

Journey of



www.bigskyfellowship.org



Discovery

Where are you in your spiritual journey?

Every human being is on a spiritual journey. We ponder the origins of the universe and wonder if life has any true purpose. Some follow religious systems thrust upon them by family or political force. Their path is good works and blind allegiance. Some use their personal freedom for self-indulgence with no care or thought of anything beyond themselves.

Still others are swayed by human philosophy, where truth is relative and situational. Some choose agnosticism, because they doubt a God would allow suffering, and others choose to totally reject any concept of God and identify themselves as atheist. They settle in their minds that there is no God, yet their basic questions remain and new ones arise. If there is no God, then why be good? If life is the result of random, unexplained spontaneous processes, what is the meaning of life? If there is no Creator, why not fulfill every lust of the human nature without any concern for consequences?

Even science has become an adversary to faith, but what if they actually compliment one other? Modern scientists assume there must be an answer that precludes any divine involvement. Any evidence of an intelligent designer is rejected and any deviation from the presumptions of the scientific elite is called ignorance. Yet, legitimate scientific questions remain. How did order form out of chaos? How did billions of random processes over billions of years evolve into a universe and a unique planet that sustains so many interrelated life forms with the right atmosphere? Why do we base our theories on thousands of assumptions that cannot be measured by the scientific method? Why does everything, even down to the complexities of the human DNA all appear to be the work of an intelligent designer?

Is there a God? Has He revealed Himself? Is there absolute Truth? Do all religions lead to the same God? Do all religions teach the same thing?

How do you discover these answers? Are they worth exploring? Have you ever questioned what you believe? How do you know what you believe is true?

The Journey of Discovery is a tool for you to explore the basic claims of biblical faith with someone on the same journey. They have found the evidence of the Bible compelling and a relationship with Jesus genuine. Their role is to listen and to understand the obstacles you face. They may not know all the answers, but they are willing to seek them with you.



Are you a SEEKER?

A *seeker* is someone who is open to spiritual things. They still have obstacles to faith, but God is drawing them and they want answers. A seeker is willing to explore what the Bible says, but they want to ask their questions without feeling like they are being judged. We understand. Your life experiences may have left you skeptical. You may have doubts about the authenticity of the Bible. You may see those who claim to be Christians as hypocrites. What about other religions? What about science?

Our greatest desire is for you to know and love God, so we are willing to open up our lives to you. No question is off limits. You have been given this booklet by someone who cares about you. They have a relationship with God, through Jesus Christ. This person may not have all the answers, but they are ready to help you find them.

We have also found www.truelife.org to be a great resource. This site hosts quality videos, which examine the self-authenticating claims of the Bible from a historical, logical, philosophical, and scientific perspective.

A Journey of Discovery

Will you give us 4 weeks to explore the claims of Scripture?
Will you make the following commitments?

- **Read 1 chapter a day from the Gospel of John and write down your questions and thoughts.** There are 21 chapters, so you will have **21 days with Jesus**. You will discover who Jesus said He was/is and you will have to decide if you believe it. Was He just a good man or a good teacher, or was He truly the Son of God?
- 3
- **Meet with your discipleship partner at least once a week for an hour to discuss what you have read and ask your questions.** There are five main discovery questions. Use them to focus on the meaning of each passage and to gain understanding and perspective. Critique what the Bible says and evaluate it for yourself.
 1. **What does the text say about God?**
 2. **What did you learn about mankind/yourself?**
 3. **What did you enjoy or appreciate in the text?**
 4. **What troubled you in the text?**
 5. **What did you not understand?**
 - **Go to www.truelife.org and seek answers to your questions.** Examine the evidence with an open mind.

If you are willing to make these **3 commitments**, we are willing to join you in your *Journey of Discovery*. There are no strings attached. If you reject the claims of Christ, we will still love you. You are not obligated to go any further. If the door is still open, we will walk with you for however long it takes or however long you are willing. If not, we will respect your decision and continue to pray that door will open again in the future.

Will you embark on this *Journey of Discovery*? Will you take the **FIRST STEP**? Sign the covenant below indicating your commitment with your discipleship partner.

Make a Plan!

Pick a time and place for your first meeting. Choose a location where your discussion will be free of unnecessary distractions. Make this time a priority. Also, set aside 15-20 minutes each day for your reading. Do you have a Bible for the journey?

