

THE QUESTIONS WE ASK GOD

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Student Handbook



An 8-Session Bible Study

Welcome

You're holding a handbook for a journey — eight sessions exploring the questions we really ask God. The honest ones. The ones that keep us up at night. The ones we're sometimes afraid to say out loud.

Here's the good news: God is not afraid of your questions. He invites them. From the psalmist crying "How long?" to Thomas asking for proof, Scripture is full of people who brought their doubts and confusion straight to God — and found Him faithful.

This handbook is yours. Write in it. Underline. Doodle. Bring it each week. Come ready to listen, to share, and to let God meet you in the middle of your questions.

How to Use This Handbook

- Before each session, read the devotional and the key Scriptures.
- During the session, use the discussion questions and take notes.
- After the session, work through the journal prompts and take the action step.
- Be honest — with God, with the group, and with yourself.
- Remember: there are no "dumb" questions here. Only unasked ones.

The Questions We'll Explore

This study draws from research on the questions people most often bring to God. Here are the ten questions behind our eight sessions:

The Top 10 Questions We Ask God	Session
Is God real? Does God exist?	Session 1
Why does God allow suffering and evil?	Session 2
Does God hear and answer my prayers?	Session 3
What is my purpose / the meaning of life?	Session 4
What is God's will for my life?	Session 5
Does God still love and forgive me?	Session 6
Where is God in injustice and oppression?	Session 7
Why is God silent / how long must I wait?	Session 3
What happens after death?	Session 8
Can I trust God with my future and overcome fear?	Session 8

SESSION 1

God, Are You Real?

The Question: *How can I know that God is really there — and that it matters?*

Big Idea: Faith is not blind; it is trust built on evidence, encounter, and a God who invites our questions.

Key Scriptures

- Hebrews 11:6¹
- Psalm 19:1²
- Romans 1:20³
- Jeremiah 29:13⁴

Devotional

Faith isn't pretending you have no questions. It's bringing your questions to a God big enough to handle them. The same God who stretched out the stars invites you to seek Him — personally, honestly, persistently. You don't have to have it all figured out. You just have to be willing to find out.

Icebreaker

My First Picture of God: Ask each person to finish this sentence: "When I was a child, the first picture I had of God was..." Go around the circle quickly — no commentary, just sharing. Then ask one follow-up: "Has that picture changed? If so, what changed it?"

Discussion Questions

1. What first convinced you — or made you doubt — that God is real? Was it an experience, a person, an argument, or something else?
2. Hebrews 11:6 says God "rewards those who earnestly seek him." What does "seeking" look like in everyday life? Have you ever felt rewarded for seeking Him?
3. If someone in this room is quietly asking, "God, are You real?" what would you want them to know this week?
4. Where do you see "the heavens declaring the glory of God" in your own life or community right now?

Reflect & Journal

What is one honest question I've been afraid to bring to God?

Where have I seen God show up that I may have overlooked?

What would "seeking Him with all my heart" look like this week?

¹Hebrews 11:6 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2011%3A6&version=NIV>

²Psalm 19:1 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2019%3A1&version=NIV>

³Romans 1:20 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%201%3A20&version=NIV>

⁴Jeremiah 29:13 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah%2029%3A13&version=NIV>

Action Step: Spend five minutes outside this week simply looking at creation — the sky, a tree, the wind — and say, “Thank You for being real.”

My Notes

SESSION 2

Why So Much Pain?

The Question: *If God is good and powerful, why does He allow so much suffering?*

Big Idea: God does not explain away our pain — He enters it, redeems it, and promises that it will not have the final word.

Key Scriptures

- Romans 8:18–28⁵
- John 16:33⁶
- Lamentations 3:31–33⁷
- 2 Corinthians 1:3–4⁸

Devotional

God never promised a pain-free life. He promised His presence in the pain. The same Savior who wept at Lazarus' tomb weeps with you now. And the empty tomb is His guarantee that your story does not end in the grave. Hold on. Sunday is coming.

