

How to Avoid the Sinful Trap of Job's So-Called Friends

When we're hurting, what we don't need are "Job's comforters," who not only assume they know everything we're going through but seem to have all the answers. That's what Job's so-called friends offered him in the Bible book that bears his name, and that's what Jeff and Sarah Walton, authors of *Together Through the Storms*, strive to avoid.

Like Job, the Waltons have experienced multiple trials (learn more of their story [here](#)). But unlike Job's friends, they know they don't have all the answers, they tell host Marti Pieper on part 2 of their *Hope for Marriage* interview on the Charisma Podcast Network.

"Ultimately, we're not going to have what they need the most," says Sarah. "Because I think if we get that mixed up, we can end up giving maybe even false advice or taking too much liberty in what we offer to people, but we may not know the whole story, so I do feel a sense of caution for myself in how I respond.

"But I think it's so important what I've learned the most, through my own trial is not looking for ways to fix people's problems, but realizing that most of the time, they just want to feel heard and cared for," Sarah says. "So rather than having this idea that it's my job to solve or give answers, responding with a humility that [says], 'How can I be an avenue for Christ to minister to this person that comfort?' Ultimately, it's pointing them to Christ, but then it's also showing them that they have the companionship of the body of Christ and asking them, 'How can I best serve you in this? Can I pray for you? Can I do something practical for you? ... How can I help bear this burden with you?'"

Jeff adds that if he and Sarah open up to a friend after some of their struggles, “If that friend responds right away by saying, ‘Oh, I know exactly what you mean,’ and then they go into their story, that kind of really can shut you down from wanting to open up.” Because Job’s friends kept trying to point out reasons for his struggles, Jeff says, “They caused so much added grief on Job when he was at his lowest points.”

Jeff encourages those who want to give encouragement to others who are struggling to take time to understand the relationship and to consider questions such as “When is the right time to speak up? And when is the time to sit and just kind of love them through your silence?”

To learn more about how you can offer genuine love and support to others who are walking through trials, [click here](#) to listen to the entire podcast.