

Small Group Guide – September 3 & 6

Head Scratchers: The Bible

Date: September 3 & 6, 2026

Focus Passage(s): 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Theme: Why should we trust the Bible?

Suggested Schedule (60 minutes total)

Segment	Time	Description
Icebreaker	10 min	Get comfortable, begin connecting
Intro/Recap	5 min	Read the key passages for the week
Group Discussion	25 min	Dive into Scripture and discuss application
Deeper Dive Option	5–10 min	Deeper Bible study or individual challenge
Prayer & Requests	10–15 min	Close in prayer for growth + personal needs

Welcome + Icebreaker (10 min)

What is something you believed as a kid that you eventually started asking questions about as you got older?

Keep this one light. It could be something your parents told you, an urban legend, something about how the world worked, or something you completely misunderstood.

What is one instruction manual, set of directions, or piece of advice you ignored and later realized you probably should have followed?

Key Message Recap

Most of us have questions about things we were taught growing up, and faith is no exception. One of the biggest questions is about the Bible itself:

Why should I trust it?

And if we decide the Bible really is God's Word, an even more personal question follows:

What am I going to do with it?

People have very different opinions about the Bible. Some believe it is God's Word. Some think it contains helpful ideas, but is outdated. Some struggle to understand it. Others have heard so many arguments and interpretations that they are unsure what to believe.

The message examines six reasons for trusting the Bible: internal evidence, historical evidence, archaeological evidence, prophetic evidence, eyewitness testimony, and the testimony of changed lives. But the message does not stop with whether the Bible is trustworthy. If Scripture really is God's Word, then it should affect how we actually live.

Discussion Questions (25 min)

Can the Bible Be Trusted?

The message presented six categories of evidence:

Internal Evidence

The Bible contains many books written across centuries by different authors, yet tells a unified story ultimately pointing toward Jesus.

Historical Evidence

Ancient manuscript evidence allows the biblical text to be examined and compared.

Archaeological Evidence

Discoveries have provided historical context and confirmation for people and places described in Scripture.

Prophetic Evidence

The message points to Old Testament passages Christians understand as anticipating Jesus.

Eyewitnesses

The New Testament contains testimony from people who claimed to have seen, heard, and experienced Jesus.

Testimonies

Generations of people testify that following Scripture has changed how they live.

Discuss

- Before hearing this message, what would you have said if someone asked, "Why do you believe the Bible?"
- Which of these six categories do you find most interesting or compelling? Why?
- What questions about the Bible do you still wrestle with?
- Why is it healthy for Christians to investigate difficult questions instead of being afraid of them?

Key Truth

Christian faith does not require us to be afraid of questions about the Bible.

(continued)

God's Word Is Meant to Change Us

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 again.

Notice the action words:

Teach. Correct. Train. Prepare. Equip.

Scripture is intended to do something in us.

Discuss

- Which of these functions of Scripture do you most appreciate?
- Which one can be the most uncomfortable?
- What is the difference between knowing what the Bible says and submitting to what it says?

Key Truth

We do not simply read the Bible. We allow the Bible to shape us.

The Bible Calls for a Response

The message identifies five implications if we believe Scripture is God's Word:

It calls for a decision.

It is to be obeyed.

It is to be treasured.

It becomes a guidebook for life.

It helps us live with joy.

Discuss

- Which of these five stands out to you most right now?
- Which is easiest for you? Which is most challenging?
- Why is obedience such an important part of trusting God's Word?
- Where are we sometimes tempted to adjust Scripture to fit our lifestyle rather than adjust our lifestyle to Scripture?

Key Truth

Believing the Bible is God's Word eventually requires deciding whether we will trust and obey what it says.

God's Boundaries Can Bring Freedom

The message uses the picture of an invisible fence. The boundary limited where the dog could go, but that boundary also provided freedom and protection. God's instructions can work similarly.

Read Proverbs 2:6

Discuss

- Why do people sometimes view biblical commands as restrictions rather than protection?
- Can you think of a biblical principle that has protected you from something harmful?
- How can obedience actually produce greater freedom?
- What area of life do you most need God's wisdom to guide right now?

Key Truth

God's Word does not simply restrict our lives. It provides wisdom for living them.

Treasure God's Word

Read Psalm 119:11

The message encourages us not only to read Scripture, but to study it, meditate on it, and memorize it.

Discuss

- What is your current relationship with reading the Bible?
- What tends to keep you from spending consistent time in Scripture?
- Have you ever had a Bible verse come to mind exactly when you needed it?
- How could memorizing Scripture affect your decisions, worries, temptations, or relationships?

Key Truth

What we repeatedly put into our hearts and minds eventually shapes how we live.

More Truth From the Gospels (10 min)

The message gives us reasons to trust Scripture. But we can also ask an important question:

How did Jesus Himself treat Scripture?

His words and actions in the Gospels show that Scripture was not peripheral to His life. Jesus knew it, quoted it, trusted it, and used it to guide His response to real situations.

Jesus Relied on Scripture

Read Matthew 4:1-11

When Jesus is tempted in the wilderness, He repeatedly responds by quoting Scripture. His first response begins:

"It is written..."

Jesus does not merely know Scripture. He uses God's Word in the middle of temptation.

God's Word gives us truth to stand on when circumstances, emotions, or temptation pull us somewhere else.

Discuss

- Why do you think Jesus responded to temptation with Scripture?
 - How might knowing Scripture beforehand prepare us for difficult moments?
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Jesus Said God's Word Is Truth

Read John 17:14-17

As Jesus prays for His followers, He says:

"Your word is truth."

Jesus connects God's Word with truth and with the transformation of His followers.

Jesus did not treat God's Word as simply one helpful perspective among many. He treated it as truth.

