



good question!

series companion

 **highrock**

2025

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered what heaven looks like? Or why is it that God allows chronic illnesses? How about if we truly have free will? Does God ever change His mind? We put out a call for Highrockers to share some of their curiosities about God, faith, or the Bible and we got a lot of really good questions! We hope you join us for this sermon series where we'll be responding to the questions that you asked. Together we'll search the scriptures and explore what the Bible has to teach us about a range of challenging and important subjects that many of us wonder about but often don't know where or how to ask.

RESOURCE OVERVIEW

Here we provide space to take notes on the sermon and Scripture text and answer reflection questions that you can discuss with others. When considering the reflection questions, remember that the goal is not to have all the "right" answers—instead, let these questions serve as a starting point for curiosity in your conversation with God and others. See the Appendix of this guide for more resources and opportunities to engage with this study.

Please note this discussion guide is created before the series begins. Discussion questions are prepared before the sermons are written and based on the theme and text for the week. Thank you for your understanding that the topic and focus of the sermon as the pastor writes it may differ from what is written in the discussion questions.

APPENDIX (page 15)

Offers a deeper dive into the topic as well as resources for Bible study, leading small groups, and links for further support.

- Additional Resources
- Online Bibles
- Prayer Tools
- "Icebreaker" Questions
- Tips for Guiding Conversations
- General Resources for Individual Support

SERMON SCHEDULE & SCRIPTURE READING

**Subject to change at the discretion of the pastors.*

Sermon	Topic & Scripture Passage
Week 1/2	Does God have a plan for my life?*
Week 1/2	Why don't we see miracles today like in the Bible?*
Week 3/4	Why does God allow disabilities?*
Week 3/4	Does God change his mind?*

Week 5	What does "fear of the Lord" mean?
Week 6/7	How do you really 'abide' in the joy of the Lord?
Week 6/7	Does God love the Canaanites, too?
Week 8	What is the justification for women being allowed to preach?

*For weeks 1 and 2, weeks 3 and 4 and weeks 6 and 7 use the passage/Question covered in the sermon from your Highrock congregation on Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

WEEKLY FORMAT

SERMON DISCUSSION

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT: Listen to the sermon, read weekly selections/view video links (if provided), read scripture passages, and answer reflection questions. (30-40 mins)

RELATE: Discuss reflection questions with your small group. (50 mins)

PRAY: Use the suggested prayer prompt to conclude your time (5-10 mins)

CONVERSATION COVENANT

We hope all small group discussions are lively and enriching, but sometimes tough topics will be discussed. The Conversation Covenant* is an agreement to hold respect and grace toward all participants within a small group, no matter the conversation. Please adhere to the Conversation Covenant or consider creating one that fits your context.

*Adapted from <https://conversational-leadership.net/conversation-covenant/>

I pledge:

To act in good faith, with curiosity. *I will assume the best about my conversation partners when entering into our groups. I will give the benefit of the doubt, recognizing that they may know something I don't.*

To show respect. *I will show respect. I will be polite and give due regard to the feelings and traditions of others. I understand that I do not have to agree with someone to show them respect.*

To speak the truth. *I won't use rhetorical tricks to try to win an argument. I will speak what I genuinely believe is the nuanced truth.*

To aim to discover the truth. *I will not enter into a conversation with the purpose of changing the mind of anyone to my way of thinking.*

To focus on what we can change. *I will focus on what we can do differently in the future since we cannot change what we did in the past.*

To take responsibility for the conversation. *I will take responsibility for the quality of the conversation and the abidance of the rules both in principle and in spirit.*

To follow the covenant even when others fail to do so. *I will abide by the rules regardless of whether another person breaks them.*

To respect the confidentiality of the group. *I will not share the stories of group members verbally or in written form (including on social media and online outlets).*

To lighten up and approach the conversation in good humor. *I recognize that humor is a hallmark of a constructive, generative conversation and take the conversation in good humor.*

PREPARE

The following questions are jumping-off points for personal reflection. Engage with them to awaken your awareness of themes in this sermon series. Pay attention to the questions that stand out to you and look back on them throughout the series to see how God might be speaking to you.

CONSIDER

This sermon series invites us into the practice of asking questions. Reflect on your own journey with this:

- When have you found yourself asking deep questions about your faith? What were they, and what prompted them?
- What kinds of faith questions are you wrestling with now—or would like to explore?
- How have others responded to your questions (or those of others), both helpfully and unhelpfully? What have you learned about creating a healthy space for questioning?

