



 gracechurch

## Discussion Guide

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# God is >

## Discussion Guide

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### Purpose of This Guide

The “God is >” series explores worship and the nature of God. In this series, we strive to simplify the large concepts of God’s greatness and goodness into a childlike faith that honors God.

You may choose to use this guide:

- ▶ with your Grace Group.
- ▶ with any group of people interested in knowing more about worshipping God’s greatness and God’s goodness.

# 1-God is Great: Awe of God's Presence

## Icebreaker: I Will Praise Your Name

Watch and listen (and sing along if you'd like) to

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmACy5t8s9M>,

a song based on **Psalm 145**.

## Discussion Questions

### Isaiah 6:1-7

- ▶ We make a big mistake when we limit our imagination to thinking that God's greatness is simply higher than that of humans. That is a huge understatement. God's purity makes the seraphim (celestial beings) blush and seek cover [**Isa 6:1-2**].
  - ▶ How should we react to God's greatness?
  - ▶ In what way does thinking about God's holiness make you uncomfortable?
  
- ▶ Shaking added to the sense of the awesome presence and power of God [**Isa 6:4** and **Exo 19:18**]. Attempt to express in words how you view the wonder and power of God. How do those thoughts affect the way you worship Him [**Rev 4:11**]?
  
- ▶ Isaiah was clearly overwhelmed by God's presence [**Isa 6:1-7**]. How can **Hebrews 12:25-29** help us understand Isaiah's reaction to being in God's presence? What about God would bring your face to the ground if you came into His presence?
  
- ▶ We don't like to think that we should be terrified of God. We only want to think about the loving nature of God.
  - ▶ When anyone gets a glimpse of the Almighty God, what happens [**Eze 3:23**, **Mat 17:5-6**, **Acts 9:3-6**]?
  - ▶ Why are they terrified [**Exo 33:20** and **John 1:18**]?

## Going Deeper: Superlative of Holy

Seraphim are celestial beings stationed above the throne of God. Notice that the seraphim utter the word “holy” three times. In the Hebrew language, if a word is uttered three times in a row, it is a form of superlative expression, showing something that is ultimate. The Bible uses the superlative of **holy** to express an ultimate thing about God in **Isaiah 6:3** and again in **Revelation 4:8**. God is not simply holy or even holy, holy. He is the superlative of holy. Holiness is God’s intrinsic and transcendent purity, the standard of righteousness to which the whole universe will be conformed.

### Application Exercise: One Thing about God

Begin each day this coming week by telling God one thing about Him that you find awe-inspiring.

# 2-God is Great: God is God, You are Not

## Icebreaker: Pop Quiz

Discuss the types of pop quizzes you used to get in school. What about them did you like or dislike? In what ways did knowing you might have a pop quiz change your study habits?

## Discussion Questions

### Job 38-39

- ▶ Do you think God arrived in the way that Job expected (**Job 38:1**)? If God answered you out of a whirlwind, would you assume He was angry with you? Consider how He appeared to two of His favorite people:

<i>Person</i>	<i>Verse</i>	<i>How God Appeared</i>
Moses	<b>Exo 19:17-18</b>	
Ezekiel	<b>Eze 1:4</b>	

- ▶ In **Job 38:3**, God told Job to prepare himself like a man. When men got ready to perform strenuous tasks, they gathered up their robes and tucked them into their sash belts (**Exo 12:11** and **1Kings 18:46**). Job was getting a pop quiz that was tough enough to require him to get prepared. Discuss how you might react to that type of pop quiz.
- ▶ How well do you think you understand God (**Isa 40:28**)? What does God say about people who think they fully understand Him (**Pro 3:5-6**)? What is more important, understanding or trust? Why?

- ▶ What are the benefits of having a God with infinite power and knowledge, one we cannot fully understand?

**Rom 8:32**

**Eph 3:20**

## **Group Prayer**

Spend time praying in your group. Include some of these:

- ▶ Praise God that He is unlimited in power and knowledge.
- ▶ Thank God for desiring to have a relationship with you.
- ▶ Ask God to help you understand Him well enough to humbly trust and appreciate Him.

