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Then Job spoke again: 'If my misery could be weighed and my troubles be put on the scales, they would outweigh all the sands of the sea. That is why I spoke impulsively.'

–Job 6:1-3, NLT

The Bible reveals with authenticity the true nature of the characters whose lives are described within its pages. It exposes their faults and struggles without apology and without holding back. This is why the story of Job is so fitting—Job himself was a man of authenticity.

By “authenticity” I mean transparency, openness and yes, even vulnerability—the kind of vulnerability that makes us willing to share our inner lives with others. Job is a perfect example of one who is transparent.

In the middle of his deepest agony, he holds true to his character and shares his inner life with three of his friends. His authenticity is revealed in statements such as “‘Let the day of my birth be erased, and the night I was conceived'” (Job 3:3); and “‘Why wasn’t I born dead? Why didn’t I die as I came from the womb?’” (v. 11).

His trusted friends then turn on him and insist that he must be holding onto unconfessed sin. Like most of us in charismatic-Pentecostal circles, these men didn’t have a theology for suffering; hence there could be only one reason Job was suffering as he was. They felt a need to fix him—all the while thinking they were comforting him.

Fixing is good; however, in Job’s case, only God could fix him.

What can be learned from Job’s authenticity?

First, we can get a glimpse of the power of modeled

authenticity. Millennia later, saints are still drawing courage and inspiration from the story of Job's heroic endurance. The 21st century church needs to see new models of transparency in order to reach a generation that has grown wary of Christianity.

Second, we can see how important it is to be careful in choosing the people with whom we share our innermost struggles and thoughts. A good rule of thumb is this: Share at a deep level only with trusted peers or those who are above you in leadership or maturity.

Was Job's authenticity worth it? After all, it got him into a lot of trouble and made him vulnerable to criticism and ridicule. Only God can answer that question. But through his openness and authenticity he became a model for enduring suffering and pain.

Are you transparent? Maybe today would be a good day to begin the journey to biblical authenticity.

John Chasteen is the assistant dean of Southwestern Christian University Graduate School in Bethany, Oklahoma. He writes a weekly blog at .