

Study Guide

“Is God Fair?” — Job 34

Primary Text: Job 34

Supporting Scriptures: Psalm 34:8; Proverbs 3:5–6; Isaiah 55:8–9; Romans 3:21–26
(All themes and structure drawn directly from the sermon transcript)

Big Idea

When suffering comes, our instinct is to put God on trial. Job 34 reminds us that God is not unjust, silent, or cruel—He is perfectly righteous, sovereign, and good, even when we cannot trace His purposes.

1. Setting the Scene

Elihu enters the conversation as one who desires to **defend God’s character**, not condemn Job personally. His words are strong, urgent, and corrective—like someone shouting a warning to save another from danger, not to shame them

Elihu calls the listeners to **“taste and see”**—to carefully weigh the arguments and discern what is true about God rather than reacting emotionally to suffering.

2. Job’s Case Against God’s Justice

Elihu summarizes Job’s complaint into one driving accusation:

“God is not fair.”

This accusation unfolds in four connected claims:

1. **“I am in the right.”**
Job believes his understanding and response are correct.
2. **“God has taken away my justice.”**
Since Job believes he is right, he assumes God must vindicate him.
3. **“I am counted a liar.”**
Because Job’s circumstances contradict his claims of innocence, he feels God has misrepresented him.
4. **“My wound is incurable.”**
Job believes God is silent and that there is no hope for explanation or restoration.

These claims echo the ancient and ongoing human complaint that God is withholding good and acting unjustly—an accusation that stretches all the way back to the garden.

3. Elihu's Case for God's Justice

Elihu does not begin with circumstances—he begins with **God's character**.

Core Truth:

“Far be it from God that He should do wickedness.” (Job 34:10)

God's justice flows from who He **is**, not from human perception or experience

Key theological anchors from the sermon:

- God does not merely *act* justly—**He is justice**.
- God owes nothing to creation; He answers to no one.
- All humanity deserves judgment because of sin.
- Mercy and grace are not obligations—they are gifts.

Elihu reminds us that God's justice was ultimately satisfied not by ignoring sin, but by **pouring His wrath out on a mediator**, pointing forward to substitutionary atonement and aligning with Romans 3:21–26.

4. Why “God Is Not Fair” Is Spiritually Dangerous

The sermon gives a sobering warning:

- When we believe God is unfair, **prayer dries up**.
- Worship becomes duty rather than delight.
- Suffering turns into a courtroom where we subpoena God instead of trust Him.

If God were truly unjust, there would be **no refuge left**—for Job or for us.

5. Call to Repentance

Elihu's goal is not argument for argument's sake, but repentance rooted in truth. Job's words, though understandable in suffering, crossed into speaking about God without knowledge.

The proper response is not self-defense, but **humble repentance informed by God's holiness**, not our pain

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Where do you see the temptation to say “God is not fair” when life is painful?
2. Why is starting with God’s character more trustworthy than starting with our circumstances?
3. How does remembering that all people deserve judgment reshape how we view grace?
4. In what ways does suffering expose what we truly believe about God?
5. How does Christ as our mediator protect us from despair when we don’t understand God’s ways?

For Prayer

- Confess where you have judged God’s actions instead of trusting His character.
- Thank God that justice and mercy meet perfectly in Christ.
- Ask for grace to “taste and see” that the Lord is good—even in suffering.