

STUDY GUIDE
For Individuals and Adult Groups

The
Unshakable
TRUTH™

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THE UNSHAKABLE TRUTH™ STUDY GUIDE

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WE'VE GOT A QUESTION FOR YOU

We've actually got three questions for you. You are about to begin *The Unshakable Truth Study Guide*. And by knowing the answers to these three questions, you can get the most out of this material.

1. Who Is This For?

This study guide is for anyone who wants to make real sense out of Christianity. What is the Christian faith all about anyway? What defines it, what does God want from us individually, and how do we pass the faith on to our families, friends, and others?

This may sound strange, but most Christians don't know the answers to those questions. If you want answers and want to know what being a Christian really means, this study provides an excellent introduction to the foundations of the faith.

2. How Does It Work?

There are 12 truths that make up what Christianity is all about. Whether you are using this guide individually or in a group, you will find questions to answer, issues to think through, and truths to apply to your life. To enhance your study experience there are two optional ways to view videos of Josh and Sean McDowell discussing each truth:

courses allows you to take your time to explore how you were meant to live God's truths out in community with family and your committed brothers and sisters in Christ. (For more information about TruthWalk go to www.HarvestHousePublishers.com/TruthWalk.)

But first things first. You are now ready to start with the first session of *The Unshakable Truth Study Guide*. So let your journey begin!



TRUTH ONE: GOD EXISTS

What Are We Talking About?

To help you frame some important questions about God's existence, consider the following excerpt from chapter 4 of *The Unshakable Truth* book:

“We live on Planet Earth, which is part of a vast universe. And it's natural to ask where we all came from and for what purpose we exist. Our home on earth seems so insignificant and small, suspended as it is in the vastness of space. Is God out there somewhere in the vastness? Think about space for a moment. It seems to stretch on and on without any possibility of ending. When we try to imagine the size even of the known universe, it's impossible to truly comprehend. But let's try.

“The expanses of the universe are so immense that we measure them using the light-year, which is the distance light travels in 365 days. Light travels at the speed of 186,282 miles per second. In a year, that distance, multiplied out and rounded off, increases to 5,865,696,000,000, almost 6 trillion, miles. To put that in a perspective we can almost grasp, it takes a sunbeam just over 8 minutes to travel the 93 million miles from the sun to earth. So what is the size of the observable universe in terms of light-years? Scientists say matter is spread over a space at least 93 billion light-years across. Our Milky Way galaxy is roughly 100,000 light years in diameter. Its nearest sister galaxy, the Andromeda galaxy, is located roughly 2.5 million light years away. And there are probably more than 100 billion galaxies in the observable universe.

“As finite beings we simply cannot imagine such distances, such magnitude. And the very concept of infinite space is far more than our minds can handle. How was this vast space formed, and why? Could it all be here just by chance? And if not, how can we know why we are here?”

As a child, did you ever wonder where you came from? Complete the following sentence.

"I asked _____ where I came from and he or she told me..."

You may have proof of your family identity by a birth certificate, but what proof do you have that God created everything? How would you answer someone who asked, "How do you know God created all that there is?"

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Session Objective

To gain a greater devotion to and understanding of our Creator God and why he created us.

Notice: As explained in the introduction of this guide, to enhance your study experience there are two optional ways to view videos of Josh and Sean McDowell discussing each truth. To view the video segments free of charge via the web go to www.unshakabletruth.com/sg and follow the instructions below. If you prefer to purchase a high-resolution DVD more suitable for group use you may place your order on the website.



Video

So, if you elect to use the DVD or web links, view Session One, Part 1 now. This video is a 5-minute segment of Josh and Sean introducing this truth. The online session is at www.unshakabletruth.com/sg. Click on "Video Menu" and then "Session One, Part 1."

We are talking about Truth One: God Exists.

How Do You Answer?

What is your perception of God—what is he like? How would you define his qualities?

God has these characteristics:

Three horizontal lines for writing characteristics of God.

Where did you get your view of God? Check one or more.

- Four checkboxes with options: Mostly from my parents, Mostly from the church, Mostly from my friends, and Other.

Many people get their view of God based on the dominant authority figure from their childhood. Is that true of you? Who was that person, and how accurately did he or she reflect who God is?