Consider how questioning relates to faith:

- Does asking questions feel natural or challenging in your faith journey?
- How do you see questioning reflected in Scripture? Who asks, who answers, and how? (For example, look at Genesis 3:1–10 and Mark 10:46–52.)

As you reflect:

- How might you bring your questions to God—in prayer, worship or daily practices?
- Is there a particular question or insight you feel nudged to share in small group conversations during this series?

WEEK 1/2: Does God have a plan for my life?

* For whether to use this week's discussion guide (Heaven) or the next one (Miracles), consult which Scripture passage/Question was covered in the sermon at your Highrock congregation this past Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights
- ☐ Reference the Bible passages used in the sermon.

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What role have questions played in your faith journey? How do you see asking questions as part of following Jesus, or might it be?
2. How do you relate to the question of this sermon – Does God have a plan for me life? Do you lean more towards God orchestrating and planning what goes on in your life and the world or more towards leaving things to chance?
3. How did this sermon nuance the affirmation that God speaks to us? Share your responses and reflections on this, including the ways God speaks to us.
4. Reflect on this line from this sermon: "What is God's will and how can my life be used to help accomplish it?" How is this different from the question, What is God's plan for my life? What do you think makes this distinction important?
5. Share with your group one simple way you can be intentional about following God's will this week. What would that look like for you?

PRAY | God of infinite beauty and goodness, we trust you with our lives. Help us in knowing and continually discerning your will. In the ways it has been made clear to us, trusting in your grace, give us the strength we need to follow it wholeheartedly.

WEEK 1/2: Why don't we see miracles today like in the Bible?*

* For whether to use this week's discussion guide (Miracles) or the previous one (Heaven), consult which Scripture passage/Question was covered in the sermon at your Highrock congregation this past Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Reference the Bible passages used in the sermon.

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon sparked new questions or insights for you?
2. Why do you think miracles interest people? What shapes your own view of them?

Consider these follow-up questions. Use them (or pass on them) based on your group's interests:

- Are there things that make it difficult for you to believe in miracles? What, if anything, would make you more open to the occurrence of miracles?
 - Presuppositions are the things we assume and bring into conversations with others. Consider what presuppositions you might have. How do you think they shape how we view the possibilities of miracles?
3. How can the idea of miracles move from being just theoretical to practical in your faith? How do you think it could impact your prayer life or relationship to God and others—what you expect God to do in your life?
 4. How has this conversation stirred a personal invitation or next step in your faith or relationships?

PRAY | God, above all, help us place our trust in you and your power. You can do more than we know or imagine. Meet us where we are, in our current expectations. But as you meet us where we are, also move us closer to you. In ways both subtle and profound, increase our faith. Help us be open to what you want to do in our lives and in this world.

WEEK 3/4: Why does God allow disabilities?*

* For whether to use this week's discussion guide (God and disabilities) or the next one (does God change God's mind?), consult which Scripture passage/Question was covered in the sermon at your Highrock congregation this past Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Reference the Bible passages used in the sermon (Luke 5:12-13, 20-26).

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon sparked new questions or insights for you?
2. Did this sermon cast new light or a different perspective on disability for you? Share with the group.
3. What do you think has shaped how you view disability? Are there personal experiences, key relationships with other people or perceptions that impact your view? How has this sermon spoken to your views or experiences in challenging, helpful or hopeful ways?
4. How did this sermon help you understand what a biblical idea of 'wholeness' and healing can look like?
5. Whether you identify as having a disability or not, what's one way that you, as part of the church community, can help your community see our differences as part of what makes us whole, a better reflection of Christ's body?
6. How has this conversation stirred a personal invitation or next step in your faith or relationships?

PRAY | God, help us see one another with the eyes of Christ. Help us see the dignity and vibrant image of God in one another. Help us see and experience the gifts that each one of us can be to one another. Amen.

WEEK 3/4: Does God change his mind?*

* For whether to use this week's discussion guide (does God change God's mind?) or the previous one (God and disabilities), consult which Scripture passage/Question was covered in the sermon at your Highrock congregation this past Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Reference the Bible passages used in the sermon.

