything wrong.
    - He justifies himself before God. Elihu picks up on that (32:2) and so does God (40:8).
  - Job 31:35 – this is the climax of his defense.
    - Job claims to be innocent and implies that since God does not answer him; that he (Job) is right. He justifies himself before God.
    - He is being proud.

III. The Pride of Elihu
- In Chapter 32 the author introduces a strange character, Elihu. He doesn’t fit with the other three friends.
- Read Job 32:1-2.
- Elihu is young and angry. This is repeated several times in the introduction (32:2-4).
- One of the reasons he is angry is that he doesn’t believe that the older friends have given Job good advice. He is busting at the seams to teach everyone what is really going on.
• Even though he chastises the friends he still agrees with them. He also holds to the Retribution Principle and believes Job has done something wrong.
• Read 34:10-12 and 36:1-12.
• Elihu is intelligent but also very proud. He holds firmly to the Retribution Principle. He makes a lot of sense. However, we already know that he is wrong. We know about the trial in heaven and that Job is not on trial, God is. We know that Job has done nothing wrong and Elihu doesn’t know what he is talking about.
• A lesson for our lives: This happens a lot when bad things happen to us: someone comes along with some theology and bible verses and makes us think that they are speaking for God.
• Illustration: Imagine the horrible scenario of losing your child. A friend might mean well, however, his or her words are wrong. Imagine someone saying, “God just needed one more angel.” They are presuming to speak for God. It sounds pious, but it is horrible theology. Children don’t turn into angels when they die. Angels and human beings are like dogs and cats; completely different species. They mean well but in their attempt to comfort you they have fallen into a trap. They are presuming to speak for God. They are presuming to know the mind of God. That is arrogant.
• The author is telling us that someday a wise person may give pious sounding arguments and presume to speak for God in telling us the background of what is going on in our lives and what is really taking place. But they don’t know what they are talking about.
• We cannot presume to speak for God.
• People will come up to someone who has lost a child and say: God will use this for His glory.
• That might be true; but do you know how God is going to use this for His glory? You don’t know and it sounds like you might know how that is going to happen.
• Saying that is not helpful. Don’t say it. Don’t presume to speak for God.
• Additionally, this puts the parents in a bad place. They don’t want to be against God’s glory. No one wants to be against God’s glory. But honestly they are thinking – I don’t care about God’s glory I want my child back.
• Don’t say anything. Just love people like Job’s friends did at first. Come along side of people and say nothing. Love on people. Listen to people. Let people complain and express their anger. But don’t presume to speak for God. God can speak for himself. He does that thru his Word.
• One of the biggest problems with pride is that it is like bad breath. You are usually the last person to know that you have it.
• Another problem we face with a message like this is that it is not helpful to tell someone who is suffering that they also have a pride problem. While it may be true, telling them while they’re suffering isn’t helpful. No one needs to be told when they are going through a difficult time that they are also struggling with pride.
• This series is to help us talk about this kind of thing before it happens.
• What we learn from Job is that even the best of people (Job was the greatest person who lived in his day) struggle with pride when their lives go through hell. If Job struggled with pride, we will also struggle with it. Elihu was a good person, but he struggled with it.
• Both men have fallen into the trap of pride and hubris but neither have come to the right solution about what is going on.
• Pride is hard to detect. People who struggle with it don’t normally admit to it.

IV. Some questions to help us discover the pride in our lives.
1. Am I an angry person?
   o When we are introduced to Elihu, anger is one of his primary traits. It is mentioned three times in 32:1-5.
Proud people center themselves in the middle of the world and they seek to be in control. They want to be in control, because they are always right. Whenever things get out of control their anger comes to the surface. It can be pretty ugly.

2. Do I think that God has messed up; that He has fallen down on the job?
   - We subtly think that we could do a better job of running the world if we were in charge.
   - Do I ever think that I could do a better job of running the world if I were in charge? Do I ever think that God is deficient? If I could run the world there wouldn’t be...(fill in the blank)

3. When we pray to God does it sound like we are telling God what to do?
   - Does it ever sound like we are reminding God of His responsibilities like we are informing Him about a situation? We are using our influence to peddle information and curry a favor.
   - Sometimes we can pick up on this by listening to our prayers; we use the words “I” and “Me” a lot. Do we recount for God what a good person we are or what a good person others say that we are? Are we spending a lot of time trying to justify ourselves in front of God?

20/15 Challenge – Week 5: Humility and Confession
- Psalm 15
- Psalm 51
- Psalm 90
- Psalm 115
- Psalm 131

IV. Conclusion
- Pride can be a problem for all of us as we go through difficult times.
- What can we do to help someone who is going thru a difficult time? How can we be good friends to them?
- Job’s friends were good friends at first – Job 2:11–13 (NIV)
  11When Job’s three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him.
  12When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. 13Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.

- When Job’s friends opened their mouths is when they started to spew bad theology.
- When you do that and someone is really suffering be ready for someone to say: I hate God. I don’t know how a loving God could allow this. I don’t want to have anything to do with God.
- When people are in the hospital they don’t need theology or a sermon. Just love them.
- There is a God who is loving and does love them. He sometimes does different kinds of things to help us to move towards Him.
- God is a much bigger than we can comprehend, and He is a much better God than we can comprehend; who really wants to bless us beyond what we are able to imagine.