

Road Trip
to
TRUTH

Study Guide



Season 3

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How to Use This Curriculum

Two-thirds of American young adults leave the church between the ages of 18 and 22, according to a study done by LifeWay Research in 2017. Of those who dropped out, 71 percent did not plan to leave the church. A Pinetops Foundation report in 2019 predicted that about 35 million youths raised in Christian homes will depart from the faith over the next 30 years.

Although there are a variety of factors that lead to this exodus of young people from the Christian faith, the secular ideas encountered on university and college campuses undeniably exacerbate the issue. Campuses are rife with atheistic, evolutionary, and postmodern ideas that are incompatible with a biblical worldview.

The Road Trip to Truth curriculum is intended to prepare churched teenagers for the onslaught of postmodern ideas they will encounter on university campuses. The goal of this study is to introduce students to many of the ideas and arguments they will likely face and to persuade them of the reality and defensibility of the Christian worldview. After this study, students should be able to demonstrate the irrationality of an atheistic worldview, describe the Christian worldview and its basis, articulate the Gospel, and recognize many of the ideas and arguments indicative of non-biblical worldviews.

Curriculum Components

Road Trip to Truth DVD

This curriculum is based on The Road Trip to Truth, a 13-episode video series. Each approximately 30-minute episode invites experts to deal with a particular topic that students are likely to face on university campuses.

Student Guide

The student guide provides a place for students to engage with their assumptions and presuppositions as they are challenged by the content of this curriculum. This can become a valuable tool as they find themselves being confronted by the worldly claims of their peers. The guide presents four questions for each episode and space to take notes and record how answers may change throughout the study.

Teacher Guide

The teacher guide equips you to facilitate the study in a meaningful way. With detailed instructions, a clear schedule, main ideas, and a scripted Connection Point, you will be prepared to lead each session so that you can focus on engaging your students in the most effective way. The schedule includes pacing guides that are based on 1-hour of class time. If you have more time, you can inflate the discussion time between each video or allow for a deeper discussion following the last segment.

Questions

Each lesson begins with four questions the students should answer before watching the videos. All four questions should be answered at the beginning of the class. Each question corresponds to a segment of the episode. After each segment, pause the video and allow students to revisit the corresponding question. They should decide whether or not they would like to change their answer and record their reasoning. Discuss their answers and explanations as time allows.

Video Segments

Each session covers a full episode, broken into four segments. The episode should be paused after each segment to maximize the teaching content it covers. After each segment, use the main ideas provided to reinforce the concepts from the video. See Discussion Tips.

Connection Point

Provided with each segment is a scripted Connection Point. This section is scripted so it can be read directly, but you are encouraged to be familiar with the material and to make it your own. As the teacher, you know your students best and are uniquely qualified to engage them in a way that will have a lasting impact. The Connection Point is designed to reinforce the truths from the video, point to Scripture, and transition to the next video segment.

Conclusion

Use whatever time remains to answer questions, make announcements, and to close in prayer.

Discussion Tips

The strength of this curriculum depends on the engagement of the students with the ideas presented. Many of these ideas may be new and unfamiliar. Many unsuspecting university students are swept up by the philosophies of postmodernism and non-biblical worldviews without ever realizing the implications of those beliefs. Use the discussion time to guide students to think about what they believe, why they believe it, and how it lines up with truth. Use the following discussion tips to help you lead fruitful discussion:

- Discussion is most fruitful when a majority of students are involved. Manage students as necessary to draw out those who are quieter and keep the more vocal from dominating the conversation.
- Create an environment where students feel safe to share their thoughts and experiences without judgment or ridicule.
- While you need to be aware of your time, do not cut short a discussion that seems especially engaging to the students. Invest your time where the students respond best.
- Have a plan, but be flexible enough to allow the students to guide the discussion. In this way you will learn what aspects they are most concerned with.
- Use the students' answers to the questions, especially if they changed their answers, to launch discussion.

- Use the main ideas provided as prompts for discussion. Ask whether students agree with certain statements in the video. Encourage thoughtful explanations.
- Ask questions that require thoughtful answers.
- Avoid leading questions; the goal of discussion is not to receive correct answers, but to lead students to think about their answers
- Be prepared to offer correction to false ideas, especially toward the end of the curriculum, but when possible, guide students to discover for themselves the flaws in their thinking

Sample Schedule

Below is a sample schedule based on one hour of class time. Exact timing will vary with segment lengths and success of discussion.

6:00-6:01	Open, introduction, and prayer.
6:01-6:03	Have students answer all four questions.
6:03-6:11	Watch video segment one. Pause.
6:11-6:17	Discuss segment one and students' answers to question one.
6:17-6:25	Watch video segment two. Pause.
6:25-6:31	Discuss segment two and students' answers to question two.
6:31-6:39	Watch video segment three. Pause.
6:39-6:45	Discuss segment three and students' answers to question three.
6:45-6:51	Watch video segment four.
6:51-6:57	Discuss segment four and students' answers to question four.
6:57-7:00	Wrap-up, answer questions, make announcements, close in prayer.