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon or reading has brought up new questions or interesting points you would like to discuss?
2. Have you thought about God in the way Pastor Taylor described, actively relating with us? How does it compare with how you've thought about God at various points in your life? What, if anything, was new for you?
3. How do you think God's grace works alongside our will and ability to choose (our freedom)? What does this say about God? What does it say about us?
4. Drawing on the sermon and your discussion, how could understanding God in a more dynamic way impact your image of God, your spiritual life and/or what it means to participate in Christian community?
5. Perhaps drawing on question 4., how has this conversation stirred a personal invitation or next step in your faith or relationships?

PRAY | God, you are powerful enough to create this world and humble enough to become one of us. Help us appreciate you, your goodness and beauty, from the wonderful things you have done and continue to do in our midst. Help us accept your invitations into new life. Along the way, give us willing hearts to share in your life-giving work. Until your kingdom comes, Amen.

WEEK 5: What does “fear of the Lord” mean?

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock’s [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Reference the Bible passages used in the sermon.

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. Was there anything from the sermon or the Scripture that really stood out to you—maybe something that raised questions or sparked curiosity?
2. When you hear the phrase “fear the Lord,” what comes to mind? Have you come across it before, and if so, where? How do you think your early experiences shaped the way you understand it, both then and now?
3. How did Pastor John address the topic of fearing God? What issues or misunderstandings was he addressing? Did anything he said help you see this concept in a new light?
4. If you were to describe a biblical, life-giving way to understand “fear of the Lord,” what would that look like for you personally? How might that affect your spiritual life or how you connect with God?
5. How has this conversation stirred a personal invitation or next step in your faith or relationships?

PRAY | God, help us to fear you rightly; that is to say, help us to understand what fearing God means in light of your justice and truth, and above all, in light of your love. Your humble power is what makes you awesome – because of that, we worship you.

WEEK 6/7: What does it mean to *abide* in the joy of the Lord?

* For whether to use this week's discussion guide (TBD) or the next one (violence), consult which Scripture passage/Question was covered in the sermon at your Highrock congregation this past Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Read John 15:1-17

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. Was there anything from the sermon or reading that sparked a new question or made you think in a fresh way?
2. Coming into the sermon, what, if anything, did you think about what it means to 'abide' in God or 'abide' in the joy of the Lord? Did this sermon shed new light on this idea?
3. Pastor Prashan framed his sermon on abiding in joy in the context of responding to suffering. What's hard remaining close to God during challenges or suffering for you? Has it helped you before? Share with the group.
4. If you could remain closer to God in one area or challenging circumstance of your life right now, what would it be? What's one thing, perhaps something to incorporate into your prayer life, that could help you with that?
5. Do you see abiding in God's joy as different from happiness? If so, how?
6. Reflect on this statement, sharing whatever thoughts or feelings it brings up for you with the group in a few moments: God is with you right now. God abides with you.

PRAY | God, help us to abide in you as you remain with us. Make this a process of discovery and joyfulness for us. And make us attentive to the needs of a neighbor in our life this week, near or far, so that they too might experience the gift of your joy.

SCRIPTURE |

1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose

me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17 This is my command: Love each other.

WEEK 6/7: Does God love the Canaanites, too?

* For whether to use this week's discussion guide (violence) or the previous one (TBD), consult which Scripture passage/Question was covered in the sermon at your Highrock congregation this past Sunday. The other passage/Question will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Read Joshua 6:1-5,12-17.

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

*This week's topic is a sensitive one. As we begin, what thoughts or feelings are you bringing into the conversation? Do you think it would help to set a few group guidelines to keep the discussion respectful and open?

1. Was there anything from the sermon or reading that sparked a new question or made you think in a fresh way?
2. Before hearing the sermon, how would you have described your thoughts—or even just your gut feeling—about the topic of divine violence in the Bible (or God calling a people to war in the Bible)?
3. Did this sermon address any of these thoughts or feelings? Did it raise any new questions for you?
4. Pastor John said he thinks he'll wrestle with the topic of whether violence is ever justified for the rest of his life. Do John's comments resonate with you? How might they help us learn how to engage with the Bible in humble, constructive ways?
5. As a practice this week, try to fill out these two statements: (1) In following Christ, one way I can try to become more of a person of peace internally this week is by (2) I will try to bring more peace to the world around me, by

PRAY | God, help us move closer to becoming a united people with a vision for the kind of peace you give to us and that Jesus calls us to in this world. Where there is violence and strife around us, bring peace. May your justice flow like a river and your righteousness a never-ending stream.