Let's begin with an outline of the Bible we call the *Roadmap*.

Roadmap

An OVERVIEW of the BIBLE

Satan
& the fallen angels
are cast out of
heaven.

Genesis

Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

Joshua

Judges
& **Ruth**

1&2 Samuel
1&2 Kings
1&2 Chronicles
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

Creation — God created Man in His own image & with the ability to make choices. Man rebelled against God. The FALL of man brought a separation between God and man. Despite our sin, God promised to redeem us. **This is the story of the Bible.** The God of Justice would provide the sacrifice for sin needed. Throughout the Bible, God punishes wickedness, but at the CROSS He poured out His wrath on Himself, in our place. It is by grace you are saved through faith. It is the gift of God.

Flood — God destroys the earth because of the wickedness of man. This changed the atmosphere & the entire landscape of the earth.

Job

2090 Abraham — God chose Abraham. From his seed, the Savior would come. Abraham believed God by faith & it was credited to him as righteousness.

Isaac

Jacob & Esau — Jacob becomes Israel - 12 Tribes

Joseph

430 Years of Captivity in Egypt

1525 Moses Born — He was placed in a basket in the river. Pharaoh's House, Flees to Midian, Burning Bush, 10 plagues, Red Sea, 10 Commandments
Writes 1st Five Books of the Bible — 40 years in the desert

1405 Conquest of Promised Land

Joshua - the Jewish people drive out & destroy evil/idols.

1373-1043 Judges rule Israel

The people fell into a cycle of living in rebellion, seeking repentance, God giving deliverance with Judge, then repeat.

1043 Samuel anoints Saul as the 1st King

1011 King David

971 King Solomon - TEMPLE!!!

931 Divided Kingdom

722 Northern Captivity

Northern Prophets

860-852 Elijah
852 Elisha
840 Obadiah
830-815 Joel
785-770 Jonah
765-755 Amos
755-714 Hosea
739-692 Isaiah
736-701 Micah

REPENT & Return

Timeline

Scale adjusted p.5 - Larger.

Lamentations

Southern Prophets

627-575 Jeremiah
605-536 Daniel
593-560 Ezekiel
438-415 Malachi

Page 5

500

400

300

God is silent 400 Years

200 BC

100 BC

0 AD

27 Books of the New Testament

100 AD

Future

606 Babylon Attacks Jerusalem
597 2nd attack of Babylon
586 TEMPLE Destroyed
Southern Captivity

539 Fall of Babylon
536 Return/Start Temple
520 Work Resumes
516 Temple Finished

Esther
Ezra
Nehemiah

Secular History

Alexander the Great
Maccabean Revolt
Rome Defeats Greece

Jesus is the apex of human history. He is the fulfillment of hundreds of promises & prophecies. From beginning to end, the Bible is about Jesus.

4 BC Jesus is Born!

34 AD Crucifixion & Resurrection

The Church begins.
Bible completed by 95 AD
with Revelation.

The Bible promises Jesus will return.

A Journey of Discovery

Read 1 chapter a day from the book of John. Use these questions to discover what is in the text. Write down your observations and share them with your discipleship partner each week and ask your questions.

Basic Discovery Questions:

1. What does the text say about God?
2. What did you learn about mankind/yourself?
3. What did you enjoy or appreciate in the text?
4. What troubled you in the text?
5. What did you not understand?

Week 1 – John 1-7

Observations & Questions

Go to www.truelife.org and click on the *Answers* tab at the top. Choose the videos on *God*. Watch these short videos and write down your questions.

This week, your discipleship partner will highlight these verses using the Basic Discovery Questions.

Jesus is God: John 1:1-14

Jesus gives spiritual birth: John 3:1-21

Jesus is Living Water: John 4:1-30

NUGGET:

As you read the Gospel of John, you will see that God reveals Himself as a complex unity. He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. He is one God, yet He displays His nature in 3 Persons. All are co-equal and eternal, without beginning or end. The names of God relate the relationship of each Person within the Godhead.

Respond to this statement.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3:16-18

Week 2 – John 8-14

Read 1 chapter a day from the book of John. Use these questions to discover what is in the text. Write down your observations and share them with your discipleship partner each week and ask your questions.

