



EXPLORE GOD
STUDY GUIDE
WEEK 1



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

John 14:6
Matthew 7:13-14

MAIN POINT:

Jesus said some controversial things about the way to follow God.

JESUS CONNECTION:

The only way to restore our broken relationship with God is to believe Jesus conquered death on the cross to rescue us from our sin.

@HopeHSM

1. READ
The Bible

Yessss! We are glad you are here because taking time on your own to study God's word is an amazing way to grow in your relationship with Him. Life with Jesus is the best life! Take a moment to pray and ask God to lead you as you study this Scripture; then read the Scripture (from your Bible or it's on the back).

2. OBSERVE

The Straight Facts

Who: _____

What: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

How: _____

What is Repetitive?

Highlight it

What is Contrast?

Underline it

3. INTERPRET

What Does the Text Mean?

Research answers using trusted sources like a Study Bible, BibleProject.com, BlueLetterBible.org, and/or Bible.org

What is the historical and/or cultural context of this Scripture?

What else do I know about the author, audience, or context of this passage?

What do key words mean in their original language?

What other Scripture might help me interpret this text?

What is this text's clearest meaning?

4. APPLY

Getting Personal

How do you relate to any of the characters, events, or words in this Scripture?

What truth(s) from this Scripture can you apply to your life right now?

What is God saying to you through this Scripture?



EXPLORE GOD TEACHING GUIDE

WEEK 1



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JESUS CONNECTION:

The only way to restore our broken relationship with God is to believe Jesus conquered death on the cross to rescue us from our sin.

THIS GUIDE IS FORMATTED TO HELP YOU INTRODUCE AND REFLECT ON THE TEACHING VIDEOS.

INTRODUCTION:

- **Series Overview:** We've all had questions about life and God: Is there a God? How can we know Him? Why does God allow pain and suffering? The answers to these questions really drive the purpose and direction of our lives, yet sometimes it's hard to know how to get these answers. Don't be intimidated if you don't have the answers - that's what we want to explore together!
- **Tonight's** question is a controversial one: "Is Christianity Too Narrow?"
- We are going to watch a video and discuss it together. I really encourage you all to pay attention and feel free to be real and share your thoughts when we process the video together.

WATCH THE VIDEO

TALK IT OUT

- After watching the video together, choose from this list of questions or ask some of your own to facilitate large group discussion. There is no need to feel pressure to cover all questions.
- Set up your Q & A time by saying something like, "We are going to process this video together. Before we talk through it, I just want to say that there might be some of us who will disagree with others – and that is fine. We want this to be an honest, safe space for each of us to be real and expression our opinions."
 - What did you connect with in the video?
 - What did you think about the elephant illustration? Do you think anyone or anything has the right to make the call from the king's viewpoint?
 - What seems harsh or hard to believe about saying that only one religion has it all figured out?
 - After watching this video, do you believe that Christianity is the only right religion, not the only right religion, or you just aren't sure? Why or why not?

WRAP IT UP

- Our main point today is: Jesus said some controversial things about the way for us to follow God.
- Here at Hope we believe: The only way to restore our broken relationship with God is to believe Jesus conquered death on the cross to rescue us from our sin.
- But we want to talk about this more, so I'm going to pray for us and we are going to transition into small group discussion time.
- Close in prayer: God, please be with us as we talk about and wrestle with tough and controversial questions. We love you, thank you for loving us and being with us. Amen.



EXPLORE GOD DISCUSSION GUIDE WEEK 2



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

John 14:6
Matthew 7:13-14

MAIN POINT:

Jesus said some controversial things about the way to follow God.

JESUS CONNECTION:

The only way to restore our broken relationship with God is to believe Jesus to conquered death on the cross rescue us from our sin.

LEADER CORNER

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to have a safe space to talk about if they believe Jesus is the only way to God and hear what we as Hope Community Church believe.

THINK ABOUT THIS

As leaders, we don't have to be afraid or worried when people ask questions, even questions about their faith and God. **A natural part of someone growing and owning their faith is asking questions.** You have a huge potential to help shape someone's faith development by pointing them in the right direction to learn how to answer deep questions of the soul. **The biggest questions only God is big enough to answer.** And God Himself says He is with those who are searching: "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." – Jeremiah 29:13 Today, take steps to make today's discussion PERSONAL. Why do YOU believe Jesus is who He says He is – the only way to the Father? Share that with your group.

THINGS TO KNOW

- Here are a few extra places you can point your students to in their search for answers:
- **ExploreGod.com**, where the videos we are watching are from, has TONS more.
- **"Why I Believe"** by Dr. Kennedy
- **"The Case for Faith: Student Edition"** by Lee Strobel

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

GET THEM TALKING

What are different things you've heard about whether Christianity is too narrow or not?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you connect with in the video?
2. What did you think about the elephant illustration? Do you think anyone or anything has the right to make the call from the king's viewpoint?

READ JOHN 14:6 & MATTHEW 7:13-14 and answer the following questions:

3. According to these verses, does Jesus believe all religions lead to the same place?
4. What can seem harsh about that? What seems clear about it?
5. How can we have a restored relationship with God through Jesus?
6. Do you believe that Christianity is the only right religion, not the only right religion, or you just aren't sure? Why or why not?
7. What insight(s) from the Bible can people hold onto while wrestling with this question?
8. How can we be there for others wrestling with this question?

NEXT STEP

We might be in different places on our beliefs about the Bible, but we can all take a next step closer to Jesus this week.

IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY – take time on your own this week to PRAY, to SEARCH, to LOOK FOR ANSWERS.

IF YOU ALREADY BELIEVE JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY – try praying for someone in your life who doesn't. And as a double dog dare challenge – share about the hope you have in Jesus with them.

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MAIN SCRIPTURE

John 14:6 (NIV)

“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV)

¹³“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

BONUS LEADER RESOURCE

WEEKLY TEXT IDEA:

This series we will give you a weekly text idea to send to your students with a little teaser about the topic. Reaching out to your group outside of small group is a way to show you care:

“Jesus said some pretty controversial things that not everyone agrees with. Come hang out with us tonight and let’s talk more about it!”