SCRIPTURE |

1 Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

2 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. 3 March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. 4 Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. 5 When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in."

12 Joshua got up early the next morning and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13 The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the LORD and blowing the trumpets. The armed men went ahead of them and the rear guard followed the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets kept sounding. 14 So on the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

15 On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times. 16 The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city! 17 The city and all that is in it are to be devoted[a] to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.

WEEK 8: What is the justification for women being allowed to preach?

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights.
- ☐ Reference the Bible passages used in the sermon.

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. Was there anything in the sermon or reading that sparked a new question or insight for you?
2. If you grew up in the church, what kinds of roles did you see women take on—or not? What kinds of roles were afforded to them—or not?
3. Were there any scriptures or themes in the sermon that stood out to you? Did it/they shift or deepen any of your views?
4. How have you received wisdom, encouragement, or spiritual insight from women serving in ministry? Share what that was like with the group.
5. What's one thing you could do to help younger generations in the church grow up seeing women in preaching and leadership roles as normal life-giving examples of faithfulness?

PRAY | God, you have made all people in your image. We thank you in particular today for the gifts of women that have shaped our traditions and our church communities. Help us respond faithfully to your calling on our lives, and to be a supportive community where all of your people can flourish. Amen.

APPENDIX

Below are resources to look into if you are interested in diving deeper into some of the topics covered in this series. If you need resources that more specifically address your own experience, demographic, or faith journey, please reach out to a Highrock pastor or to smallgroups@highrock.org and we will be happy to help!

ONLINE BIBLES

- [Blue Letter Bible](#)
- [Bible Gateway](#)

PRAYER TOOLS

- [The Prayer of Examen: Tracking Our Moods](#)
- [Breath Prayer/Prayer of the Heart](#)
- [Divine/Fixed Hour Prayer](#)
- [SoulCare guide to Imaginative Prayer Spiritual Practice](#)
- [Imaginative Prayer/Ignatian Contemplation](#)
- [SoulCare guide to Recall & Paraphrase Spiritual Practice](#)
- [Lament](#)
- [Laughter and Prayer](#)
- [Palms Up, Palms Down](#)
- [Pray a Psalm in a Nature Setting](#)
- [Praying with your Body](#)
- [Welcoming Prayer](#)

“ICEBREAKER” QUESTIONS

- What was a small win from your week?
- Share a High/Low from your day or week.
- On a scale of 1-10, how are you doing coming into this meeting?
- If you were to describe yourself as a weather forecast today, what would you be? Example: sunny, partly cloudy, rainy with a chance of snow, etc.
- What song would be the theme track for the day you had?

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

- [Spiritual Practices](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Parenting & Kids—Understanding each other through Milestones](#)

TIPS FOR GUIDING CONVERSATION

- Allow everyone space to share. It's ok to ask what people are thinking even if they don't volunteer to share right away. But always give people the option to decline to share. Example: "Hey, Fred, you've been a little quiet and I'm curious to know what you think. Would you like to share anything?"
- Remember there aren't necessarily "right" answers. Encourage participants to simply be curious about what came up for them or others without the pressure of feeling like they "should" have thought or felt anything in particular. Example: Instead of asking "What is this story supposed to be communicating?" ask "What did you notice?"
- Embrace the differences. Affirm that different people can come to different conclusions regarding the same thing. Example: "Interestingly, the text reminded Susie of ABC, while it reminded José of XYZ. Both can be present and true."

- Adapt to suit your group's needs. Sometimes conversation is free-flowing and sometimes it's easier to move through discussion questions one at a time. Do what feels suitable for your group, but don't feel pressured to answer/discuss every single question.
- Encourage curiosity by modeling curiosity. Asking someone "Tell me more about XYZ" can be a really simple but effective tool to go deeper in conversation.
- Don't be afraid of silence. It's natural to want to fill silences or pauses in a conversation. But don't be afraid to sit in silence with your group members. Sometimes thoughts just need time to percolate, so don't feel like you have to rush to another question if no one shares immediately.
- Refer back to the Conversation Covenant. This is the posture that we as Highrock hold as we gather in groups. When the conversation gets tough, you can always refer back to the Conversation Covenant to remind the group that everyone has agreed to abide by this covenant in small group meetings.