

# no more secrets

Revealing Jesus - Discussion Guide #3

## Inquiry

1. Why would people give up their basic human values for material gain?
2. What might happen if a depraved civilization continued to its ends uninterrupted?
3. Is it an act of love to allow people to destroy themselves?
4. What lies have been the most destructive in human history? In your life?

## Inquest

**Truth. Lies. Distortion.** In a world of ambiguity and misplaced priorities, of twisted values and backwards ambitions, core truth has always been scarce. We're distracted by thrills and fleeting amusements, but miss out on true joy and wisdom.

Jesus compared the end times to "the days of Noah." People seek self-fulfillment and satisfaction, craving short-lived pleasure at the expense of people they'll never look in the eye. We may achieve progress in one sphere, yet our inner selves continue to fester. The battle for souls is sharper than ever. It's easy to get caught up in debates and fixations about unessential details of theology and faith, but we must keep our main focus on core truth. Read 1 Timothy 6:20, 21.

1. What does Paul mean by "godless chatter"?
2. What balance should we seek between God's word and human knowledge?
3. Read Amos 5:21-24. How may people profess to honor God but with wrong motivations?

**2 Peter 2:1-2 says, "But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping."**

1. What can make spiritual falsehood so dangerous? What qualities distinguish truth from falsehood?
2. How do people misuse religion for their own benefit?
3. How is falsehood self-destructive?



**James 1:5 assures us, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."**

1. What does it mean to you that God "gives generously to all without finding fault"?
2. James 1:6 continues, "But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind." How can you seize onto faith?
3. Even Jesus struggled with fear and doubt the night before His crucifixion. What makes the difference between honest faith that wrestles with real questions and an erratic faith grounded in nothing?

## **Cross-Examination**

**"God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in discoveries in science. But even the greatest minds, if not guided by the Word of God, become bewildered in their attempts to investigate the relations of science and revelation."**

1. How do you see God leading scientists today?
2. How does one's worldview shape how they approach science? How can science build our faith?
4. What is the best attitude for a Christian to approach science?

**"It is a masterpiece of Satan's deceptions to keep men conjecturing in regard to that which God has not made known. Lucifer became dissatisfied because all the secrets of God's purposes were not confided to him, and he disregarded that which was revealed. Now he seeks to imbue men with the same spirit and lead them also to disregard the direct commands of God."**

1. What unknowns do you long to ask God to explain?
2. What areas of truth are the easiest for you to grasp or accept?
3. How do you see God building our understanding?

**"God has given in His Word sufficient evidence of its divine character. Yet finite minds are inadequate fully to comprehend the purposes of the Infinite One. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Romans 11:33. Still, we can discern boundless love and mercy united to infinite power. Our Father in heaven will reveal to us as much as it is for our good to know; beyond that we must trust the Hand that is omnipotent, the Heart that is full of love."**

1. What aspects of God's character most enthrall you?
2. It is often said that the more we understand, the more we see how limited our understanding truly is. How might growing in faith make us more comfortable with ambiguity?

**"The Lord permits His people to be subjected to the fiery ordeal of temptation, not because He takes pleasure in their distress, but because this is essential to their final victory. He could not, consistently with His own glory, shield them from temptation, for the object of the trial is to prepare them to resist all the allurements of evil. Neither wicked men nor devils can shut out God's presence from His people if they will confess and put away their sins and claim His promises. Every temptation, open or secret, may be successfully resisted, `not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.'" Zechariah 4:6.**

1. What challenges have built your character? Which have most tested your faith?
2. Why would it be inconsistent with God's glory to fully shield us from temptation?
3. In what areas of life do you see God calling you to greater reliance on Him?

### **Chapter 3— *Dangerous Seductions***

The great controversy between Christ and Satan is soon to close, and the wicked one redoubles his efforts to defeat the work of Christ in man's behalf. To hold people in darkness and impenitence till the Saviour's mediation is ended is the object he seeks to accomplish. When indifference prevails in the church, Satan is not concerned. But when souls inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" he is on the ground to match his power against Christ and to counteract the influence of the Holy Spirit.

