



Questions for God

Why This? What About Heaven?

Why was my loved one taken from me? Why am I left here alone? The questions that swarm after a loved one's death feel endless, and you probably wish that God would give you all the answers. But did you know God has already provided answers to some of your toughest questions in His Word, the Bible?

As you work through the video and Step by Step exercises this week, you'll discover how God responds to our most difficult questions. You'll find:

- **Trusting God with your questions is a step forward in faith.**
- **The benefits of asking God "What can I learn from this?"**
- **You can learn what happens after death in God's Word.**



Video outline

Use this outline to write down important concepts, encouraging words, or questions you may have while viewing the video.

Why did this happen?

Seeking answers

Learning from Job

Growing through grief

How can I trust God now?

Shattered expectations

A different reason to trust

A bigger vision to embrace

What about the afterlife?

Is reincarnation possible?

What do we know about heaven?

Step by Step

Daily comfort & encouragement



Eleanor's story

"When I came back home from Bob's [my husband's] memorial service, I walked through our front door and realized at that point that he was never coming home. I fell on my face before God, and I cried and cried and cried. And I called out to Him and asked, *What is it You want from me?*"

Do you have questions for God? If so, this week is for you. This week's exercises will reveal why trusting God with your questions is important. And you'll learn how to find answers about God's role in your life.

1 No more tears, suffering, or death

"There's a big difference between thinking 'This is a bad chapter' and 'This is the last chapter.'"
– Dr. Stephen Viars

Our lives and our loved ones' lives are chapters in the middle of a much larger story. And the conclusion of that story, God says, is awesome.

God's message to you

"He [God] will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.' And the one sitting on the throne said, 'Look, I am making everything new!'" (Revelation 21:4–5a NLT)

1. **How might it help you to focus on your life and your loved one's life here as a "chapter" rather than "the whole story"?**

2. What steps could you take to learn more about what God has promised for the future? (If you're unsure, ask your GriefShare leader.)

Remember

- This isn't the final chapter of your life or your loved one's life.
- God has an incredible final chapter in store for those who put their trust in Him.

2

A sign of healing, p. ix

Addressing questions



Death is the gateway to the unknown. Thinking about it prompts a lot of questions. Some have to do with the afterlife: *What happens after we draw our last breath? How can we know what to expect?* Some have to do with God: *Why did God allow my loved one to die? Could God have prevented my loved one's death?*

A key step toward healing involves coming to terms with what you believe about ultimate concerns such as God, heaven, and eternity. Now, resolving your ultimate concerns doesn't mean "having answers to all your questions." The Bible doesn't provide specific answers to every question you have about your loved one's death and the surrounding circumstances. As it says in Deuteronomy 29:29a, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God."

Are you demanding answers to questions that God hasn't promised to answer?

Ultimately, we have to trust in the character of God and the promises He's made about life, suffering, and the afterlife. God's Word is the source of our understanding, and you can find great comfort in what the Bible says about God, His love for us, and what's to come.

Take some time to consider:

1. What unanswered questions do you have for God? Are you looking for answers that God hasn't promised to provide?

2. How might your unanswered questions be hindering you from coming to terms with what you believe?

3 God's sovereignty

The more you understand about God's character, the more you can trust Him, even when things don't seem to make sense. An important trait to understand is His sovereignty (infinite power and complete authority).

Dr. Stephen Viars puts it well: "The Bible presents God as One who is completely sovereign over the affairs of men. And that's the kind of God I want to trust."

God has not forgotten you or your loved one. He is in control, and He has a plan with a purpose that is good and is still being played out.

God's message to you

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

"Then Job replied to the LORD: 'I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted.'" (Job 42:1-2)

1. **God's power and authority are connected to His goodness and love. How does this give you confidence to know that God is working all things in your life for good? If you're struggling to believe this, how do you think your life would change if you did?**

2. **A friend who recently lost a loved one is finding it difficult to believe that God's plan for her life is good. How might her lack of belief in God's goodness affect her ability to work through her grief?**

- God is good and sovereign, which means He has ultimate control and power over everything in the universe. God loves you, and His sovereignty includes your best interests, justice, and hope. Even when God allows something we don't want to happen, we can trust that He is ultimately working things out for our good.
- As you deepen your relationship with God and believe what He's revealed about His character, you can learn to trust in Him and His plan for your life.

