



# Writing Bible Questions

Section 3 of our study is called

**ANSWER / CREATE / ANSWER**

and in this section you will

first **answer** the questions that we created for you,

then **create** questions yourself,

and then **answer** the questions you created.

The questions we create for you will aim to focus on the big picture, but the questions you will create should aim to zoom in close.

The following information will help you develop the skill of writing Bible Questions for this study.

## Goals

Questions help us dig deeper and find the treasures of Scripture. Creating our own personal questions makes room for the Holy Spirit to personalize our treasure hunt as we all meditate on the same Bible Testimony. As you aim to write questions about each testimony, remembering these goals is important:

- I am seeking to know God better
- I am seeking knowledge and understanding of Scripture
- I am seeking to see and experience God working in my own testimony

## Zoom in close to create questions

As noted, as you seek to write questions, you will want to zoom in close to identify specific parts of the Bible Testimony. This is where you get to be nosy and exercise your privilege to learn more. Here are some suggestions of where to zoom with notated examples connected to Abraham and Sarah's testimony. You could zoom in on

- A specific event (ex. – the first time God spoke to Abraham, found in Genesis 12)
- A specific dynamic (ex. - how Abraham and Sarah were called to trust God with no details)
- A specific challenge (ex. – Abraham and Sarah's age)
- A specific action of the person (ex. – Abraham lying and saying that Sarah was his sister)
- A specific action of God (ex. – The Lord making a covenant with Abraham)
- A specific pattern of God (ex. – God appeared to Abraham and spoke to him over and over again)
- A specific word or phrase in the testimony that catches your attention ((ex. – Genesis 15:6 *“the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness”*)
- A specific part of the testimony that encourages your faith (ex. – God's question in Genesis 18:14 of *“is anything too difficult for the Lord?”*)
- A specific part of the testimony that challenges your faith (ex. – Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac)
- A specific part of the testimony that challenges your thinking about God (ex. – God's plan for Ishmael)
- Anything that is repeated such as an action, word, phrase, direction (ex. – God showing up to talk with Abraham)
- A specific thing that raises questions in your mind (ex. – why God didn't discipline Abraham for his actions regarding Sarah)
- And there are many more!

Please note: The last question that we create for you will always direct you to identify which parts of the Bible Testimony you will focus on in creating your own questions. Taking the time to do that on Day 10 will set you up for success on Days 11 and 12 as you create your questions.

## Keep God in view

This might seem repetitive, but it is important to always remember the first reason why we are studying Bible Testimonies... which is because we are seeking to know God better! So, as you are creating questions, make sure to always keep God in view and make Him a part of your questions. And remember, you are creating the questions so you can work through them with God, under His counsel and instruction.

## Layering questions is good

Layering questions allows you create a group of questions which work together. Your first questions of the grouping would probably begin with content, but then you can also layer on questions about God's perspective, and then also personal application. The following example of layered questions zooms in on the specific challenge Abraham and Sarah faced of being so advanced in age, and yet God promised them a baby.

**Question 1** – How old were Abraham and Sarah when God first promised them a baby?

**Question 2** – How old were Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was actually born?

**Question 3** – What does their testimony specifically reveal about the faith struggle each one of them had in believing that God would give them a baby at such an old age?

**Question 4** – What does their testimony reveal about what God thinks about their age, or any natural circumstance?

**Question 5** – Where do I also struggle to believe God can overrule natural circumstances to accomplish His plan?

**Question 6** – How does this testimony encourage me to trust God and His promises, no matter what?

## \*And when you answer...

This reference sheet is really about writing questions, not about answering them, However, in follow-up to the example questions above, it is important to note these things about answering...

**Get your answers out of your head by writing them in your journal.** Thinking about our answers is good, but writing them down is better, because writing them makes you articulate your answers with clarity.

**Be willing to research.** For example, maybe you are not clear on how old Abraham and Sarah were, but you can take the time to research and find out.

**Be specific in your answers.** Cite specific examples or words or thoughts.

**Reference Scripture** as much as you can in your answers. For example, to answer Question 4, you could reference what God said in Genesis 18:14 or reference the conversations God had with Abraham in Genesis 17:16-21 and Genesis 18:11-15 as you expound on your answer.

**Don't rush,** but instead give thorough, clear and thoughtful answers.

**Be willing to explore further.** If your answer opens another line of thought, be willing to explore that too. It might be where you discover some of the greatest treasure.

**Be ok if you don't know the answer.** Sometimes you won't have a totally clear answer. That is ok. Ask God to show you and wait for His instruction. He may reveal things to you now. He may not.

## Employ your imagination

The Bible doesn't reveal all the details we might like to know about each testimony, but God gave each of us an imagination and we can use it to create some really probing Bible questions. Some suggestions of things you can imagine to create good questions are:

**Personal experience...** putting yourself in the same situation, imagining how you would handle things.

**Feelings...** imagining how the characters may have felt, how God may have felt, how you might have felt.

**Outcomes and Impact...** imagining different outcomes and the impact of those different outcomes.

## Look for the Gospel

The Gospel of Jesus is certainly woven throughout the testimonies that we will study this year, so we should be on the lookout for it and committed to creating questions that bring it to light. These questions may appear simple, but their answers can be rich! For example, in connection to God's testimony in the lives of Abraham and Sarah, we definitely see a foreshadowing of the Gospel in Genesis 22:12-13, so we could write a simple question that sounds something like this...**How does Genesis 22:12-13 foreshadow the Gospel of Jesus?** And then answer it by articulating the reality of Jesus being the sacrifice that God provides.

## Things to avoid or minimize

As you write questions of each Bible Testimony, here are some things to avoid or minimize:

- Vague questions
- An excessive amount of questions that focus on feelings
- Fact questions
- Questions that only seek a "yes" or "no" answer
- Only creating questions for which you already know the answers.