On one occasion, when the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them, not to bow before the Eternal King, but to further his malicious designs against the righteous. See Job 1:6. He is in attendance when men assemble for worship, working with diligence to control the minds of the worshippers. As he sees the messenger of God searching the Scriptures, he takes note of the subject to be presented. Then he employs his cunning and shrewdness so that the message may not reach those whom he is deceiving on that very point. The one who most needs the warning will be urged into some business transaction or will by some other means be prevented from hearing the word.

Satan sees the Lord's servants burdened because of the darkness that enshrouds the people. He hears their prayers for divine grace and power to break the spell of indifference and indolence. Then with renewed zeal he tempts men to the indulgence of appetite or self-gratification, and thus benumbs their sensibilities so that they fail to hear the very things they most need to learn.

Satan knows that all who neglect prayer and the Scriptures will be overcome by his attacks. Therefore he invents every possible device to engross the mind. His right-hand helpers are always active when God is at work. They will present the most earnest, self-denying servants of Christ as deceived or deceivers. It is their work to misrepresent the motives of every noble deed, to circulate insinuations, and arouse suspicion in the minds of the inexperienced. But it may be readily seen whose children they are, whose example they follow, and whose work they do. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matthew 7:16; also see Revelation 12:10.

#### **The Truth Sanctifies**

The great deceiver has many heresies prepared to suit the varied tastes of those whom he would ruin. It is his plan to bring into the church insincere, unregenerate elements that will encourage doubt and unbelief. Many who have no real faith in God assent to some principles of truth and pass as Christians, and thus are enabled to introduce error as scriptural doctrine. Satan knows that the truth, received in love, sanctifies the soul. Therefore he seeks to substitute false theories, fables, another gospel. From the beginning, servants of God have contended against false teachers, not merely as vicious men, but as inculcators of falsehoods fatal to the soul. Elijah, Jeremiah, Paul, firmly opposed those who were turning men from the Word of God. That liberality which regards a correct faith as unimportant found no favor with these holy defenders of truth.

The vague and fanciful interpretations of Scripture and conflicting theories in the Christian world are the work of our great adversary to confuse minds. The discord and

division among the churches are in a great measure due to wresting the Scriptures to support a favorite theory.

In order to sustain erroneous doctrines, some seize upon passages of Scripture separated from the context, quoting half a verse as proving their point, when the remaining portion shows the meaning to be the opposite. With the cunning of the serpent they entrench themselves behind disconnected utterances construed to suit carnal desires. Others seize upon figures and symbols, interpret them to suit their fancy, with little regard to the testimony of Scripture as its own interpreter, and then present their vagaries as the teachings of the Bible.

### **The Whole Bible a Guide**

Whenever the study of the Scriptures is entered upon without a prayerful, teachable spirit, the plainest passages will be wrested from their true meaning. The whole Bible should be given to the people just as it reads.

God gave the sure word of prophecy; angels and even Christ Himself came to make known to Daniel and John things that "must shortly come to pass." Revelation 1:1. Important matters that concern our salvation were not revealed in a way to perplex and mislead the honest seeker after truth. The Word of God is plain to all who study it with prayerful heart.

By the cry, Liberality,\* men are blinded to the devices of their adversary. He succeeds in supplanting the Bible by human speculations; the law of God is set aside; and the churches are under the bondage of sin while they claim to be free.

God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in discoveries in science. But even the greatest minds, if not guided by the Word of God, become bewildered in their attempts to investigate the relations of science and revelation.

Human knowledge is partial and imperfect; therefore many are unable to harmonize their views of science with Scripture. Many accept mere theories as scientific facts, and they think that God's Word is to be tested by "science falsely so called." 1 Timothy 6:20. Because they cannot explain the Creator and His works by natural laws, Bible history is regarded as unreliable. Those who doubt the Old and New Testaments too often go a step further and doubt the existence of God. Having let go their anchor, they beat about on the rocks of infidelity.

It is a masterpiece of Satan's deceptions to keep men conjecturing in regard to that which God has not made known. Lucifer became dissatisfied because all the secrets of God's purposes were not confided to him, and he disregarded that which was revealed. Now he seeks to imbue men with the same spirit and lead them also to disregard the direct commands of God.

