

ASK ANYTHING

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IF GOD IS FAIR WHY AREN'T THERE MANY WAYS TO GOD?

1. What is your favourite flavour of ice cream? Why?
2. If you get diagnosed with diabetes, what medicine do you need to take to keep your blood sugar levels in check? What if you like the taste of Vitamin C tablets better? Can you take those instead?

Read: John 14:1-14

3. In the opening verses Jesus tells His disciples not to let their hearts be troubled. Why does he comfort them? Where was Jesus going (v.1-4)?
4. Rephrase Thomas question in your own words (v.5). How does Jesus answer the question (v.6-7)?
5. Is this an arrogant statement from Jesus? Why/ why not (v.9-11)? Can he make this claim?

Read 1 Timothy 2:5

6. What is Jesus role? Why is it exclusive (why aren't there more)?

Read Ephesians 2:1-5

7. How does Paul describe us (v.1-3)? Where would we be without Jesus intervening for us? How does this make Jesus the only mediator between people & God?

8. Is God unfair then to give us only the one way to get right with Him? Why can't we decide how to get to God?

9. Write a brief answer to the question based on the stuff you've looked at in this study.

IF GOD IS THERE WHY DOESN'T HE PROVE IT?

1. How do you know things about other people?

God has *revealed* things about himself in two ways: generally & specially.

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF IN A GENERAL WAY

2. What are some ways God reveals himself from the following verses?

Romans 1:18-20

Psalms 19:1-4, 8

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF IN A SPECIAL WAY

God reveals himself in two special ways: the bible & in Jesus

3. From the following verses. How does Jesus reveal God?

John 1:1-5, 14, 18

Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3

4. Read **Luke 16:19-31**. What evidence does God consider enough for us to believe in him? (c.f. **John 10:25,38; 20:30-31**)

5. Read **John 20:24-29**. What evidence does Jesus provide Thomas with to remove his doubts?

The resurrection is great evidence for the existence of God

6. Is this a new question (1 Corinthians 1:22-25)? What answer does Christianity offer?

7. Do you ever have doubts about God's existence? How has this study helped speak to some of those doubts?

IF GOD IS GOOD WHY ALL THE SUFFERING?

1. Why do you think God allows suffering? What has been your experience of suffering?

Read Romans 8:18-25

2. Who/what is suffering and why? Is anything on this earth exempt? (See Genesis 3:17)

3. Are all experiences of suffering a punishment for our sin?
In 2 groups read the following verses and discuss.

Luke 13:1-5

Genesis 3:16-24

4. Do you deserve to suffer? Do you deserve not to suffer?

Read Romans 5:3-8

5. Do you believe that God really loves you, even when he lets you suffer?
6. What hope is there for us when we suffer *as Christians*? How does God work for our 'good'? What does suffering produce? Back in groups read the following and discuss

Romans 8:17-18, 29-30

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

7. Is your perspective on suffering broad enough? Read **Revelation 21:1-8**. How will suffering end? Does it end for all of us? What should our response be?
8. What hope do non-Christians have in their suffering? Read Isaiah 50 esp vs:3-5 and Luke 24:44-49
9. In your own words write a brief answer to the question

IF GOD OWNS EVERYTHING WHY DOES HE NEED MY MONEY?

1. Look at these 3 passages. What they reveal about God 'owning everything'?

Psalm 24: 1-2

2 Corinthians 8:9

James 1:17

Let's look at the story of Zacchaeus (a tax collector) who when converted, thought it fitting to give half of all he owned to the poor.

Read Luke 19: 1-10

2. Who was Zacchaeus? And what was his God? (c.f. Luke 16:13-15)

3. Jesus singles out the most notorious "sinner" in a crowd of mainly respectable people. What does this reveal about our relationship with God?

4. Zacchaeus wanted to follow Jesus and immediately he realized that money was an issue he needed to deal with. What were his two remarkable promises? What was the reason for his new heart/ life and way of giving?

Promise #1	Promise #2

If salvation had been something earned through obedience to a moral code then Zacchaeus’s question would have been, “How much MUST I give?” However, these promises were a response to lavish, generous grace so his question was, “How much CAN I give?”

5. Which question do you find yourself asking? How can you begin to ask the 2nd question more?

6. In the OT God instructs his people to give 10% (tithe). In the New Testament giving quantities are less prominent, why do you think this is so? What does it reveal to us about giving?

