

ASK

GENESIS  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

“We ALL have questions. The questions we have help us to make sense of what we believe about God, ourselves, and the world in which we live. Questions are important, but even more important is where we go to get answers to the questions we ASK.

God is big enough to handle any and all of the questions we may ASK. He desires us to know Him and understand Him so that we might love Him as we walk with Him!” – Michael Davis

# ASK

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Tyndale House Publishers,  
Carol Stream, IL, 2013.

# USING THIS GUIDE:

## Group Leader Instructions

In preparation for each study, take a few moments to read through the instructions below

### **Before The Group Meeting:**

1. Spend some time in prayer before your group.
2. As you prepare for the study, read over the questions and think through how answering them for yourself could help you better walk with God.
3. Then, try developing two to three practical steps that would help members of your group also walk better with God. Avoid the temptation to simply recount information, but thoughtfully arm your group members with something tangible that they can do throughout the week.
4. In the closing moments of your preparation, ask the Lord to move mightily in your home or group setting. Without the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing, and we are utterly dependent upon Him showing up!

### **During The Group Meeting:**

1. Begin with prayer. Ask for the Spirit to be present during the group.
2. Attempt to summarize this week's message, in a few, succinct, thoughts. (See summary below for an example)
3. Assign readers to read various Scripture texts.
4. Walk your group through the discussion questions. (Don't feel like you have to cover every question. Some questions will naturally be more relevant to your group than others, and will naturally produce more fruitful discussion. Be sensitive to the flow of conversation and either redirect or dwell longer upon a topic when it is necessary).
5. In response to questions, share stories and personal examples of how this has played out in your life. What did you learn? How did it help you walk with God? What fresh stories of God's power, love, mercy, or grace do you now have because you trusted Him?
6. Draw others out to share their own personal stories. What did they learn? What would life look like if they were able to live out this week's truth consistently?
7. End in a time of prayer, thanking God for the truths that He has revealed, and for the people that He has brought to your group.

# WEEK 5

## Science and Faith

### Today's Question(s):

- *Is it allowed for a Christian to believe in both science and God?*
- *Could God have used evolution as His mechanism for creation?*

### Sermon Summary:

The heart behind this series is not only that we would ask lots of questions, but also, that we would be able to see and experience God. Tons of people are asking tons of questions. But not everyone is walking away from his or her questions, with an encounter from God. For that reason, our hope is that you would not only ask great questions, but that you would have a great encounter with the living God!

Today, we are looking at questions that deal with both God and science. More specifically, we are looking at whether belief in God and science are mutually exclusive, or if they can coexist. Before continuing, however, it is important to approach this subject with a great deal of humility. First, because none of us know everything that there is to know about the origins of life, or about how God chose to create everything that we see from nothing. Second, the Bible was not written to show us HOW He created everything, but to boldly proclaim THAT He created everything! Third, science itself is not fully equipped to answer the question of origins. How so? Because, science is the study of material objects and processes, by observation and experiment, that can be tested and repeated. Because science cannot observe, test, or repeat what happened in the beginning, then it also cannot make definitive claims concerning it. Now, if science is not fully equipped to make those claims, and if the Bible was not written specifically as a manual on how God created everything, then what should we believe?

First we must understand that there is a certain amount of freedom for the Christian to hold various views, so long as those views acknowledge that God was the one who personally created everything. We did not come from blind processes fueled by random chance, but from a loving and personal God who created us in His image and likeness. Second, we must also know that, while the Bible was not written to give us the specific details on how God created everything, it does tell us some things. For instance, the Bible tells us that God is the one who created everything (Gn. 1:1); through purposeful demonstrations of His glory and power (Ps. 33:6-9); that He is ruling over everything (Ps. 89:11); and that He has even made Himself known to humanity through His creation (Rm. 1:19). All of this tells us that God is the one who created all things, and that He has made Himself known to us through those things.

Today, we can see God's fingerprint upon creation. How? By engaging in a thoughtful study of science. By examining the evidence and seeing if those things align with Scripture. This does not mean accepting everything that Science has to offer, but to engage with what is being said, and to test it. For some, today's message may have been challenging, because it may have challenged a view of creation that you are currently holding. For others, it may have been a source of encouragement, to know that the Bible and Scientific discoveries could be reconciled. Yet, our hope in this message was not to communicate a particular position that everyone should hold to, but to magnify the plain and simple fact that God alone is creator, and that He is seeking for you to walk with Him! Beyond that, there is freedom for us to discuss and hold various views about creation, so long as God the creator is affirmed.