### **Truth Rejected Because It Involves a Cross**

The less spiritual and self-denying the doctrines presented, the greater the favor with which they are received. Satan is ready to supply the heart's desire, and he palms off deception in the place of truth. It was thus that the papacy gained its power over the minds of men. And by rejection of the truth because it involves a cross, Protestants are following the same path. All who study convenience and policy, that they may not be at

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\* Broadminded acceptance or toleration of views regardless of whether they agree with the Bible.

variance with the world, will be left to receive "damnable heresy" for truth. 2 Peter 2:1. He who looks with horror upon one deception will readily receive another.\*

### **Dangerous Errors**

Among the most successful agencies of the great deceiver are the lying wonders of spiritualism. As men reject the truth they fall a prey to deception.

Another error is the doctrine that denies the deity of Christ, claiming that He had no existence before His advent to this world. This theory contradicts the statements of our Saviour concerning His relationship with the Father and His pre-existence. It undermines faith in the Bible as a revelation from God. If men reject the testimony of Scripture concerning the deity of Christ, it is vain to argue with them; no argument, however conclusive, could convince them. None who hold this error can have a true conception of Christ or of the plan of God for man's redemption.

Still another error is the belief that Satan has no existence as a personal being, that the name is used in Scripture merely to represent men's evil thoughts and desires.

The teaching that the second advent of Christ is His coming to each individual at death is a device to divert minds from His personal coming in the clouds of heaven. Satan has thus been saying, "Behold, he is in the secret chambers" (see Matthew 24:23-26), and many have been lost by accepting this deception.

Again men of science claim that there can be no real answer to prayer; this would be a violation of law—a miracle, and miracles have no existence. The universe, say they, is governed by fixed laws, and God Himself does nothing contrary to these laws. Thus they represent God as bound by His own laws—as if divine laws could exclude divine freedom.

Were not miracles wrought by Christ and His apostles? The same Saviour is as willing to listen to the prayer of faith as when He walked visibly among men. The natural cooperates with the supernatural. It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask.

### **Skepticism Toward the Bible**

Erroneous doctrines among the churches remove landmarks fixed by the Word of God. Few stop with the rejection of a single truth. The majority set aside one after another of the principles of truth, until they become infidels.

The errors of popular theology have driven many a soul to skepticism. It is impossible for him to accept doctrines which outrage one's sense of justice, mercy, and benevolence. Since these are represented as the teaching of the Bible, he refuses to receive it as the Word of God.

The Word of God is looked upon with distrust because it reproves and condemns sin. Those unwilling to obey its requirements endeavor to overthrow its authority. Not a few become infidels in order to justify neglect of duty. Others, too ease-loving to accomplish anything which requires self-denial, secure a reputation for superior wisdom by criticizing the Bible.

Many feel it is a virtue to stand on the side of unbelief, skepticism, and infidelity. But underneath an appearance of candor will be found self-confidence and pride. Many

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\* In the complete book, *The Great Controversy*, readers will find the story of how most of the Christian world gradually departed from the teachings of the Bible.

delight in finding something in the Scriptures to puzzle the minds of others. Some at first reason on the wrong side from a mere love of controversy. But having openly expressed unbelief, they unite with the ungodly.

### **Sufficient Evidence**

God has given in His Word sufficient evidence of its divine character. Yet finite minds are inadequate fully to comprehend the purposes of the Infinite One. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Romans 11:33. Still, we can discern boundless love and mercy united to infinite power. Our Father in heaven will reveal to us as much as it is for our good to know; beyond that we must trust the Hand that is omnipotent, the Heart that is full of love.

God will never remove all excuse for unbelief. All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them. And those who refuse to obey until every objection has been removed will never come to the light. The unrenewed heart is at enmity with God. But faith is inspired by the Holy Spirit and will flourish as it is cherished. No man can become strong in faith without determined effort. If men permit themselves to cavil, they will find doubt becoming more confirmed.

But those who doubt and distrust the assurance of His grace dishonor Christ. They are unproductive trees that shut away the sunlight from other plants, causing them to droop and die under the chilling shadow. The lifework of these persons will appear as a never-ceasing witness against them.

