



## The God We Wish We Knew Week One

### Opening Prayer:

God, help us to encounter you in this space today. Help our conversation grow our friendship and our faith.

### Talk It Over:

Everything starts somewhere and has a beginning point of sorts — relationships, career, and even our faith. Share about where your faith story started.

Some people are initially taught a rather simple framework for faith that says: God is good, God punishes evil and rewards good, and God answers prayer. But as life experiences are gained, we often see there is a gap between our experience and our simple faith foundation. In turn, our faith can end up feeling childish or irrelevant.

- What are some faith topics you have had to wrestle with personally because things weren't adding up between real life and the faith framework you had learned? What was that process like?
- In what ways has your faith ever felt irrelevant?

### Read Job 42:5 and Psalm 34:8

"The Bible says" was never intended to be the starting point for faith in Jesus. In fact, the New Testament wasn't put together until 250-300 A.D. This means for 250-300 years following the death and resurrection of Jesus nobody said "the New Testament says..." as a pathway to faith. And still, for those 250 - 300 years, thousands of people became follower of Jesus. It was through the passing of personal stories and personal encounters with Jesus that people continued to come to faith in Jesus. Fast forward to today and Jesus still holds the same power and invitation. Jesus wants people to experience him first hand. Jesus wants us to know who he is.

- What role did the Bible play in your faith journey? In what ways did the Bible help or not help you connect with Jesus?
- Share about a personal story or encounter you had with Jesus.

### Read Romans 3:22 and Read Romans 3:25-26 (The Message)

No matter who we are or what we've done, God's asks each of us into a relationship him. Jesus replaced religious checklists and made things right in his power because of his deep love for us.

- How hard or easy is it for you to believe that God has made things right between you and him? Why is this the case?

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- How hard or easy is it for you to believe God loves you just as you are? Why do you think this is the case?
- How are you doing at connecting with Jesus this season? Do you feel you are experiencing his love regularly? Why is this the case?

**Closing Prayer:**

God, thank you for your love and desire to connect with us. Help us to experience and engage with you in real ways this week. We want to grow more aware of your love and presence in our life.