

The Really Good News
about
GOD



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Discussion and Study Guide

The Really Good News About God

Discussion and Study Guide

This small booklet may be used in a variety of ways as it contains a simple study guide for discussing “The Really Good News About God” as a whole, followed by separate study guides for each chapter of the book.

Each study guide has two parts – a Review and Reflection section followed by a Bible Study section for those who wish to explore the main ideas of the book more deeply.

The Review and Reflection sections would easily lend themselves to small groups of those who have already read the book and the Bible Study sections might encourage individuals to do some private research and thinking before joining with others to discuss their findings and opinions.

For those who wish to explore a chapter even more thoroughly, other quotes from the pages of “The Really Good News About God” could be selected as the focus of further study using the suggested Bible Study format. Indeed, some additional quotes are appended to get you started.

Whichever route you take, however you use this resource, be prepared to explore, question, research, debate. Be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as you seek to discover God’s truth about himself and his purpose and plans for his creation.

THE BOOK – “The Really Good News About God”

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of the book for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive while reading the book?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read the book?
4. In what ways did the book help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of the book?

BIBLE STUDY

On page 23, the author states his primary aim in writing “The Really Good News About God”.

“I wish to show that the God of love who created and is in control of our world has a loving purpose for it and has the power and determination to see his purpose accomplished.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support his view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character? Why?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the subject of “The Really Good News About God”, what further issues would need to be discussed to help you form one?

CHAPTER ONE – “God’s Unconditional, Unfailing Love”

(Chapter One discusses God’s extravagant love as the motivating factor for all that he does.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On page 35 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“I like to say that God’s love is unconditional and unfailing. He just can’t help himself. Love is his character, his nature. Love comes naturally to him, and everything he does is clothed in love and motivated by love.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character? Why?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

CHAPTER TWO – “God’s Supreme Authority”

(Chapter Two explores God’s sovereignty – his ability to do whatever he decides and to fully achieve his purpose for his creation.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On pages 88 and 89 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“God has a plan for all of us.

We have the authority to exercise our wills and make all the choices we want, but these will only determine the quality of the journey – they can only make the journey wonderful or dangerous. But our final destination, the ultimate outcome, has already been chosen by the Sovereign God, who loves us, wants the best for us and will make sure we get it.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

CHAPTER THREE – “God’s Awesome Plan”

(Chapter Three describes God’s purpose for his creation and the plans he has to achieve it.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On page 107 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“God is going to use Jesus Christ to bring all the universe into unity and harmony with himself. And this has been God’s plan, in his script, from the very beginning – even from before time began – the Bible reveals.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

CHAPTER FOUR – “God’s Champion Lifesaver”

(Chapter Four examines the role that Jesus Christ, God’s Son, plays in achieving God’s purpose.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On page 127 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“Jesus came to this planet to save us from death, the separation and independence from God that we inherited from Adam and Eve. He came to restore us to the original position God created us to have.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

CHAPTER FIVE – “God’s Merciful Judgement”

(Chapter Five investigates judgement and punishment, and shows how God uses these in his plans for restoring the creation to its original position and condition.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On page 170 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“The God of the Bible is not only a God of love, but has plans for all of his creation to eventually be reconciled to him and live in harmony with him forever.

So all his actions, including his judgements, are motivated by this love and are geared towards accomplishing his great purpose.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

CHAPTER SIX – “God - The Perfect Parent”

(Chapter Six uses the metaphor of a perfect parent to draw the conclusion that God really has good news for all of us.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On page 185 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“Personally, I find it much easier to love, worship and serve the One who is kind and forgiving and has my best interests at heart than someone who is presented as angry, vengeful and looking for reasons to exclude me from his amazing heaven.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

CHAPTER SEVEN – “Our On-Stage Role”

(Chapter Seven discusses how special we are and how we might respond to knowing this really good news about God.)

REVIEW and REFLECTION

1. What was the most striking feature of this chapter for you?
2. What new ideas did you receive by reading this chapter?
3. What personally challenged you or any of your previously-held ideas as you read this chapter?
4. In what ways did this chapter help you better understand God and His character?
5. What suggestions would you like to offer the author about improving the next edition of this chapter?

BIBLE STUDY

On pages 200 and 202 of “The Really Good News About God”, the author says,

“Being a special person with a special gift says that God has selected you to live in union with Jesus much earlier than most other people – you are a chosen one.”

“We get to spend the rest of our lives here being part of God’s production team on stage assisting Jesus in bringing the production to its finale.”

1. What Biblical texts and arguments does the author present to support this view?
2. What additional Biblical texts and/or arguments could have been used to support this view?
3. What Biblical texts and/or arguments could be used to contest this view or to present an alternative view?
4. Which of these views (the author’s and any alternatives) best fits *your* understanding of God and His character?
5. If all Scripture is inspired by God, how can the Biblical texts that are used to support other views be explained or harmonised with the Biblical texts that are used to support your view?
6. If you have not yet reached a firm view on the topic of this chapter, what further issues would need to be clarified to help you form one?

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

From page 47,

“Those God ‘destroyed’ were removed from the planet to prevent them from making things worse for themselves or leaving them where they could not resist the temptation to continue in their sinful ways.”

From page 55,

“To love someone is to genuinely desire the best for them – and as the opportunity arises, to do that best for them.”

From page 60,

“God’s influence on humankind is never zero, no matter how far from God any person might be.”

From page 73,

“To understand and appreciate God’s love, goodness, mercy, grace and forgiveness God knows we need to experience their absence or opposite.”

From page 78,

“Freewill is a myth. Not the ‘will’ part, but the ‘free’ part.”

From page 84,

“We have delegated authority, a limited authority delegated to us by God and we are accountable to him for how we exercise it.”

From page 123,

“Death is a separation, not the end ... It is just one event in our life’s journey.”

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

From page 145,

“Judgement is a decision or a verdict: not a sentence or a punishment. A judgement and its subsequent course of action are two connected, but quite separate, components of any legal system.”

From page 148,

“Because all people have already been forgiven – there is no price to pay.”

From page 167,

“If anyone had to go to hell forever, surely it would have been Jesus, who was paying for the sin for all of us. But he didn’t!”

Copies of “The Really Good News About God” can be purchased online in paperback, eBook and Kindle formats from most good bookstores.
See www.ibtechservices.com.au for more details.