Basic Discovery Questions:

1. What does the text say about God?
2. What did you learn about mankind/yourself?
3. What did you enjoy or appreciate in the text?
4. What troubled you in the text?
5. What did you not understand?

Observations & Questions

Go to www.truelife.org and click on the *Answers* tab at the top. Choose the videos on *Truth*. Watch this video and write down your questions.

This week, your discipleship partner will highlight these verses using the Basic Discovery Questions.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd: John 10:1-21

Jesus is the Resurrection & the Life: John 11:1-44

Jesus is the Servant: John 13:1-17

NUGGET:

God is infinite, so He cannot be fully explained or understood, yet we can know Him and identify with Him in the ways He has described Himself. Our attempt to define God, based on human wisdom, falls short and is insufficient. God defines Himself. The Gospel of John is a beautiful picture of the unity and submission within the Persons of the Godhead. If God were actually three different gods, then they would be competing for supremacy from one another, but this is not true. There is no division because God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are of the same essence and substance, yet God functions in 3 distinct ways. He is THREE in ONE.

Respond to this statement:

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

Week 3 – John 15-21

Read 1 chapter a day from the book of John. Use these questions to discover what is in the text. Write down your observations and share them with your discipleship partner each week and ask your questions.

Basic Discovery Questions:

1. What does the text say about God?
2. What did you learn about mankind/yourself?
3. What did you enjoy or appreciate in the text?
4. What troubled you in the text?
5. What did you not understand?

Observations & Questions

Go to www.truelife.org and click on the *Answers* tab at the top. Choose the videos on *Jesus*. Watch these videos. Write down your questions.

This week, your discipleship partner will highlight these verses using the Basic Discovery Questions.

Jesus is the Vine: John 15:1-17

Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for sin: John 19

Jesus is the risen Lord: John 20-21

NUGGET:

If Jesus was not God, then He did not rise from the dead. The Bible even says in 1 Corinthians 15 that if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then the teaching of Christ and faith in Him are useless. It also says we are then false witnesses about God. Our faith in Christ is futile and we are still in our sin. However, if Jesus is God and He did rise from the dead, then that **changes everything!** We are now accountable to Him as God and everything He said is absolutely true.

Respond to this statement:

Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." John 18:37

Week 4 – The Romans Road

Your *Journey of Discovery* has led you to take 21 days with Jesus through the Gospel of John. In your final week, your quest for TRUTH will take you through some selected passages from the book of Romans. Read 1 passage a day. Ponder these verses carefully and discuss them with your discipleship partner at your final meeting.

Your Roadmap: The book of Romans is a letter to the church in Rome from the Apostle Paul. His given name was actually Saul. He was a strict Jewish Pharisee (a religious zealot). As Saul, he persecuted Christians and rejected Christ. Then, he met Jesus on the road to Damascus and his life was never the same. God even changed his name to Paul. You can read his story in Acts 9. In Romans, Paul describes salvation from a historical perspective with which the Jewish people could identify. The bottom line is that righteousness is not earned based on following the Law or by good works. It is given from God on the basis of faith, based on what Jesus did on the cross for all who believe in His name.

Basic Discovery Questions:

1. **What does the text say about God?**
2. **What did you learn about mankind/yourself?**
3. **What did you enjoy or appreciate in the text?**
4. **What troubled you in the text?**
5. **What did you not understand?**

Go to www.truelife.org and click on the *Answers* tab at the top. Choose the videos on *DEATH* and *Salvation*. What is your response or questions?

Romans 1:1-18

Romans 3:21-31

Romans 5:1-11

Romans 6:15-23

Romans 10:1-15

What is God doing in you?

- Are you convinced that Jesus is God's Son and that He died on the cross in your place, for your sin?
- Do you believe He arose from the dead triumphant over sin & death, so that you can have eternal life?
- Are you broken over your sin? Are you repentant?
- Have you placed your faith in Christ as your only hope?
- Are you ready to follow (submit & obey) Jesus as King?

If you answered yes, then let's continue *First Steps*.

If not, are you willing to continue the journey in *First Steps* to discover what it means to follow Jesus?

If you are not ready and are unwilling to continue, we accept your decision. We are here to continue the journey when you are ready.