

WONDER

Week 1 - What is Truth?

"Where I found truth, there I found my God, who is the truth itself." -Augustine

THE MAIN POINT

Students will be able to look at some of the questions that tend to be stumbling blocks when it comes to Christianity and find solid answers to those questions.

Without acknowledging that there is absolute TRUTH in the universe, it will be easy for students to say "that may be true for you, but it's not true for me" during the discussions in the upcoming weeks. Our goal this week is to establish the baseline idea that there is ultimate TRUTH that governs the universe, realize that we can know what it is, and open the door to seek out that TRUTH together!

MATERIALS NEEDED

- UNO deck
- Printed slips of paper with different "UNO" rules on them for each person in the group
 - Some examples for rules:
 - When someone plays a card, if you have an identical card in your hand you may immediately put it down, skipping anyone between you and the person who put down the other card.
 - If someone plays a 0 card, you may immediately switch their hand with someone else's hand of your choice (including your own)
 - (or use some rules from: <https://www.deepfun.com/2002/08/official-crazy-uno-rules.html>)

- Note - only put 1 or 2 rules on each slip of paper, they should all be different.

GETTING STARTED

Since this is your first meeting, take a few minutes to introduce yourself and allow each person to introduce themselves. This is a good time to be a little vulnerable as the leader because it will build the groundwork for letting the students be more vulnerable later. Say something like "Hey guys/girls I'm _____ one of the Campus Life leaders at _____ school. What you might not know about me is _____". Once you have shared ask the students to do the same. Again the more vulnerable you can be here the more it will help build trust in the group early on.

Once everyone has had a chance to share it's a good idea to cover the ground rules for small groups:

Share the rules for small group and ask if everyone can agree to them.

RULES FOR SMALL GROUP:

Commitment - Commit to being at every group meeting (make it a priority!)

Confidentiality - What is shared here stays here.

Be honest or be silent - don't make up an answer just to have one. Sometimes the most honest answer is no answer, so if you need to, just say pass.

Respect - for one another, their thoughts/ideas/opinions (no put downs).

Do those rules sound ok to you? Do you have any rules you would like to add?

Over the next 6 weeks we are on a mission to discover the answers together to some of the most important questions we can ask in life. Maybe you're here because you've heard us talking about God in Campus Life and you're just not sure about all that stuff. You have hard questions. Is there proof? Does God even exist? If there's a God, how do I know who He is and if this Christian God my CL leader talks about is Him? I am glad you're here, because if you've decided to be a part of this group, it means you are an adventurous thinker. You're not afraid to think about difficult things and

wrestle with difficult ideas. You're not afraid to wonder...

To be clear, this group is not about having debates. It's about thinking adventurously together and discovering what we might learn as a group. Remember the rules we just went over when discussing these things. We're not here to prove who's smarter or who can outwit the other. We're here to explore together. We're also asking that you keep an open mind. We are willing to hear you out. Be willing to hear us out. We're going to share the answers to some of these difficult questions from our perspective as Christians. We just ask that you'd be willing to at least consider what we have to say.

I hope you're ready to go there with me... to be an adventurous "wonderer" who's ready to find the truth. But first, we need to figure out what the word truth even is...

ACTIVITY

Ridiculous UNO

Before passing out cards, make sure everyone knows the "normal" UNO rules. If the majority of your students don't know UNO, then it may be better to do the same idea but with a different game they are more familiar with.

Before you deal cards, pass out one slip of paper with custom rules on it to each person. Each person follows the normal rules of UNO while playing unless they have a custom rule that says differently, then they follow their custom rule. Play 1-2 games. (note this is meant to be chaotic and to cause disagreements between people, if you feel it's getting out of hand feel free to cut it short).

GOING DEEPER

- What was the problem with our UNO game? (no one was playing by the same rules)
- And why was that a problem? (when no one is playing by the correct rules the game doesn't work)
- So how do we know what the true rules are? (the **creator** of the game told us!)
- Do you think this principle applies to the world itself? Is there truth that's true for everyone no matter what?

Not knowing what the truth is can be quite a problem. Let's take a look at some other areas of life

where knowing the real truth is important as well.

- What are some areas in our world where a set of rules or truths governs something? (traffic laws, scientific laws, math, sports, board games, etc.)

Maybe you've heard someone say "there is no absolute truth" or "that's true for you, but not for me" or "that might be wrong for you but it's right for me" or "your religion is good for you but it's not true for everyone."

- What do you think about that idea? Are there rules that apply to everyone everywhere no matter what? Is there a universal truth out there?
- What could be some potential problems if everyone actually lived as if there were no truth? (people have different values that can directly or indirectly contradict one another)
- Does people believing or not believing the rules that we see in our world change whether or not those rules are true?
 - What would happen if someone told you that the real traffic law was that you didn't have to stop at red lights?
 - What would happen if you decided you didn't believe gravity was real and you jumped off a tall building?
 - You laugh at that last question, but what about the people who believe the earth is flat? On what basis do you believe they are wrong?

We take for granted that we know the truth about some of those things like traffic laws, gravity, and the shape of the earth. However, when it comes to the big questions of life like "why do we exist?", "what happens after we die?", "how did the world & universe come to exist?", "is there a God?", "how do I know right & wrong?" there are many different answers out there, but is there one true answer? Is there an answer to these questions that is as true as gravity?

This conversation reminds me of this quote from the Bible - read Proverbs 3:13-14:

*"Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,
¹⁴ for the gain from her is better than gain from silver
and her profit better than gold.*

- Can someone summarize this passage for me in their own words?
- What do you think is the benefit of getting wisdom and understanding of the truth?

Based on what we have talked about already in other areas of life, do you think there is one objective true answer to the big questions of life? Is there one answer to the question about the existence of God and who He might be? Why or why not?

TAKE AWAY

I really and truly believe that there is a truth to be found when we look for it. Jesus actually promised it. He once said "keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." (Matthew 7:7-11 NLT)

So again, over these next few weeks, we are going to knock on some doors, we're going to ask, and we're going to seek. I believe that just as the answer to $2+2$ will always equal 4 no matter what, there is an answer to the questions we are asking if we're willing to hear them. Just like finding the correct rules for UNO involves looking to instructions written by the creator of the game, we're going to look at these questions and examine them from the Bible.