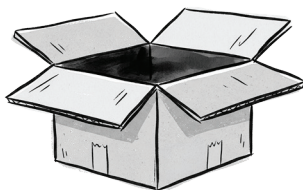


UNBOXING GOD

50 DAYS OF SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY

Small Group Lessons



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INTRO

This study guide material is meant to be your servant, not your master. You don't have to answer every question; the point is to develop spiritually, not to check off every section like a test. Be sure to allow adequate time to pray at the end of each meeting.

Look over these questions before your group meets so that you'll be prepared for group discussion. Jot down notes about how you might answer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 1

CONNECT

Briefly introduce yourself to the others and share how you became part of this group.

1. What do you hope to get out of this study? How do you hope to personally change?

2. How does your soul feel?
 - ___ Dry and parched
 - ___ Enduring a drought but rain clouds are on the horizon
 - ___ It's dry season, but there are still waterholes here and there
 - ___ The rivers are flowing but the land needs irrigating
 - ___ Luxuriant, verdant, soaked with a sense of God's love



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 1

Available at *tlc.org/unboxingGod*

3. René quoted a pastor who said, “The greatest spiritual need of Christians today is to discover the identity of the true God. If believers really understood the personality and nature of God, it would revolutionize their lives.” What is your response to that statement?

4. How did you picture God when you were a child?

5. These are some of the attributes of God we will be studying in this series:

God is Omnipotent (All-Powerful)
God is Omnipresent (Present Everywhere)
God is Omniscient (All-Knowing)
God is Immutable (Unchanging)
God is Sovereign (In Control)
God is Holy
God is Love
God is Good
God is Merciful

6. Which quality of God feels the easiest for you to believe in?

7. Which quality of God feels the hardest for you to trust?

8. What do you think gets in the way of people truly thinking about God?

___ Digital distractions
___ Constant news
___ Long work hours
___ Family pressures
___ School homework
___ Trust issues with religion
___ The idea that science explains all of life
___ Religious people thinking they know it all already

To know God's attributes—to know *what God is like*—is not a side topic of the Christian faith. It is *central*. Scripture's aim is not simply to tell us stories or inspire us with heroic tales, but to introduce us to God so we can have a *relationship* with Him.

ENGAGE

Open your Bibles and have someone read *Psalms 42* to the group.

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you describe your soul's current "thirst" or longing for God?

10. Have you ever felt like life's "breakers and waves" were sweeping over you?

11. The psalmist reminds himself, "put your hope in God." What is the connection between *knowing more about God's character and attributes* and *putting your hope in Him*?

APPLY

12. In what area of your life do you need to "hope in God" right now?

PRAYER

Take prayer requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 2

CONNECT

13. How does God speak through creation to you?



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 2

Available at *tlc.org/unboxingGod*

14. Have you had an experience of God's glory through creation this week? What happened?

15. What prevents you from putting on those “polarized lenses” and turning daily life into an act of worship?

ENGAGE

Open your Bibles and have someone read *Psalms 29*.

16. What impresses you about Psalm 29?

17. What are the most impressive displays of nature's power you have witnessed? How do these displays remind you about God's power?

18. Where today did you see evidence of the power of God?
19. How does thinking about the omnipotence of God impact you?
20. What is the promise in Psalm 29:11?
21. What situation are you facing where you need to claim that promise?
22. When we don't focus on God's omnipotence, what negative or destructive thoughts or emotions might we have?

APPLY

23. Although you may theoretically believe that God is omnipotent, how does your life demonstrate your belief; in other words, what powerful things do you *expect* God to do in your life?
24. What is a situation in which you feel powerless right now, and what step(s) can you take this week to give that to God?

Assignment: This week, look around and notice whatever strikes you as an example of God's creative power—especially if you've never noticed it before. *Intention* is a huge part of noticing God's omnipotence at work around you. Then notice the difference that noticing makes. How does it affect you to be looking for signs of God's power?

PRAYER

Take prayer requests/talk about answers to previous requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 3

CONNECT

1. Last week we talked about the habit of *noticing* signs of God's power all around you. Did you try that this past week? In what ways did you see God's power?



