

For Further Study

These study sheets may be helpful for additional group or personal use.

From Session 1: OUR SUFFICIENT GOD

Read through each of these 18 questions and answer True or False according to what the Scripture passages say. Use the “to consider” statements to think through biblical truth.

1. True or False I can be sure of myself because I am sufficient in myself.

- 2 Cor 3:5 “Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to think of anything as being of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.”

To consider: I will either trust in myself (pride) or I’ll trust in God (humility). There is no middle ground.

2. True or False God will take care of my every need.

- Philippians 4:19 “But my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
- 1 Peter 5:7 “casting all your care on Him, for He cares for you.”

To consider: God’s definition of need is different from mine. What He defines as my need, He will fulfill in His time.

3. True or False God is all-knowing (He knows everything about everything, including the explanation for everything).

- Psalm 139:1,4,6 “O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.”
- Romans 11:33 “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out.”

To consider: He knows what my questions are, my doubts, my thoughts and desires. And everyone else’s too.

4. True or False I can trust God’s Word to tell me the truth.

- John 17:17 b “Your Word is truth.”
- Psalm 119 in its entirety, such as
 - v. 30-31 “I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me. I cling to Your testimonies”
 - v. 104 “Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.”
 - v. 142 “Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth.”

To consider: He may not give me all the information or explanation I want. He will tell me what I need to know, when He determines that I need to know it.

5. True or False God is all-powerful (can do anything He wills).

Psalm 115:3 “But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.”

To consider: God’s power is greater than my needs, so when He doesn’t do what I think He should, then I don’t fully understand His purposes. But I can know that He is everything He says He is.

6. True or False God is completely faithful (will do what He says and fulfills His promises).

2 Timothy 2:13 “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”

To consider: Trust His timing.

7. True or False God is good and is the final standard of good.

- Psalm 34:8 “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”
- Mark 10:18b “No one is good but One, that is, God.”

To consider: I can know what goodness is because it always corresponds to God’s character.

8. True or False God is love (gives for the well-being of others).

I John 4:7-8 “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

To consider: I cannot understand the full scope of His love. I am called to believe and live by faith.

9. True or False God loves me.

- *John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*
- *Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

To consider: God so loved you and me – while we were still His enemies – so much that He died to redeem our souls. Then, John 1:12 says, “But to as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

10. True or False God is merciful.

- *Psalms 103:8 “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.”*
- *Hebrews 4:15-16 “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

To consider: Mercy rescues me from the punishment I deserve.

11. True or False God is righteous and is the final standard of righteousness.

Acts 17:31 “...He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

To consider: Christ’s righteousness covers me when I put my faith in Him. I stand in His merits, not my own.

12. True or False God is sovereign (in control of all things for His purposes).

I Chronicles 29:11-12 “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, and Your reign over all. In your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.

To consider: His sovereign purpose for His children is to transform them into His image through the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil 3:10).

13. True or False God is the source of absolute truth (He cannot lie), and Christ is truth.

- *John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*
- *I John 5:20 “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”*

To consider: Do I struggle because God won’t answer to me or give me the explanation I demand?

14. True or False God is all-wise.

- *Romans 16:27 “to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.”*
- *Romans 11:33 “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”*

To consider: Wisdom is the correct use of knowledge. How is truth necessary for wisdom?

15. True or False My own wisdom is enough to get me where I need to go.

- *Jeremiah 9:23-24 “Thus says the LORD: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight, says the Lord.”*
- *Proverbs 16:25 “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”*

To consider: Scripture says the wisdom of man leads to death. I need God, the only source of absolute truth.

16. True or False I don't need God; I have enough resources of my own.

Proverbs 3:5-7 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil."

To consider: The current surge in mental health issues and personal turmoil is evidence that we aren't enough to solve our own problems or find lasting peace.

17. True or False I was created with limitations that keep me dependent upon God.

- *2 Corinthians 3:5-6 "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."*
- *Proverbs 2:3-9 Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice, equity, and every good path.*

To consider: My limitations are designed to keep me nestled close to the Savior, because I am sufficient in God. And that's great news!

18. True or False God is sufficient, so I can put all my confidence in Him.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

To consider: Next time I'm upset, I can ask, "What am I trusting to tell me the truth? Do I want to control the outcome more than to trust in Christ? Do I live by fear or by faith in God?"

From Session 2: SCRIPTURE AND MY EMOTIONS

Application Exercise. Start with the first chart below. Using what you learned in this session, apply each of the four “Considerations” questions (Column 1) to Helen (loss of possessions) and Carla (anxiety over finances). Keep in mind that *every* human struggles emotionally, but Scripture can bring stability. Think about your own responses, too.

Considerations	God’s Way	Her Own Way
How is she responding?	According to God’s character & the wisdom of the living Word (Hebrews 4:12-13)	According to the world’s philosophies, her own desires/thoughts/feelings, the lies of her adversary
What does she trust?	God’s Word is truth, and she informs her feelings.	Her emotions are truth, and she follows them.
What is her view of God and her circumstances?	She sees/judges her circumstances through God’s Word.	She sees/judges God through her assessment of her circumstances.
What does she want most?	She loves/needs God and uses things for His purposes.	She loves/needs things and uses God for her purposes.

Move toward informing troublesome emotions by changing the script.

Over time, embracing truth stabilizes our hearts through faith in God as Scripture presents Him. Using Carla’s script in column 1, here are some ways she can inform her financial anxiety using biblical truth. Use your own example to start rewriting your script. For more help, see *Shame vs. Humility* on the next page. Refer to your rewritten script often and add to it as God teaches you.