There is but one cause for those to pursue who honestly desire to be freed from doubts. Instead of questioning that which they do not understand, let them give heed to the light which already shines upon them, and they will receive greater light.

Satan can present a counterfeit so closely resembling the truth that it deceives those willing to be deceived, who desire to shun the sacrifice demanded by the truth. But it is impossible for him to hold under his power one soul who honestly desires, at whatever cost, to know the truth. Christ is the truth, the "Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 1:9; 7:17.

The Lord permits His people to be subjected to the fiery ordeal of temptation, not because He takes pleasure in their distress, but because this is essential to their final victory. He could not, consistently with His own glory, shield them from temptation, for the object of the trial is to prepare them to resist all the allurements of evil. Neither wicked men nor devils can shut out God's presence from His people if they will confess and put away their sins and claim His promises. Every temptation, open or secret, may be successfully resisted, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6.

"Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" 1 Peter 3:13. Satan is well aware that the weakest soul who abides in Christ is more than a match for the hosts of darkness. Therefore he seeks to draw away the soldiers of the cross from their strong fortification, while he lies in ambush, ready to destroy all who venture upon his ground. Only in reliance upon God and obedience to all His commandments can we be secure.

No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer. Entreat the Lord for wisdom to understand His Word. Satan is an expert in quoting Scripture, placing his own

interpretation on passages by which he hopes to cause us to stumble. We should study with humility of heart. While we must constantly guard against the devices of Satan, we should pray in faith continually: "Lead us not into temptation." Matthew 6:13.

## Sources

In the list below, under each chapter in the current work are listed the source chapters in *The Great Controversy* that correspond to it:

Chapter 1, “Why Is There Suffering?”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 29

Chapter 2, “Hope for Triumph Over Evil”

*The Great Controversy*, chapters 30, 31

Chapter 3, “Dangerous Seductions”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 32

Chapter 4, “Everlasting Life”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 33

Chapter 5, “False Hope”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 34

Chapter 6, “True Peace”

*The Great Controversy*, chapters 7, 27

Chapter 7, “Our Only Safeguard”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 37

Chapter 8, “In Defense of the Truth”

*The Great Controversy*, chapters 3, 25, 26

Chapter 9, “Real Hope”

*The Great Controversy*, chapters 1, 17, 36, 38, 39

Chapter 10, “The Great Rescue”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 40

Chapter 11, “Victory of Love”

*The Great Controversy*, chapter 42



A revealing  
look at the  
battle between  
good and  
evil — and  
who wins.

The

Great

Hope





# Younger Generation Church

YG is the vibrant young adult ministry of the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our mission is to deepen our devotion to Christ Jesus by pursuing INTIMACY with GOD, experiencing COMMUNITY with each other, and inspiring those around us with the HOPE of GRACE. [www.YGchurch.com](http://www.YGchurch.com)



## How it all began

YG began just after the turn of the century as a high-energy, contemporary worship service highlighting multimedia, upbeat music, and timely, creative messages – all focused on reaching young adults. Today, YG transcends age and program boundaries, making authentic efforts to foster the great commandment and great commission in new generations. [www.vimeo.com/channels/ygchurch](http://www.vimeo.com/channels/ygchurch)



## Intimacy

**We are wholeheartedly pursuing a 24/7 experience of the living GOD. Our worship is for His fame.** Each week Younger Generation Church offers a powerful worship experience, Saturday mornings, 10:15 am [Central], where we authentically gather to focus our attention and adoration on Christ Jesus. [www.YGchurch.com](http://www.YGchurch.com)



## Community

**We express best who GOD is by doing life together well. Our relationships express His love.** Younger Generation Church enjoys LIFEgroups affording our members an opportunity to build inspiring community and foster healthy relationships. We love having fun and taking time to enjoy each other's company. [www.facebook.com/ygchurch](http://www.facebook.com/ygchurch)



## Grace

**We are compelled to share the hope we have with others. Our compassionate witness reveals His Good News as real.** Younger Generation Church generously shares the grace of Jesus Christ with whomever we might serve. Feeding the hungry, encouraging the orphan, consoling the widow—being grace dispensers to the least of these bring us joy. @YGChurch