

Discussion Guide

Wrestling with God

Chapter 1: Why Believe a 2,000-Year-Old Book?

1. Faith in God, like all relationships, requires a personal commitment transcending the evidence. Do you wish that faith could be more certain? Why or why not?
2. Skeptics of biblical authority often allege that the Scriptures contradict themselves. Can you think of other motivations for their attacks on God's Word?
3. As you have seen, the manuscript evidence for biblical authority is remarkable. What more could God have done to give us his Word in a way we would trust? Why do you think he transmitted the Bible to us as he did?
4. How do you think a skeptic would respond to the evidence from fulfilled prophecy? How does this evidence relate to the definition of faith we've considered?
5. Do you think that Christians often take the gift of God's Word for granted? Do you? What could be done to encourage greater reverence for Scripture?

Chapter 2: If God Is Real, Why Aren't We Sure?

1. How might skeptics answer the argument for God's existence from creation? How could a Christian respond?
2. Some skeptics claim that the theory of evolution makes the design argument irrelevant. What do you think? Why?
3. Human morality can be explained as an example of self-preservation. How would you defend the moral argument from this allegation?
4. An atheist might ask how a Christian accounts for evil and suffering in the world. A Christian can counter by asking how an atheist accounts for good in a world without God. Do you think this response would be effective? Why?
5. Skeptics ask why we don't have proof that God exists. What more could God do to prove his existence to you today?

Chapter 3: If Christianity Is True, Why Aren't Christians Better People?

1. Why do you think skeptics often confuse Christianity with other world religions? How does this confusion advance their argument?

2. Good people who refuse to trust in God often claim that they don't need religion to be moral. How would you respond to them?

3. This chapter argues that Christianity's growth in the face of persecution is strong evidence for its truth and relevance. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

4. How would you assess the claim that faith in God is a relationship that cannot be proven, only experienced?

Chapter 4: Is Jesus Really God?

1. Do you think that non-Christian evidence for Jesus would be persuasive for a skeptic? Why or why not?

2. In defending the deity of Christ, how would early Christian evidence for Jesus strengthen or weaken the argument?

3. Critics sometimes argue that Jesus never claimed to be God. What is your response?

4. How would a skeptic respond to evidence regarding the historicity of the Resurrection? How would you answer this objection?

Chapter 5: Is Jesus the Only Way to God?

1. Postmodern thinkers deny the existence of absolute truth; critics counter that this is an absolute truth claim. What do you think the postmodern person would say to that?

2. According to this chapter, demonstrating Jesus' relevance is a Christian's best response to the postmodern denial of objective truth. Do you agree or disagree?

3. How could you demonstrate the practical relevance of Christian faith today?

4. What would you say to someone who claims that all religions teach the same truth and lead to the same God?

Chapter 6: Where Was God When My Father Died?

1. Have you personally experienced innocent suffering in your life? How has this issue challenged your faith? How has it changed it?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of attributing some evil and suffering to the work of Satan today?
3. In your experience, how is the free-will approach to suffering strong? How is it weak?
4. In what ways has suffering strengthened your character?
5. Does the fact of God's presence help you with the problem of evil and suffering? In what way?

Chapter 7: When Suffering Makes No Sense

1. Why does suffering tend to isolate us?
2. If God treated us fairly, what negative consequences would you have experienced recently?
3. In your view, does freedom require consequences? Why or why not? How does freedom relate to the problem of evil and suffering?
4. Is the promise of a future reward relevant to your present suffering? Why or why not?
5. This chapter claims that God redeems all that he allows. Does this assertion help you with problems you're facing today? Does it bring up more questions?

Chapter 8: Did God Cause My Father's Death?

1. Some people believe that God determines everything that happens. Others say that our freedom is the final determining factor in our life experiences. What do you think?
2. This chapter says that God has chosen to limit himself to the freedom he has given us. Do you agree or disagree? How is this argument relevant to the problem of evil and suffering?
3. Do you believe that God causes all natural suffering? Why or why not?
4. Do you agree that God warns his children when the suffering is specifically the result of divine judgment? Why or why not? Can you think of any modern-day examples of this?
5. Who in your experience has modeled faith in the face of personal tragedy? What have you learned from them about God's justice and love?

Chapter 9: What Happens to Those Who Never Hear?

1. How would you respond to the claims of a Christian universalist?
2. Is natural revelation relevant to the problem of the unevangelized? Why or why not?
3. Critique the suggestion that supernatural evangelism plays a significant role in answering the question of the unevangelized.
4. Some theologians believe that God will share the gospel with the unevangelized after their death. What kind of impact would that kind of thinking have on the priority of missions and evangelism?
5. This chapter suggests that God reaches those we cannot or will not. Would this approach affect your willingness to sacrifice for the cause of world missions? Why or why not?

Chapter 10: Does Prayer Really Work?

1. Do you think that prayer changes God? Why or why not?
2. How does praying prepare you to receive what God intends to give you?
3. The chapter suggests that intercessory prayer cannot violate the freedom of the person for whom you're praying. Will that change the way you pray for people? How so?
4. After reading this chapter, are you excited about praying more? Why or why not?

Chapter 11: Why Doesn't God Always Give Us What We Ask For?

1. Why do you think God wants us to pray continually?
2. Why is it important to God that we pray for his glory? How does that kind of praying benefit us?
3. Can you think of a time when God did not give you what you asked, but gave you something better in its place? How does this experience relate to the urgency of prayer?
4. This chapter suggests that your future prayers can affect past events. What do you think of this idea? How is it relevant to the priority of prayer today?

5. Are you waiting for God to answer a prayer today? After reading this chapter, are you more convinced or less convinced that he will do just that?