4 The only path to heaven

Some people claim that all religions lead to heaven. Others say that everyone who is basically good, honest, or hardworking goes to heaven. But what does God say?

God's message to you

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" (John 14:6)

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved ... for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" (Romans 10:9, 13)

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

1. **What have you believed in the past about who goes to heaven?**
2. **Based on today's verses, who will go to heaven?**
3. **How certain are you of your eternal destiny?***

* If you are not certain, read the article on page x to learn more about how to put your faith in Jesus and secure your place in heaven.

Remember

- Your eternal destiny depends on your decision to believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, so take some time to consider this choice—a choice not only of *where* you're going, but *who* you're surrendering your life to.
- If you're worried your loved one may not be in heaven, here's an important note from Dr. Joseph Stowell: "The most important thing to remember is that God is fair and just and wise and loving. Whatever He does with our loved ones will be fair and just and wise and loving. God cannot deny Himself. We do not know what our loved ones did in that last flickering moment of life in the quietness of their soul."

5

Healing through *Writing*

Now through eternity

Facing questions about the afterlife, death, and God can leave anyone's head spinning. Journaling can help organize your thoughts and bring clarity. These prompts will help:

- **What have you been taught to believe about the afterlife? Have your beliefs changed? How?**
- **How has your loved one's death affected your beliefs about God's character?**
- **Since this is a chapter in your life, write about the wonderful conclusion of your story (based on what you've learned in this week's video and exercises).**

Chart your progress

Place a check in the boxes to identify how you are feeling this week: emotionally, physically, etc.
Or, even better, insert a word to describe how you are doing.

	BAD	OKAY	GOOD	GREAT
Emotionally				
Physically				
Spiritually				
Relationally				
How your life is in general				

My Healing

Eleanor's story

"I picked up my Bible and it fell open to Proverbs 3:5-6. It said, 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge Me and I will direct your paths.' And that was the beginning of my growing relationship with God. I began to realize that I really wasn't alone. He was always there with me, and He would stay with me. He just gave me total peace."

Next session

Discover how to avoid getting "stuck" in grief.

God Is Making Something Beautiful

As far back as 1892, a Christian poet reflected on how the course of our lives—with all the joyful and painful experiences we have—could be viewed as a tapestry woven by God, the Master Craftsman. The complete design of God's tapestry can't be seen from our limited vantage point, so we must trust His skill to arrange and pull together the right threads in such a way that its beauty is clearly displayed once the tapestry is finished.

*My Life is but a weaving
between my Lord and me;
I cannot choose the colors
He worketh steadily.*

*Oft times He weaveth sorrow
And I, in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the under side.*

*Not til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skillful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.*

*He knows, He loves, He cares,
Nothing this truth can dim.
He gives His very best to those
Who leave the choice with Him.*

Reflecting on life and death is natural to human beings, as reflected in another poem written in the book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible:

*There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die ...
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance.*
(Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2a, 4)

The threads in life's tapestry—the experiences we have—are easy to see one by one, and according to Ecclesiastes 3:11, God “has made everything beautiful [that is, appropriate] in its time.” But the writer of Ecclesiastes continues: “He has also set eternity in the human heart.” That is to say, we almost instinctively wonder, “Okay, I am going through these experiences in life—and eventually death—but what's the point?” And then the writer acknowledges, “yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.”

There are two possible responses we might have to this unfulfilled desire to “fathom what God has done.” (1) We might voice our dissatisfaction to God and demand that He give us more insight into—or even more control over—the grand design of *His* tapestry. When we react this way, it's important to remember that we aren't the master craftsmen of our lives. We see today only, but God sees into eternity. (2) We might recognize that although our questions are legitimate to ask, they will always reflect our *inability* to be the “master craftsman.” Only God can pick the perfect threads in our lives that will ultimately become a tapestry that reflects His wisdom and skill (what biblical writers call His “glory”).

In that we should rest. Remembering His comprehensive knowledge, perfect love, and tender care for us can be our security when our questions press in on us.

**Adjusting to life
without your loved
one** is a sign of healing

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