7. Are we more or less ‘debtors to grace’ than OT believers? Did Jesus ‘tithe’ his life and blood to save us, or did he give it all?

8. Zacchaeus realised that while he was *financially rich* he had been *spiritually bankrupt*. Jesus had poured out his spiritual riches on him freely. What was Zacchaeus attitude towards money now?
9. Zacchaeus gives in response to his changed heart not to try pay God back. Why can we never repay God for his free gift of grace?
10. How does viewing money in the light of the Gospel challenge your ideas on giving?
11. **Acts 20: 35** says “It is more blessed to give than receive”. Do you really believe this? What does it look like to put this verse into action? How is your giving going? What changes do you need to make?

What breaks the power of money over us is not just redoubled effort to follow the example of Christ; rather it is deepening your understanding of the salvation of Christ.

IF GOD IS KIND WHY DOESN'T HE ANSWER ALL MY PRAYERS?

1. What was the last prayer that God answered of yours? What is a prayer that God hasn't answered? How does it feel in both situations?
2. Is God really a kind God? (Matt 7:9-11)

Unanswered prayers may not always be unanswered. God may answer with a no or a not yet. There are three reasons why our prayers may go 'unanswered'. God either says NO WAY, NOT YET, NO BUT!

NO WAY

Read **James 4:2-3, Isaiah 1:15-17**

3. Why does God not answer these kinds of prayers? What prayers may fall into this category?

NOT YET

Read **Revelation 6:10-11**

4. What is the prayer request of the martyrs? Why hasn't God answered their prayer?

IF GOD IS HAPPY WHY DOES HE HATE US HAVING FUN?

1. What is one of the most fun days you've ever had?
2. The question assumes something about God. What is it?
Do you think God is happy? (Ps 115:3, 135:6).
3. Read **1 Timothy 1:11, 6:15**. What does it mean that God the *blessed God*?
4. How does your view of God affect your view of fun, pleasure and enjoyment?
5. What kind of things makes God unhappy/ angry?

6. Read **John 10:10**. What is one of the reasons Jesus has come? What does this tell us about God's view on life?

7. Read **Matthew 13:44-46**. Is it worth following Jesus and not doing all the 'fun' stuff? Why?

8. "Every command of Jesus is for our good." Do you agree? (**Matt 11:28-30, 1 John 5:3**). Why do we believe then that sin is fun?

9. What are areas in your life where you are finding it hard to trust that God's way is in fact for you good and better than the ways of this world?

10. Are we right to say that we know better than God and determine what fun really is? How could you answer this question to a friend who asked?

IF GOD WANTS TO BE KNOWN WHY IS THE BIBLE SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND?

1. When you read the bible do you generally get it? Or is it all beyond your understanding? What do you find hard?
2. Is the bible hard to understand? Split into 2 groups, read the following verses and discuss.

2 Peter 3:15-16

Deuteronomy 6:6-7, Psalm 19:7

3. What do these verses tell us about the bible and its clarity?

2 Timothy 3:14-17

James 1:22-25

1 Corinthians 2:9-14

4. Is the core message of Christianity hard to understand?
Read **John 3:16**. What is it saying? Are these verses clear?

5. Read **Psalms 119:97-104**. Is this your attitude towards God's word?
How can you crave God's word like the song-writer did?

6. What has God been teaching you recently through his word? How regular is your bible reading?

7. In your own words write a brief answer to the question.

IF GOD IS SO SMART WHY DOES SCIENCE NOT NEED HIM?

1. How have you heard people using 'science' as an objection to belief in God?
2. What does the bible tell us about creation? (**Genesis 1:1, 26-27; Isaiah 45:18 & Colossians 1:16-17**)
3. What do we lose if we get rid of a creator God (and replace Him with say the theory of evolution)?
4. Can science tell you how the world works? Can science tell you why you (& the world) exist? Why does science need God?

5. Can science prove that God does or doesn't exist? How then can we know if God exists (see study 2 for clues)?

6. "True science gives rise to worship." Do you agree?
(**Revelation 4:11, Nehemiah 9:6, Psalm 148**)

Science can test a natural event...it can't test a supernatural event. How then can science claim to get rid of God, if God acts in the supernatural realm?

7. Read **Hebrews 11:3**. What will make a person believe that God created this world? Where do we get faith from (clue: Eph 2:8)? Pray for your atheist/agnostic friends to have blind eyes opened.

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