Icebreaker

The Comfort Map: Give each person a sticky note. Ask them to write one word for a time God brought them through a hard season. Post them on a wall or board. Read a few aloud. The wall becomes a visible testimony of God's faithfulness in pain.

Discussion Questions

1. When have you most wanted to ask God, "Why did You let this happen?" What did that season feel like?
2. Romans 8:28 promises God works "for the good" of those who love Him. How do you hold that promise alongside pain that still hurts?
3. Who in your life has been "the comfort of Christ" to you in a hard time? How did they show up?
4. What would it look like to let God into a painful place you've been carrying alone?

Reflect & Journal

What pain have I been carrying that I need to hand to God?

How has God already brought me through something I once thought would break me?

⁵Romans 8:18–28 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A18-28&version=NIV>

⁶John 16:33 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2016%3A33&version=NIV>

⁷Lamentations 3:31–33 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Lamentations%203%3A31-33&version=NIV>

⁸2 Corinthians 1:3–4 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%201%3A3-4&version=NIV>

Who might need the comfort I've received?

Action Step: Reach out to one person who is hurting this week and offer the comfort you've received from God — a call, a meal, a prayer.

My Notes

SESSION 3

Why Don't You Answer?

The Question: *Why does God seem silent — and what do I do when my prayers go unanswered?*

Big Idea: God's silence is not God's absence. Delays are not denials. Keep praying, keep trusting, keep watching.

Key Scriptures

- Psalm 13⁹
- Luke 18:1–8¹⁰
- Habakkuk 2:2–3¹¹
- 1 John 5:14–15¹²

Devotional

Silence is not absence. The God who seemed silent to Joseph in the pit was working out a rescue. The God who seemed silent on Saturday was preparing a resurrection. Your “how long” is not falling on deaf ears. Keep praying. The answer is on the way.

Icebreaker

The Wait Test: Ask: “What’s the longest you’ve ever waited in line or in traffic — and how did you handle it?” Let two or three share. Then bridge: “If we get impatient in a drive-thru, imagine waiting on God for years. Today we’re talking about holy waiting.”

Discussion Questions

1. What is a prayer you’ve been praying a long time that still seems unanswered? (Share only what you’re comfortable.)
2. What’s the difference between God saying “no,” “not yet,” and “I have something better”? How can you tell?
3. When has a “delayed” answer turned out to be better than the quick answer you wanted?
4. What would help you “not give up” in prayer this week?

Reflect & Journal

What prayer have I been tempted to give up on?

How might God be working behind the scenes while I wait?

⁹Psalm 13 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2013&version=NIV>

¹⁰Luke 18:1–8 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%2018%3A1-8&version=NIV>

¹¹Habakkuk 2:2–3 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Habakkuk%202%3A2-3&version=NIV>

¹²1 John 5:14–15 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20John%205%3A14-15&version=NIV>

What would it look like to trust His timing over my deadline?

Action Step: Pick one “waiting” prayer. Set a daily phone reminder to pray it for the next 7 days — and to thank God in advance.

My Notes

SESSION 4

What Am I Here For?

The Question: *What is my purpose — and does my life actually matter to God?*

Big Idea: You are not an accident. God designed you on purpose, for purpose, before you took a breath.

Key Scriptures

- Psalm 139:13–16¹³
- Ephesians 2:10¹⁴
- Jeremiah 29:11¹⁵
- Colossians 3:23–24¹⁶

Devotional

You were not mass-produced. You were handcrafted by the Creator of the universe, with intention and love. Your life has meaning not because of what you achieve, but because of Whose you are. Walk in that today.

Icebreaker

The Name Story: Ask each person to share their name and one thing about it — what it means, why their parents chose it, or a nickname. Bridge: “Your name was chosen on purpose. So were you. Today we talk about God-given purpose.”

Discussion Questions

1. Where have you been tempted to measure your worth by what you do or produce instead of by who God says you are?
2. Ephesians 2:10 says God prepared good works “in advance” for you. What might some of those be in your life right now?
3. How would seeing your daily work and relationships as “working for the Lord” change how you approach this week?
4. What part of your story feels too small to matter — and how might God redeem it for purpose?

