

NORTHLAND

Discussion Guide for the Week of April 24, 2022

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. It is a loss if all your group does is read and answer these questions. They are conversation starters not the final goal. The final goal is discussion and discipleship. Remember, we want God's answers, not man's so land where God lands. (ex: Where do we see that in the Bible?) Give grace & time for growth. It takes time, love, good questions, & support.

Hey, I got some questions

Asking for a friend... 😊

A Series For Your Questions

Connect

- What is something that's hard for you to believe but it exists or has happened anyway?

Context

So maybe you think that to believe in God requires a giant leap of faith. And maybe you think that essentially, there's zero evidence for God's existence apart from the Bible. Is that true? Is there any evidence for God outside of scripture or blind belief?

Today, we are kicking off a new series entitled "Asking for a Friend." This series will be different from the previous series. Meaning, we are going to work through the topics from a wide range of understanding and Bible passages - but not always via a verse-by-verse exposition. We want to avoid simplistic definitive answers to the questions. Because these are not just simplistic nor do they always have a definitive answer. We will leave room for a varying opinion, doubts, struggles, and more because that might be a part of your journey. We will often learn more and take ownership more deeply when we deeply process and struggle through our questions.

One of the biggest mistakes we can make is not listening to the hearts and thoughts of others. We often spend more time trying to prove a point instead of understanding someone else. Stay flexible, patient, respectful, gentle, and open-minded. We want to have an honest conversation around some really big questions. Questions you've asked, or questions someone has asked you. We are seeking to equip people with some discussion items that help you develop your faith, or help others on the outside looking into faith.

Don't just give people the right answer, give them a Christ centered relationship. In the end, every person has to decide for themselves if they believe in God. - Dave Rizer

Engage the Bible

Read the passage and share Surprises, Takeaways, and Observations from:

Acts 17:22-31 NIV

"Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. 24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in

history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 28 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' 29 "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."

1 Peter 3:15 NIV But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect

Discuss

1. What was the attitude toward God while growing up? What was the attitude towards Jesus? Did this lean you toward faith or away from it?
2. Why is having a mindset of humility, gentleness, and respect so important when considering and discussing ideas of faith, life, and meaning?
3. The Bible never tries to argue for the existence of God, it just assumes that we all know it's true. Why do you think that is? What evidence is there in nature that this is true? How do our thoughts, longings, desires, cries against injustice, and responses to crisis situations speak into this?
4. What do you think is the strongest evidence for God's existence? Against His existence?
5. "Everything is a belief system, including atheism and agnosticism." Do you agree? Why or why not?
6. If someone was going to reject God and Christianity, then they are necessarily opting for some alternative. A few key questions to ask here are these: (1) How certain can we be that any of these alternatives to God are true? (2) What major weaknesses or problems exist with these alternatives? (3) What are the personal and social consequences if we accept one of these alternatives and consistently live according to it?
7. What are the benefits of knowing not just what we believe, but why we believe them?
8. One of the biggest questions people can ask in this life is about 'causation'. Who started all this, and more importantly, why? How does naturalism (atheism, agnosticism) answer these questions? How does Christianity answer? Which answer seems more helpful, logical, and consistent?
9. If morality (an intrinsic, innate sense of right and wrong, good and bad, aka the conscience), cosmology (Why is there something, rather than nothing? How did that something come into being?), desire for meaning in life, and the design of the universe do not point toward a creator, what do they point toward?
10. How has a 'scientific' world view either challenged your faith, become an obstacle to faith for you, or become a catalyst to faith for you? Does it surprise you that 51% of scientists today believe in some God or some form of higher power, and 33% believe in a personal God? Why or why not?

End Your Group Time in Prayer

**Want to Dive Deeper? Have more questions?
Check Out [Room For Doubt](#) and [Bible Project](#)**