## **Application Exercise: God is God, I Am Not**

Begin each day this coming week telling God that you know He is God and that you are not. Tell Him what you appreciate about Him. Ask Him to help you trust Him more.

# 3-God is Good: When you don't feel God is "Good"

## Icebreaker: It's Going to Be a Bad Day When...

As a group, think of some indicators that let you know it's going to be a bad day. Here are a couple to get you started.

- ▶ Your car horn gets stuck as you follow a group of Hell's Angels down the highway.
- ▶ Your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.

## Discussion Questions

### Acts 16:16-40

*Jesus never said that following Him would be easy, just that it would be worth it!*

- ▶ You know it's going to be a bad day when you're stripped, beaten, and thrown in a jail cell (**Acts 16:22-23**). Most of us don't have days this bad, but we do all have bad days. What are some ways we can react to a bad day? How did Paul and Silas react to their bad day (**Acts 16:25**)?
- ▶ What can help us sing when we are at the midnight hour of a depressing or tragic situation?
  - ▶ **Acts 16:25**
  - ▶ **Job 35:10**
  - ▶ **Psa 42:8**
- ▶ What did it take for God to get the jailor's attention (**Acts 16:26-30**)? Discuss people you know who seem tough, independent, and determined not to have a relationship with God. If you are a believer, tell your group what it took for you to recognize Christ as your Lord and Savior.

► Notice what happened when Paul and Silas praised God (**Acts 16:25-26**). Consider how this might apply to our lives when we praise God during trials.

Prisoners listened to them.	Do others hear you praising God when you are suffering?
Their chains were loosened.	Do you watch for how God will use your trials as part of His plan?

### Going Deeper: How to React to Trials

How do the following passages advise us to react to trials?

- **Matthew 10:28**
- **Acts 5:41**
- **Romans 12:19-20**
- **1Corinthians 4:12**
- **Colossians 1:24**
- **2Timothy 1:12**
- **1Peter 3:16**
- **1Peter 4:16**

### Application Exercise: My Reaction to Suffering

How do the following reactions to suffering resemble yours?

	<i>not true for me - - - - true for me</i>
When I am afraid, I pray and praise God.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
When I lose my job or can't find a job, I pray and praise God.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
When a loved one is extremely ill or suffering, I pray and praise God.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

# 4-God is Good: Direct Access to God

## Icebreaker: Open Door Policy

Growing up, did your parents have an open door policy that made it easy to ask them anything you liked?

- ▶ If yes, how was that helpful to you?
- ▶ If no, how did that affect your relationship with them?
- ▶ At this point in your life, who has an open door policy with you?

## Discussion Questions

**Mat 27:51**

**Heb 9:1-9**

- ▶ Why did people have limited access to God in the Old Testament (**Lev 16:1-2**, **Lev 16:32-33**, **Exo 33:20**)?
- ▶ Describe what filled the tabernacle that prevented them from entering (**Exo 40:34-38** and **2Chr 7:1-2**).
- ▶ Consider the significance of the veil tearing from top to bottom (**Mat 27:51**).
  - ▶ If people had torn the veil, what would be the direction of the tear?
  - ▶ When you pray to others instead of directly to God, how is that like trying to sew the veil back together?
  - ▶ How is not accepting Christ like not being able to see that the veil is torn?
- ▶ Why is the Jewish tabernacle now unnecessary for us to have access to God (**Heb 8:1-2**, **Heb 8:5-6**, **Heb 9:11-12**)?

## Going Deeper: Tearing of the Veil

Meditate on the significance of the tearing of the veil with these passages.

<b>Eph 2:14</b> <b>Heb 10:12-14</b>	The sacrificial system has ended. Jesus made the final blood sacrifice.
<b>Eph 2:18</b> <b>Heb 4:15-16</b> <b>1Tim 2:5</b>	We no longer need any human to stand between God and us. Jesus is our only mediator.
<b>Acts 17:24</b> <b>1Cor 6:19</b>	God no longer lives in a manmade temple. He lives inside believers.

### Application Exercise: Your Relationship with God

If you have accepted Christ as Savior, take advantage of God's open door policy. Begin talking to Him about your deepest thoughts.

If you have not accepted Christ as Savior, think through how that affects your relationship with God.





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