Reflect & Journal

Where have I been seeking purpose in the wrong places?

What “good work” might God have prepared for me right where I am?

¹³Psalm 139:13–16 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20139%3A13-16&version=NIV>

¹⁴Ephesians 2:10 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%202%3A10&version=NIV>

¹⁵Jeremiah 29:11 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah%2029%3A11&version=NIV>

¹⁶Colossians 3:23–24 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%203%3A23-24&version=NIV>

What would change if I lived like I was made on purpose?

Action Step: Identify one ordinary task this week (cooking, a meeting, caregiving) and dedicate it to God before you start: “Lord, I do this for You.”

My Notes

SESSION 5

What's Your Will for Me?

The Question: *How do I hear God's voice and know what He wants me to do?*

Big Idea: God's will is less a hidden map and more a relationship — He guides those who are willing to follow.

Key Scriptures

- Proverbs 3:5–6¹⁷
- Romans 12:1–2¹⁸
- John 10:27¹⁹
- 1 Kings 19:11–13²⁰

Devotional

God's not hiding His will from you — He's inviting you into a relationship where guidance flows naturally. The more you know His Word and His heart, the more you recognize His voice. He's speaking. Are you creating space to listen?

Icebreaker

The Worst Advice: Ask: "What's the worst advice you ever received — and did you follow it?" Let 3–4 share. Bridge: "We've all followed bad voices. Today we learn to recognize the Good Shepherd's voice."

Discussion Questions

1. What decision are you facing right now where you wish you could hear God clearly?
2. How do you usually sense God speaking — Scripture, people, circumstances, inner promptings? Which is hardest for you?
3. What "noise" in your life might be drowning out God's whisper?
4. What's one area where you need to trade "your own understanding" for trust?

Reflect & Journal

What decision am I bringing to God right now?

What noise do I need to turn down to hear His whisper?

What next step am I already fairly sure of but hesitating to take?

¹⁷Proverbs 3:5–6 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%203%3A5-6&version=NIV>

¹⁸Romans 12:1–2 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2012%3A1-2&version=NIV>

¹⁹John 10:27 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2010%3A27&version=NIV>

²⁰1 Kings 19:11–13 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2019%3A11-13&version=NIV>

Action Step: Schedule 10 minutes of silence (phone off) this week. Just sit with God. Write what you sense Him saying.

My Notes

SESSION 6

Do You Still Love Me?

The Question: *After everything I've done — can God still love and forgive me?*

Big Idea: God's love is not earned and cannot be lost. Grace meets you at your worst and refuses to leave you there.

Key Scriptures

- Romans 8:38–39²¹
- 1 John 1:9²²
- Psalm 103:8–12²³
- John 21:15–17²⁴

Devotional

You cannot out-sin God's grace. You cannot fall beyond His reach. The same love that held Jesus on the cross holds you now. Stop running. Turn around. He's been waiting the whole time.

Icebreaker

The Reset Button: Ask: "If you could hit a reset button on one moment in your life, what would it be — no details required, just the category (a relationship, a decision, words said)." Keep it light and quick. Bridge: "We all want a reset. Good news: grace is God's reset button."

Discussion Questions

1. What lies has shame told you about whether God could still love you?
2. How does Romans 8:38–39 challenge the idea that your sin can separate you from God?
3. Peter failed Jesus publicly and was still restored. What does that tell you about how Jesus responds to your failures?
4. What would it look like to receive God's forgiveness instead of just asking for it over and over?

Reflect & Journal

What am I still holding against myself that God has already forgiven?

What lie does shame repeat to me — and what truth replaces it?

How would I live differently if I truly believed I am loved?

²¹Romans 8:38–39 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A38-39&version=NIV>

²²1 John 1:9 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20John%201%3A9&version=NIV>

²³Psalm 103:8–12 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20103%3A8-12&version=NIV>

²⁴John 21:15–17 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2021%3A15-17&version=NIV>

Action Step: Write “Romans 8:38” on a card and carry it this week. Each time shame speaks, read it aloud.