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 3

Available at tlc.org/unboxingGod

2. What can get in the way of staying aware of the constant presence of God with you?
3. How could *expecting* God to be present with you each day impact your outlook on life?

ENGAGE

Open your Bibles and have someone read *Psalms 139:1-18*.

4. These verses speak of God's presence in various places and times in life. Which of these images has the most impact to you right now-- and why?

David says that God is with him even if he tries to flee from God. Have you ever tried to run from God? What happened?

Read *Isaiah 43:1-5*. What is promised in those verses?

5. What is *not* promised?

6. What “waters, rivers, fires”, as Isaiah 43:1-5 puts it, have you gone through during which an awareness of God’s presence made a difference for you?

APPLY

7. Share with the group an area of your life where you would like to remember God’s presence. Have them write this down and agree to pray for you this week.

Assignment: Remind yourself each day this week, “The Lord is in this place”.

PRAYER

Take prayer requests/talk about answers to previous requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 4

CONNECT

1. Think of a time in your life when you saw true love in action. What did you see, and how did it show true love?
2. Have you ever struggled to accept God's love for you? How?



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 4

Available at tlc.org/unboxingGod

3. How would consistently believing that God is infinitely loving to the whole world change your emotions and attitude? Do you ever forget this?

ENGAGE

Have someone read these verses out loud:

For the LORD your God has arrived to live among you. He is a mighty Savior. He will rejoice over you with great gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will exult over you by singing a happy song. ZEPHANIAH 3:17 (TLB)

Let the beloved of the LORD rest secure in him, for he shields him all day long, and the one the LORD loves rests between his shoulders. DEUTERONOMY 33:12

4. Is it easy or difficult for you to believe “I am God’s Beloved!” Why? What difference do you think it would make to think this throughout a normal day, and really believe it?
5. Read *Psalms 136:1-3*. The phrase “His love endures forever” is repeated 26 times in this psalm. Why do you think we need to be reminded of this so frequently?
6. Read *1 John 4:7-21*. How does John define the very source of love in verses 7 and 8?
7. These verses say that no one has ever seen God, but when we love one another, God’s love is made manifest in us. How is God’s invisible love made visible through you? What does that look like in everyday life?
8. What specific obstacles make it hard for you to love difficult people in your life?
9. Verse 18 says that perfect love drives out fear. What kind of fear is John talking about, and how does God’s love push it out?

10. Where do you see fear active in our culture or community today, and how should a Christian response look different?
11. Verse 20 is blunt: you cannot love God if you hate your brother or sister. Why is our treatment of each other the ultimate test of our faith?

APPLY

12. What are some practical ways you can love with actions and truth, and not just words, this week?

Personal Application: Every day this week, thank God for His love to you, and show God's love to someone in a practical way.

Group Application: Choose a group "love project" and set an audacious goal! Suggestion: Give food and money to a local church food pantry or food bank, and agree as a group to give generously, sacrificially, and memorably!

PRAYER

Take prayer requests/talk about answers to previous requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 5

CONNECT

1. If you could have complete knowledge and expertise in one area of your life, what would that be and why?



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 5

Available at tlc.org/unboxingGod

2. Does God's omniscience scare you, reassure you, or frustrate you, and why?

ENGAGE

Open your Bibles and have someone read *Matthew 6:1-6*

3. What do these verses tell you about God's omniscience?
4. When we see God's omniscience as scary, we want to hide from Him. When Jesus says, "Your Heavenly Father sees what is done in secret", referring to your prayers and generosity, how is that reassuring?
5. Read *Hebrews 4:12-16*. Verse 13 says nothing is hidden, but all are completely open and exposed to God's eyes.

How does it make you feel to know that God sees your absolute truest self—including the parts you hide from others?

6. In verses 14–15, Jesus is revealed as our High Priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses. Because of Jesus, we can “approach the throne of grace with confidence.” What difference does it make for you to really believe that God *understands* you?
7. Hebrews 4 says we cannot hide anything from God, but He offers mercy when we step toward Him. How does an awareness of God’s omniscience help me get on the path of recovery more quickly following a fall?

