



### ICEBREAKER & OPENING THOUGHT

You may need to go first with this icebreaker. You may be tempted to get serious with this first question, but keep it light which will encourage people to talk about their first thoughts about God, or their lack of thought about God. Ask about the prayer the group was challenged to pray from the week before. Did anyone experience anything this last week they want to share?

### BIBLE DISCUSSION

The passage in Psalms is what many have experienced in the history of the world – that something about the world around us points to the glory of God. In fact, there are many philosophers today that believe we arrive at belief in God through these kinds of experiences, arguing that our minds are set up to come to belief in God when placed in situations that point to his existence. If you'd like to read more about this, you can check out Alvin Plantinga and his books and articles or just Google "belief in God as properly basic."

The passage in 1 John 4:8 says, "God is love." This statement means God's essence is love and all of his activity is loving. The reverse of this statement – that "love is God" is not what John is saying here, as if any experience of love is divine. That would make God an impersonal force in the world.

It may be helpful to point out that Romans 1:20 is not saying that creation points out everything we can know about God, but that creation does point to God's invisible qualities that are then made known more fully in the person of Jesus.

### LIFE APPLICATION

The existence of God is not something we can prove or disprove through the scientific method. The reason the scientific method is so successful, is that it has intentionally limited its scope to the study and explanation of the natural world, so by definition science as a discipline is not set up to answer this question for us. So belief in God is a different kind of "knowing" more like knowing the love of a friend, spouse, or a child.

So while we don't come to certainty in our belief in God through the scientific method, there are many pointers that lead rightly lead us to belief in God. Some of those may include our experience of relationships, beauty, our desire for justice, and even the wonder of the world around us revealed to us in science. More obvious pointers are miracles, dreams, and other special revelation of God to us. Still, there many have had their lives transformed by the constant reading of Scripture.

### CHALLENGE

As we close our time today, let's keep praying for God to make himself real to us, and let's keep an eye out for pointers to his existence. In addition to this prayer, look for an opportunity to have a conversation with another person about our discussion tonight. Is there someone at home, or at work, or in your neighborhood that might resonate with the deep things we're exploring and experiencing?