Two horizontal lines for writing answers to the question about childhood authority figures.

Notice: Each video part 2 begins by repeating the on-the-street interviews.



Video

Now play DVD Session One, Part 2, or go back to the website www.unshakabletruth.com/sg to view an 11-minute conversation on this subject by Josh and Sean. Again, click first on "Video Menu" and then "Session One, Part 2."

Truth One: God Exists

We believe the truth that there is an infinite, personal God of the universe.

How It Applies

If you have children, what view of God do they have? Do you sense that your child's view of God reflects the child-parent relationship the two of you have? In what way?

Read Genesis 1:26-27. The identifying marker or distinguishing characteristic of God's image and likeness that we carry is the capacity for loving relationships. So how would you define the basic idea of *relationship*? In other words,

"Relationship to me means...

."

Read Genesis 2:18 and 23-24. What does this passage indicate relationship does for you?

God created each of us for relationship with him and one another. How do relationships remove our human aloneness and give us a sense of completeness and meaning? *"Relationships remove our aloneness and give us a sense of completeness when...*

."

Scripture gives us at least two insights into the way relationships remove our human aloneness.

Read Jeremiah 1:5. "To know" in this verse is the Hebrew word *yada*, and it denotes deep and intimate acquaintance. How does it make you feel when someone wants to know you for who you are? When someone knows you intimately, it deepens your relationship with him or her because...

Read Proverbs 3:32. "Friendship" in this verse is the Hebrew word *sod*, meaning vulnerable or transparent disclosure. God has openly revealed himself to us through Jesus, and he wants us to open ourselves up and be vulnerable to one another.

Why do we sometimes hesitate to be transparent and open with others? In other words,

"I am sometimes hesitant to be open with others because..."

The relational image of God is all about knowing and being known. The more we seek to know another person for who they truly are and reveal ourselves to them, the deeper our relationships will become.



Truth Encounter

Read Jeremiah 1:5.

Take a few moments to meditate on Jeremiah 1:5. Reflect on the truth that the sovereign God of the universe knows you. The same God who created our Milky Way, as well as the 100 billion other galaxies of our universe—knows you. He knows everything about you—your faults and failures, uncertainties and inadequacies, your good days and bad ones—and still he loves you deeply, intimately, and thoroughly. He loves you with an everlasting love!

Pause quietly and think about this amazing truth. Allow the Spirit to lead you as you consider this: The One who knows you the most, loves you the best! How does your heart respond?

God has made himself vulnerable by sharing his Son and his love with you. Could you make yourself vulnerable by sharing with him? Could you share your gratitude with him? Your praise, thanks, or worship?

“Dear God, as I reflect on both your knowing of me and loving me, my heart is moved with _____ . And I want to tell you...”

(For example: “My heart is moved with thanks. And I want to tell you that I would like to know you better and love you more.”)

If you are in a small group, share the sentence you wrote above with the others.



TruthTalk—An Assignment for the Week

The apostle Paul wrote:

“We loved you so much that we gave you not only God’s Good News but our own lives, too” (1 Thessalonians 2:8-9).

Consider the following ideas and make plans to initiate a spiritual conversation this week with someone, particularly those in your family. Share any insight you have had as you’ve encountered God’s truth. Relationally share a part of yourself. If you have a child or teenager, make sure to prioritize a time to start these spiritual conversations with them. Consider saying something like:

1 “I’ve been going through *The Unshakable Truth Study Guide*. I’ve been learning how the same God who created the entire universe knows us and loves us. I’ve been especially moved by that truth because...

2 “I’ve been concerned recently about my struggle with...

(my temper, unforgiveness, discouragement, gossip, or something else) and I’ve been so grateful to realize the truth that God knows all about my struggle, loves me anyway, and is working to change me!”

3 “As I look back at the path of my life with the various job opportunities and career moves, it sure seems like God knew exactly how my gifts and talents could best be used. It’s amazing to me that the God who directs the universe can orchestrate the smallest details of my life! I can look back and see how...

Ask God to provide an opportunity for you to share one or more of these TruthTalks with a friend, co-worker, child, teen, family member, or someone who needs Christ.

As a review read chapters 1–7 of *The Unshakable Truth* book this week and chapters 8–11 for the next session.

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Close Your Time in Prayer