## **Verses to Consider:**

- Gen 1:1 – "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
- Col 1:17 – "He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together."
- Isa 45:18 – "For the Lord is God, and he created the heavens and earth and put everything in place. He made the world to be lived in, not to be a place of empty chaos. "I am the Lord," he says, "and there is no other."
- Ps. 89:11 – "The heavens are yours, and the earth is yours; everything in the world is yours – you created it all."
- Ps. 93:1 – "The Lord is king! He is robed in majesty. Indeed, the Lord is robed in majesty and armed with strength. The world stands firm and cannot be shaken."
- Ps. 19:1-4 – "The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world."
- Romans 1:19-20 – "They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God."
- Ps. 33:6-9 – "The Lord merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born. He assigned the sea its boundaries and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs. Let the whole world fear the Lord, and let everyone stand in awe of him. For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command."

## Quotations to Consider:

- "Many people today, both secular and Christian, want us to believe that science and religion cannot live together. Not only is this untrue, but we believe that a thoughtful dialogue between science and faith is essential for engaging the hearts and minds of individuals today." **Timothy Keller – The Reason for God**
- "The Bible is not a scientific textbook seeking to answer the ever-changing inquires of science but rather a theological textbook seeking to reveal God and the means by which He saves us." **Augustine**
- "The more I examine the universe, and the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the Universe in some sense must have known we were coming." **Freeman Dyson**
- "Like all other scientific theories, Darwinian evolution must be continually compared with the evidence. If it does not fit the evidence, it must be reevaluated or abandoned – otherwise it is not science, but myth." **Jonathan Wells – Icons of Evolution (Bio)**
- "Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms." **Bertrand Russell – Free Man's Worship**
- "You can't get something from nothing. If the universe began with dead matter having no consciousness, how, then, do you get something totally different – consciousness, living, thinking, feeling, believing creatures – from materials that don't have that? But if everything started in the mind of God, we don't have a problem with explaining the origin of our mind." **J.P. Moreland – The God Question**
- "I can't imagine how nature, in this case the universe, could have created itself. And the very fact that the universe had a beginning implies that someone was able to begin it. And it seems to me that had to be outside of nature." **Francis S. Collins – head of the Genome Project**
- "The probability of life arising on earth by purely natural means, without special divine aid is less than the probability that a flight-worthy Boeing 747 should be assembled by a hurricane roaring through a junkyard." **Fred Hoyle – Astronomer**
- "People are always looking for ways to forget God, even if they have to give up reason in order to do it." **Phillip Johnson – The Wedge of Truth (Darwin on Trial)**
- "At the end of the day – we need to weigh the evidence and make an informed decision – the universe if governed both by physical laws and spiritual laws – the physical laws point us towards the Creator; the spiritual laws tell us how we can know Him personally." - **Lee Strobel**

## Discussion Questions:

1. The world is attempting to say that science and God are not compatible. Is this true? Why or why not?
2. God has revealed Himself both in His Word and in creation. Which of these do you feel holds a greater authority? Why or why not?
3. What struck you about today's message? Was there anything that was challenging for you to hear? Was there anything that would be helpful for you or others to walk with God? Was there anything that increased your view of how wonderful and awesome God is?
4. Have you ever struggled with this topic? Have you ever wondered how God and science could work together?
5. More specifically, have you ever struggled with the question of evolution? Or, have you struggled wondering how the Biblical creation record and the scientific origin of the species could work together? Has this ever caused you to doubt God? Or has it caused you to doubt scientific interpretation? What has been your primary way of managing this struggle?
6. In what ways have you experienced the reality of God in creation? How did God confirm Himself through something you have observed? (Examples – The size of the universe shows us God's power and majesty; the size of an atom shows us His excellence and attention to detail; our human body demonstrates His love and care for us; etc.).
7. Michael challenged to do a few things. First, not to simply believe things because someone has said them. And, second, to investigate these matters for ourselves. If you are still struggling, what are some practical things you could do today, that would help you find answers to these questions? If you have been privileged enough to study, in what ways could you help others to learn and walk with God?



## **Guide To Prayer:**

- Begin by thanking God. 1) For the stories that group members shared. 2) That He created everything so that it would reveal Him. 3) Also, thank God that He has taken such a deep interest in creation that He has sent His one and only Son to save humanity and to redeem all of creation.
- Ask God to protect group members from the enemy and from a culture claiming that science has rendered belief in God unnecessary. Ask the LORD to empower us to serve Him in this culture, and to be prepared to give a reasoned answer for the hope we have in God. Also, ask God to give us opportunities to share.
- Finally, ask God to forgive us for the times when this issue has divided us and to help us affirm the most important truth of all; that there is a creator, and that this creator has been revealed in the Word of God.