My Notes

SESSION 7

Where Is the Justice?

The Question: *Why does injustice keep winning — and where is God in the fight for what's right?*

Big Idea: God is not neutral on injustice. He stands with the oppressed, and He calls His people to be His hands of justice on earth.

Key Scriptures

- Amos 5:24²⁵
- Luke 4:18–19²⁶
- Micah 6:8²⁷
- Psalm 9:7–9²⁸

Devotional

God is not silent about injustice — He is shouting. The same God who parted the sea for an enslaved people still stands with the oppressed today. And He's calling you to stand with Him. Justice isn't a detour from the gospel; it's the gospel in motion.

Icebreaker

The Justice Pulse: Ask: "Name one injustice in the world or our community that breaks your heart — big or small." Go around quickly. Don't debate; just listen and let the weight of the list land. Bridge: "God sees every one of these. Today we learn what He's doing about it — and what He's asking us to do."

Discussion Questions

1. When have you seen or experienced injustice — and how did it affect your view of God?
2. What's the difference between seeking justice and seeking revenge? How does Micah 6:8 guide us?
3. Jesus' mission was to "set the oppressed free." What does partnering with Him in that look like for you this week?
4. How can we pursue justice in a way that honors God and doesn't harden our hearts with bitterness?

Reflect & Journal

What injustice has God placed on my heart?

Where am I tempted to stay silent when I should speak?

What one act of justice can I take this week?

²⁵Amos 5:24 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Amos%205%3A24&version=NIV>

²⁶Luke 4:18–19 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%204%3A18-19&version=NIV>

²⁷Micah 6:8 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Micah%206%3A8&version=NIV>

²⁸Psalm 9:7–9 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%209%3A7-9&version=NIV>

Action Step: Do one concrete act of justice this week: advocate, mentor, donate, vote, listen, or stand with someone who is oppressed. Write what you did.

My Notes

SESSION 8

What About Forever?

The Question: *What happens after this life — and can I really hope for a future with God?*

Big Idea: Death is not the end of your story. The resurrection guarantees that those in Christ have a hope that outlasts the grave.

Key Scriptures

- John 14:1–3²⁹
- 1 Corinthians 15:54–57³⁰
- Revelation 21:3–4³¹
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14³²

Devotional

The empty tomb is God’s exclamation point on every question you’ve ever asked. Death lost. Love won. Forever starts now. Live like someone who knows how the story ends.

Icebreaker

The Best Reunion: Ask: “If heaven is a reunion, who is the first person you can’t wait to see again — here or gone home?” Allow a few to share (keep it tender). Bridge: “Today we talk about the hope that says the best reunions are still ahead.”

Discussion Questions

1. What does the resurrection of Jesus change about how you face death — yours or a loved one’s?
2. Revelation 21 promises “no more death or mourning or crying or pain.” Which of those words hits closest to home for you right now?
3. How does eternal hope change how you live this week — not just how you die?
4. Who in your life needs to hear this hope — and how might you share it?

Reflect & Journal

How does the hope of heaven change how I face a current fear or loss?

What would I do differently this week if I truly believed death is not the end?

Who needs me to share this hope with them?

²⁹John 14:1–3 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A1-3&version=NIV>

³⁰1 Corinthians 15:54–57 —

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A54-57&version=NIV>

³¹Revelation 21:3–4 — <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2021%3A3-4&version=NIV>

³²1 Thessalonians 4:13–14 —

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%204%3A13-14&version=NIV>

Action Step: Reach out to someone who is grieving or afraid. Share one hope-filled truth from this session and offer to pray with them.

My Notes

A Final Word

You made it. Eight sessions. Eight questions. And maybe a hundred more that surfaced along the way. That's okay. The goal was never to answer every question — it was to bring them to the One who is the answer.

Keep asking. Keep seeking. Keep knocking. The God who welcomed your questions this whole journey is not done with you yet. He's just getting started.

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” — Hebrews 11:1