



IMMANUEL CHURCH

Conversation Starter: The Gods of the No Testament
September 17, 2017

Opening Questions:

- Did you grow up going to church as a kid? What are your memories from Sunday School? What do you remember hearing most about God?
- What do you miss most about your childhood faith? When did it start feeling like it no longer answered your adult questions? What parts of what you've been told about God are most difficult for you to accept now? Why?

Looking at Scripture:

- Which God of the No Testament have you previously believed in? Bodyguard God? On-Demand God? Boyfriend God? Guilt God? Anti-Science God? Gap God?
- Read **2 Corinthians 11:23b-28...** Where do you suppose we got the idea of Bodyguard God when clearly bad things happen to good people all the time?
- Read **Isaiah 55:8-9...** How often does God do what you want him to? How often does he think the way you think he should think? Why do you suppose so many people de-converted when they realized that's not how he works?
- Read **Psalms 13:1-3...** Is it not understandable that people might think God does NOT exist when they can NOT feel his presence? When they don't feel emotionally charged by their religion? Have you ever struggled here? How did you navigate through it?
- Read **Zephaniah 3:17...** Reflect on the idea that God sings songs about his people. How does that make you feel? And when you read the Prodigal Son story that Jesus told, which character in the story are you? The prodigal son? The son who stayed home? The dad? Which one is God? What's that say about him and you?
- Read **Psalms 119:1-4...** Do you ever worry that science will explain away God? Josh said that Gap God (the explanation for everything unexplained) undermines our faith because the list of unexplained things keeps getting smaller. What do you think of that? How might we need to adjust our understanding of who God is and all that he created?

Application Questions:

- If the Gods of the No Testament don't exist, who is the real, true God then? What have you learned about him?
- What adult questions do you have for God? How do you plan to wrestle through those questions with him? Are you afraid he can't handle it? Why or why not?

End your time together asking God to give assurance and peace about his presence in our world and in our lives. Thank him for being a personal, knowable God that reveals himself to us through Jesus, the Scriptures, and creation.