Discuss

- How does that challenge the way our culture often defines truth?
- What does it look like to allow God's truth to shape our thinking when it conflicts with our preferences?

Jesus Connected Discipleship With Obedience

Read John 8:31-32

Jesus connects being His disciple with remaining in His teaching. Knowing truth is not simply an intellectual exercise. Jesus expects His followers to live in it.

Following Jesus means more than agreeing with His words. It means building our lives around them.

Discuss

- What is the difference between knowing Jesus' teaching and living according to it?
 - Where is Jesus currently challenging you to move from knowing to doing?
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Jesus Saw God's Word as Necessary for Life

Read Matthew 4:4

Jesus quotes Deuteronomy when He says that people do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from God. Food sustains our physical lives. Jesus says God's Word is essential for something deeper.

Scripture is not merely something Christians are supposed to read. God's truth is spiritual nourishment we need.

Discuss

What might change if we approached Scripture as something we need rather than something we are supposed to read?

Real-life Application (5 min)

It is possible to believe the Bible is true without allowing it to significantly change your life. We can own Bibles. Highlight verses. Attend church. Listen to sermons. Even know biblical information.

But the question is not simply: **"Do I believe the Bible?"**

A more challenging question is: **"Am I allowing God's Word to shape the way I actually live?"**

Reflection Question

What is one area of your life where you know what Scripture says, but you struggle to actually live it?

Next Steps Challenge (5 min)

Choose one practical step this week.

Read It

Spend intentional time in Scripture each day. If you are unsure where to begin, start with one of the Gospels and read about Jesus.

Obey It

Identify one thing you already know Scripture teaches and take a concrete step toward obedience.

Treasure It

Memorize one verse. The message suggests a great starting point:

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." 1 Peter 5:7

Ask

Before reading Scripture, pray:

"God, what do You want me to know, and what do You want me to do?"

Prayer

Scripture-Focused Prayer

Thank God for giving us His Word. Ask God to increase your desire to know Scripture.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand and apply what you read.

Ask God for humility when Scripture challenges something in your life.

Pray for courage to obey even when obedience is difficult.

Ask God to use Scripture to give wisdom, strength, purpose, hope, and joy.

Deeper Dive Character Study: Josiah – Rediscovering God’s Word

Scripture: 2 Kings 22:1-20; 23:1-25

Josiah became king of Judah while still very young.

Years later, while repairs were being made to the Temple, the Book of the Law was discovered.

When God's Word was read to Josiah, he realized how far God's people had drifted from what God had commanded.

Josiah did not simply find God's Word interesting. He allowed it to confront him, then he responded.

His story provides a powerful picture of what 2 Timothy 3:16-17 describes: God's Word teaching, correcting, and changing God's people.

Key Moment 1: God's Word Is Rediscovered

Read 2 Kings 22:8-10

The Book of the Law had been neglected to such an extent that its discovery became a major event.

Discuss

- How can someone own a Bible and still functionally live as though God's Word has been lost?

Key Moment 2: Josiah Allows Scripture to Confront Him

Read 2 Kings 22:11-13

When Josiah hears God's Word, he does not immediately explain it away. He allows it to expose where God's people have gone wrong.

Discuss

- What does Josiah's reaction reveal about his attitude toward God's Word?
 - How do you typically respond when Scripture challenges something you believe or do?
 - Why is humility necessary when reading the Bible?
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Key Moment 3: Hearing Leads to Action

Read 2 Kings 23:1-3

Josiah gathers the people, reads God's Word publicly, and renews their commitment to God. Then he begins changing things.

Discuss

- What would have happened if Josiah had simply said, "That was a really powerful reading," and then done nothing?
 - Why must biblical knowledge eventually lead to obedience?
 - What is one biblical truth God has used to change the direction of your life?
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Key Moment 4: God's Word Changes Priorities

Read 2 Kings 23:21-25

Josiah begins bringing the life of the nation back into alignment with God's commands. His response illustrates an important statement from the message:

"I have to adjust my lifestyle to God's Word; not the other way around."

Discuss

- Why are we sometimes tempted to reshape Scripture around what we already want?
 - What does genuine submission to Scripture look like?
 - How can Scripture reveal priorities that have gotten out of alignment?
 - Where might God be asking you to make an adjustment?
 - What can Josiah teach us about the difference between hearing God's Word and responding to God's Word?
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Key Takeaways

- God's Word is intended to be more than information.
 - Scripture can teach us, confront us, correct us, and equip us.
 - Trusting Scripture includes submitting to Scripture.
 - Obedience is a response to trusting God's wisdom and character.
 - God's boundaries are designed to guide and protect us.
 - Treasuring God's Word means making room for it in our hearts and everyday lives.
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Additional Scriptures for Further Study

Psalm 119:9-16

A picture of treasuring God's Word and allowing it to guide our lives.

Hebrews 4:12

God's Word is described as living, active, and able to expose what is happening within us.

James 1:22-25

Scripture is not merely something to hear. God's people are called to put it into practice.

Psalm 19:7-11

God's instructions provide wisdom, joy, clarity, and guidance.

1 Peter 5:7

A practical verse from the message to begin memorizing and applying.

Bottom Line

There is an important difference between believing the Bible is valuable and allowing it to have authority in our lives. The message presents reasons for trusting Scripture. But then it brings the question home. If the Bible really is God's Word:

Will I read it? Trust it?

Will I treasure and obey it?

Will I allow it to correct me and build my life around it?

God has not simply given us a book to put on a shelf.

He has given us His Word to teach us what is true, correct us when we are wrong, guide us toward what is right, and equip us for the life He has called us to live.

The question is no longer simply:

"Can I trust the Bible?"

It becomes:

"Will I trust God enough to live what He says?"