Troubling Thought/Emotion	Scripture to Believe	Truth to Consider
I don’t have the money I need.	God will supply all I need (Philippians 4:13), but He doesn’t promise to give me everything I want.	God isn’t condemning me. He knows I need to learn something from this. What is He teaching me?
I’m such a failure.	God is faithful (I Corinthians 10:13); God gives wisdom when I ask (James 1:5); my identity is in Christ not in failure (Ephesians 1:3-12).	God is faithful even when I fail. What should I do differently now to live more wisely?
Anxiety has taken over. There’s no way out.	Trust God, not yourself. He will show the way (Proverbs 3:5-6); He will bring stability if I don’t give up (I Peter 5:6-10).	No matter how I feel, I can choose to trust God to provide and to bring me hope and stability. He is with me. I can cling to truth.
I awaken at night in a cold sweat, with great fear.	The Lord is my Shepherd (Psalm 23); think about things that are true about God, honest, right, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8).	Focus away from fear by talking to God about His goodness. Sing a song like “When I Am Afraid I Will Trust in You.” Choose to believe God, think about Scripture, and consider wise choices you can make.

Whose word am I following? Scriptural responses can deeply affect emotions like shame. Choose a topic from Column 1 and read the chart from left to right. Which responses follow the truth of Scripture - shame or humility? Which will you choose to dwell on when you feel ashamed? Consider who might be able to help you with these changes; you don't have to do this alone. (See the resource list for additional materials.)

Topic	Shame says	Humility says
Where I go for truth	I listen to what my emotions are telling me. Everything is against me. I can't do this.	God's Word says He is for me (Romans 8:31). I can always do His will through Christ (Philippians 4:13). See John 17:17.
My view of God	God is far away. He is angry with me and punishing me. Or He doesn't care.	My suffering hurts, but I know God is present, good, wise, powerful, and loving. I Peter 5:7-10.
My view of meaning in life and my purpose	I focus on what I want that I can't have, my flaws and failures, and the things that are unfair. I wallow in hopelessness or work hard to seek meaning in how I perform.	I will focus on what Scripture says, do what is right, and trust in God's good purposes. Psalm 119:97-104.
What I allow to motivate me	Motivated by fear, anger, and doubt.	Motivated by Christ's example. I Peter 2:21-25.
What I believe about God during suffering	I don't think God is good because He allows suffering.	God cares for me during suffering. I can trust Him. I Peter 5:6-7.
How I respond to hardship	There is no hope for me. I have to get away from this, and I feel angry because I'm trapped here.	Even hard things like this are showing me I can trust in God. Through hardship I am learning more about Christ. He gives me joy and good in the process. James 1:2-5.
My attitude	I get caught up in my own head with negative thoughts and overwhelming emotions.	I can choose to trust God and give thanks in good times and hard times. I Thessalonians 5:15-17.
My view of freedom	I'm stuck.	I'm free in Christ. Philippians 4:13.
How I see myself	I feel worthless but I crave self-worth.	My worth is found in Christ, who gave Himself for me. Galatians 2:20.
My focus (the thoughts on which my mind dwells)	My mind dwells in fear and I'm angry about things that are unfair.	My mind dwells on Christ and the hope that's found in His gospel of grace. I Peter 1:13.
What I desire	I'm all about me.	I want to know God and live for His glory. Philippians 3:9-10.
What I fear	I'm terrified of what people think and do that hurts me. Luke 12:4-5.	I fear (respect) God and am amazed by Him. Earthly fear dissolves when I trust God. John 14:1.
How I view God's love for me	God's love must be out of reach. God's love is based on what I am like, what I do, and how I suffer.	God's love is freely given to me, based on Christ's sacrifice and what God is like. Romans 8:35-39.

From Session 3: GOD'S GRACE FOR MY TRIALS

1. Read Luke 22:31-32 and consider how a believer might apply it. ***“Jesus said to [Peter]: Simon, Simon, Satan has asked for you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you, that your faith would not fail. And when you have returned to Me, strengthen my brethren.”***
 - a. ***Satan has asked for you, that he might sift you like wheat.*** You aren't being condemned. You're being tested. Because of your High Priest's present love and grace, come to His mercy seat to receive mercy and grace to help in your time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16).
 - b. ***I have prayed for you, that your faith would not fail.*** Jesus is praying for you to have faith in Him, because He loves you.
 - c. ***When you have returned to Me, strengthen my brethren.*** You'll have to confess your sins of unbelief and doubt. But run toward Him, return to Him. He has something for you to do. Strengthen others who need hope and encouragement.
2. Helen Roseveare makes three points about her suffering. Discuss how each of these points impacts your interpretation of hardship.
 - a. Change your question from, “Is it worth it?” to “Is God Worthy?” Consider the suffering of Christ to pay for your sins (I Peter 2:21-25).
 - b. “Can you thank Me for trusting you with this experience, even if I never tell you why?” Consider Helen's situation when God gave her this question, and of the eventual results. What does that say about God's ever-present care and purpose (Hebrews 4:12-16)?
 - c. “God never uses a person greatly until He has wounded him deeply. The privilege He offers you is greater than the price you have to pay. The privilege is greater than the price.” What does this statement mean? In what ways is your suffering a privilege? Consider Philippians 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 as you answer.

A Special Invitation to Those Who Are Hurting

If you are suffering intensely, or if the Bible is unfamiliar to you, our discussion questions may be difficult for you. We're here to help because we care about you. Our church services will help you get to know the God of the Bible. You are also invited to talk to one of the conference organizers here today or call our counseling center to help you find a biblical counselor who is right for you.