

THE 7 BIG QUESTIONS DISCUSSION GROUP GUIDE

6

Session Six: Is the Bible Reliable?

Social Time

Take ten minutes for the group to catch up and reconnect over snacks and refreshments. Then, after gathering everyone into a comfortable circle, share something like the following Introduction.

Introduction

The reliability of the Bible is being challenged on multiple fronts. At this point in history, an intelligent and thorough conversation about the reliability of Scripture is essential. Jews and Christians hinge their faith squarely on the words of the Bible. Therefore, if the Bible is not reliable, the implications for these faiths are significant. On the other hand, if the Bible is a reliable record of historical events (not to mention theological principles), then the entire world must consider God's plan as recorded in it. Let's watch the first video together.

Video 1: *Pulse of the World on the Bible*

This video is a 2.5-minute survey of many people's responses to this question.

Questions for Discussion

- Did you identify with anyone's expressed views in the film? If so, who and what resonated with you?
- What does it mean that "80 percent of Americans identify the Bible as sacred literature yet only 43 percent of Christians firmly believe the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches"?

Video 2: *The Curiosity Collective: Is the Bible Reliable?*

This is a 10-minute collection of subject matter experts discussing the question "Is the Bible reliable?" It displays the various questions, struggles, and perspectives of these individuals regarding this week's topic. See what they have to say and discuss it.

Questions for Discussion

After watching the video, choose from this list of questions or ask some of your own to facilitate discussion. There's no need to limit your discussion to these questions or to feel pressured to cover all of them in the time you have.

- In what ways can you identify with any of the stories in *The Curiosity Collective*? What did you find intriguing or compelling?
- What are a few of the various sources of truth that people consider?
- If someone asked you to describe the story of the Bible, what would you say?
- Do you think it's possible that a book could be inspired by God? Why or why not?
- As quoted in the film, how might it be possible that the Bible is “the true human story that underlies our experience and our existence”?
- How relevant is the Bible to your everyday life?
- What might make you inclined to rely on the Bible as a source of truth or guidance in your life?

Wrap-Up

Thoughts to Share with the Group

To the best of your ability, summarize the main points of your group's discussion. Or, if you are more comfortable, use the text below as a launching pad for concluding the session.

The Bible is understood in a variety of ways: a book of myths, a violent story about an evil god, a book of wisdom about life, the living Word of God, a legal document that prescribes every area of life. But it's more than that. It also claims to be God-breathed. And through fulfilled prophecy, it has shown itself to be something beyond just human creation—indeed, perhaps even supernatural.

Isaiah 40:8 says, “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” In other words, this writer seems to think that there is something special about this book—that it will outlast nature. Another passage states unequivocally that the Bible is “God-breathed.” If any of this is true, then clearly the Bible is worth our sincere consideration.

Follow-Up Resources

As you wrap up this session, share or summarize these bullets:

- Acknowledge that with a topic as big as this, there is no way to answer the question comprehensively.
- Inform the group that you'll be sending some follow-up resources so people can continue to explore God.
- Thank people for joining the discussion, and invite them to stick around if they want to continue the conversation.

Explore More on the Bible

The following resources are designed for deeper exploration into the topic of the Bible. If you are doing this series offline, you can e-mail these resources to your group after the session. Simply copy this section and paste it into an e-mail.

Videos

- What Is the Bible?
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/video-what-is-the-bible>)
- Agnostic
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/agnostic-video>)

Articles

- Is the Bible Still Relevant?
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/is-the-bible-still-relevant>)
- How to Read the Bible
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/how-to-read-the-bible>)

Daily Stream of Inspiration

- 40 Most Popular Bible Verses
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/40-most-popular-bible-verses>)

White Paper

- A Deeper Look at If the Bible Is Reliable
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/is-the-bible-reliable-paper>)

Recommended Books

- *Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, Craig Blomberg
(<http://amzn.to/146tzQk>)
- *Yes or No? Straight Answers to Tough Questions About Christianity*, Peter Kreeft
(<http://amzn.to/146tGv4>)

Additional Content on the Bible

- “Bible,” Explore God
(<http://www.exploreogod.com/bible>)

Scripture Focus

Isaiah 40:8 says, “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.”

In what ways might the Bible be “offering a better story, a story to help make sense of our crazy human existence”? If you keep a journal, take some time to note your responses to these questions there.