APPLY

8. Since God is omniscient, in what area of your life do you need to surrender to His wisdom instead of your own?

Personal Application: This week, repeat this phrase to yourself often: “God knows and God cares,” Notice how it impacts you to remind yourself of this truth.

Group Application: Talk about your group “love project”. Have you agreed on a project, and have you set audacious personal and group goals for that project?

PRAYER

Take prayer requests/talk about answers to previous requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 6

CONNECT

1. What makes you anxious or worried? What are you anxious or worried about right now?
2. How could accepting and resting in the fact that God is sovereign--in total control--impact your attitude and hope in that situation?



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 6

Available at tlc.org/unboxingGod

3. How have you seen God, in His sovereignty, bring good from bad situations in your past?

ENGAGE

4. Read *Romans 8:28-29*. When you hear the phrase “God works all things together for good,” what is your initial reaction? Do you find it easy or difficult to believe in daily life?
5. Look closely at verses 28 and 29. According to Paul, what is the ultimate “good” that God is working all things

toward? How does this differ from the world's definition of "good" (e.g., comfort, wealth, happiness)?

6. Paul asks who can bring a charge against God's elect (v. 33-34). What are the voices (internal or external) that usually try to accuse or condemn you, and how does Jesus' position at the right hand of God answer those accusations?
7. In verse 35, Paul lists severe hardships (tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword). Of Paul's list of scary things in Romans 8:35, which scares you the most?
8. Why is it important that Paul *doesn't* promise Christians will escape these things, but rather promises we won't be separated from Christ *in* them?
9. Look at the comprehensive list in verses 38-39 (death, life, angels, rulers, things present, things to come...). Which of these areas do you struggle most to trust God with right now?

10. How would your coming week look different if you fully lived in the assurance that absolutely nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus?

11. How does a belief in God's sovereignty build hope and reduce fear?

APPLY

12. In what way are you trying to control God instead of allowing Him to control you (or someone you love)? What step can you take this week to surrender control to Him?

13. How has your group "love project" gone? What have you learned and experienced through this?

PRAYER

Take prayer requests/talk about answers to previous requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP LESSON 7

CONNECT

1. What is one area of your life that has changed the most over the last five years?
2. What is an item you own that has lasted a long time without breaking or changing?



WATCH THE VIDEO FOR WEEK 7

Available at tlc.org/unboxingGod

3. What physical changes have you seen in the city or county where you live?

ENGAGE

Read these verses out loud:

*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who **does not change** like shifting shadows.* JAMES 1:17

*Jesus Christ is **the same** yesterday and today and forever.*

HEBREWS 13:8

4. One of the most “other” attributes of God is that he does not change (theologians call this “immutability”). Every other thing in our existence changes. What difference does it make to you to believe God is totally reliable, faithful, steady, unchangeable?
5. Open your Bibles and have people read *Numbers 23:19-20*, *Malachi 3:6*, and *Hebrews 13:8*. Human emotions and personalities shift based on our circumstances, sleep, or stress. How does knowing that God never has a “bad day” or a shift in character change how you approach Him?
6. Read *Psalms 36:5-12*. The immutability of God is connected to His faithfulness. Because He never changes, He is always faithful. He remains faithful even when we are not. How does this truth relieve the pressure of feeling like you have to be “perfect” to keep God from walking away from you?
7. How does knowing God does not change give you hope and courage right now?

APPLY

8. What attribute of God that we studied in the last 50 days made the biggest impression on you? How did it impact you?

9. How has your view of God changed because of this study? How has simply thinking more about God impacted your life?
10. Which attribute of God do you continue to struggle with the most? Why?

PRAYER

Take prayer requests/talk about answers to previous requests and spend time in prayer.

SMALL GROUP IDEA

Consider organizing a fun get-together as a celebration for the end of this study. Have a meal together and share how you have grown.

Is your group planning to continue following this study? You can find great small group resources by emailing [*jim@tlc.org*](mailto:jim@tlc.org)

