

The Book of Job

Session 5: Job 32–37

SESSION GOALS

Every session has specific goals—things you want your group to walk away knowing, feeling, and committing to do.

Main Idea: When we counsel suffering people, we should always remind them of God’s sovereign, all-powerful nature and encourage humility as we examine his ways.

Head Change: To know we must be wise in how we approach conversations about spiritual matters.

Heart Change: To feel a deeper sense of humility when we pray for understanding or talk about hard things.

Life Change: To seek and offer wisdom with humility and reverence for God.

OPEN

Who is your favorite online news source or “influencer,” and why?

News and opinion sites abound, and social media is rife with influencers, people who are experts on specific topics, brands, or items. When we follow certain accounts, we hear them talk about issues from their perspectives. We learn from them and, often, become disciplined by them. But human wisdom is always flawed.

God’s wisdom, found in and affirmed by his Word, must guide our lives above all other sources. In today’s session, Francis will explore a long speech by one of Job’s friends, a new voice who points to God himself as the source of true wisdom.

READ

This session covers Job 32–37. Due to the length of this passage, only read Job 32:1–12; 34:5–10; 37:1–13 for a general overview of this section.

Note: *To see a weekly reading plan for the book of Job, go to **Go Deeper Section 3** at the end of this study.*

WATCH

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Francis Chan’s teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

What was different about Elihu’s approach to Job compared to the other three friends?

Whose counsel should we point others to when trying to advise them about their perspective on life?

Show Session 5: *Job 32–37* (11 minutes).

How do you know when it's time to end a conversation in which you cannot agree with the other party?

***Note:** To learn about the humility Christ taught us to have, go to **Go Deeper Section 1** at the end of this study.*

Job, on the other hand, needed a little humility himself. Read Job 34:5–10.

Job had consistently defended himself against Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar, refusing to concede that God was punishing him for the sins he may have committed. But he does go too far, claiming to be totally innocent. **How realistic is it for even the most moral, generous, servant-hearted person to live sin-free? What does Job's argument reveal about his heart?**

Elihu summarized Job's argument: Job said he was innocent and God was unjust to punish him for sins he didn't commit. Elihu responded by asserting that God never does evil. Both men were adamant in their opinions. **How do you react to disagreements about Bible passages, theology, or church matters? To what degree have you sounded like Job and Elihu? In what ways have you learned to offer your views humbly?**

Read Job 37:1–13. Elihu shared an ode to God's creative power in nature. Verse 5 says, "God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding." We can argue and wonder why God makes certain decisions without finding any answers. But, while we banter over philosophy, we can glimpse his majesty through creation. Elihu invites us to marvel at God while we wonder about his works. **In what ways can our philosophic or theological arguments cause us to treat God like a problem to be solved rather than a God to be worshipped? What would it look like to marvel at God while we wonder at his works?**

Francis noted that Elihu's speech in chapter 37 is a prelude to God's response in the following chapters. Elihu was attempting to prepare Job's heart for the truth that God is God and does not owe Job anything. **How do you think you would react to Elihu's warning if you were experiencing such dire suffering? What does it take for you to listen when a friend offers you truth you don't want to hear?**

GO DEEPER

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We’ve highlighted a place where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.

But you can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting.

1. Philippians 2: An Examination of Christ’s Humility

Elihu scolded Job and the other three men for their lack of humility in discussing God’s purpose in Job’s suffering. All children of God are called to demonstrate a humble spirit. But what does it mean to be humble? Is it being quiet, self-deprecating, or something more? Read Philippians 2:1–11.

Paul says humility is putting others first and considering their needs above our own. And our model of humility is Christ himself. How exactly did Christ humble himself? Re-read verse 6.

Though he was God, Jesus did not retain or exploit his divinity. His high privilege did not mean as much as his mission on earth. Consider your own place in society, whether at work, home, church, school, sports—any context in which you have a role with even a little more rank than others. **What does your position mean to you? What sacrifice might you need to make to serve and lift someone beneath you in the social order? What might be preventing you from putting others before your own position?**

Re-read verse 7. Jesus “emptied himself” to take on humanity and become a man. The word for “emptied” is *kenosis*, a term alluding to water being poured out of a pitcher. He let go of his transcendent power and humbly poured himself into humanity. He allowed himself to experience the fullness of our physicality, emotions, and thoughts. He got hungry, tired, sad, angry, and joyful; had friends and lost loved ones; with few exceptions, he was confined just as we are to a body’s natural limitations. **How often do you think of Jesus’s humanity? How does his ability to empathize with your own struggles encourage you to turn to him for**

Good?

- **Do your chosen news or social media influencers make you anxious, angry, or afraid? In what ways do they encourage you toward the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control)?**
- **Do your preferred accounts mock, degrade, humiliate, or dismiss those who disagree with their point of view?**
- **If a non-Christian looked at your last thirty days of social media use, would they be more or less inclined to follow Jesus?**

There are plenty more questions that we could ask, but each of these questions will help you examine sources of wisdom you seek outside of the Bible. Spend some time honestly wrestling with these questions and, after doing so, resolve to view your online content consumption—and interactions—as an opportunity to seek truth above all and to love others well.

3. Weekly Reading Plan

Job is a long book, and we won't be able to study every verse of it during our group sessions. This reading plan will help you familiarize yourself with the entirety of Job so that you can dig more deeply into God's Word. Some weeks will have more reading than others, so feel free to complete the daily readings at a pace that makes the most sense to you and your group.

Day 1: Job 22:1–30

Day 2: Job 23:1–24:25

Day 3: Job 25:1–26:14

Day 4: Job 27:1–28:28

Day 5: Job 29:1–31:40