Episode 1: Take Me to Your Leader

KEY QUESTIONS

Have students write their answers to all four questions. We will discuss how their answers change after watching the video segments.

1. The Bible (choose one)
 - Does give answers about aliens.
 - Does not give answers about aliens.
2. The existence of aliens is (choose one)
 - Supported by UFOs.
 - Unscientific.
3. Angels (choose one)
 - Could be what people think are aliens.
 - Cannot be the same thing as aliens.
4. Alien righteousness is (choose one)
 - The ethical behavior of super-evolved extraterrestrials.
 - Perfect holiness attributed to on who does not deserve it.

Episode 1: Segment 1

Aliens and the Bible

VIDEO

Play the first segment of Road Trip to Truth episode 1. Encourage students to take notes.

Main ideas:

- The fascination in aliens is driven by the motivation to vindicate the belief in the secular naturalistic worldview
- Science has not proven life to exist elsewhere and, in fact, has demonstrated the universe to be hostile to life
- The Bible says nothing about life on other planets
- The Bible uses nephesh chayya to refer to living creatures (plants not included)
- Finding extraterrestrial life would in no way undermine the Bible
- In a secular worldview, we should expect to see life all over the universe, which we don't

DISCUSSION

Have students write down if and why their answer to the first question has changed after watching the video. The main ideas listed for each video segment can become talking points or questions to help generate discussion. Encourage discussion as time allows. Use the provided connection point to reinforce the truths from the video, point to Scripture, and transition to the next video.

Connection Point: Many people are fascinated by aliens. They make for great sci-fi stories, but is it possible that there could truly be sentient life on other planets? Although the Bible is silent on the existence of aliens, we can—and should—still look to God's Word to form our worldview and inform our understanding of the universe. Colossians 1:16 makes it clear that "by [Jesus] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible." That would include aliens, if they existed. However, we also see in Isaiah 45:18 that God "formed [the earth] to be inhabited." There is no such statement about other planets. If we start with a biblical worldview, there is nothing to suggest extraterrestrials exist.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

- Do you think it is possible we may discover life on other planets?
- Do you think the discovery of aliens would change the way you think about the universe?



Episode 1: Segment 2

UFOs: Unidentified Flying Objections

VIDEO

Play the second segment of Road Trip to Truth Episode 1. Encourage students to take notes.

Main ideas:

- A UFO is an unidentified flying object (also called Unidentified Aerial Phenomenon)
- If UFOs turned out to be directed by sentient aliens, it would be difficult to reconcile with biblical theology since Jesus came to die for the race of Adam.
- In alleged encounters with aliens, there is never any tangible evidence or additional eye-witnesses.
- Due to the lack of quantifiable data, it is unscientific to reach the conclusion that aliens are likely to exist.
- The Bible's silence on the subject of aliens and UFOs seems to best reflect reality.

DISCUSSION

Have students write down if and why their answer to the second question has changed after watching the video. The main ideas listed for each video segment can become talking points or questions to help generate discussion. Encourage discussion as time allows. Use the provided connection point to reinforce the truths from the video, point to Scripture, and transition to the next video.

Connection Point: Those who want to believe in the existence of aliens often point to UFOs as evidence. However, there are many possible explanations for UFOs (planets, satellites, drones, atmospheric phenomena, etc.), and there has never been any tangible evidence that a UFO has originated from alien intelligence. Because of this lack of data, it is actually unscientific to conclude that aliens are likely to exist. The Bible's silence seems to best reflect reality. It is also worth noting that if we start with biblical theology, it seems unlikely there are other sentient beings in the universe. The Bible says that all creation was subjected to the curse of sin (Romans 8:20-21). Furthermore, Jesus came to be born into the race of Adam to save mankind (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:45). If aliens existed, it would be difficult to reconcile with this theology. However, there is no evidence that aliens are likely to exist.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

- Have you ever seen a UFO or heard about a UFO sighting? How did you respond?
- Do you think it is more scientific to believe in the possibility of aliens or to reject the possibility?

Episode 1: Segment 3

Angels and Demons

VIDEO

Watch the third segment of Road Trip to Truth Episode 1. Encourage students to take notes.

Main ideas:

- While the Bible never speaks about sentient, moral, personal, intelligent, physical beings from other planets, it does talk about personal, moral, sentient, intelligent, spiritual beings—angels.
- Angels are described as messengers travelling between Earth and the spiritual realm.
- Angels could not be aliens because they are not biological beings.
- There are many misconceptions in pop-culture about angels and demons.
- Satan doesn't rule over Hell; he is tormented like everyone else in Hell.

DISCUSSION

Have students write down if and why their answer to the third question has changed after watching the video. The main ideas listed for each video segment can become talking points or questions to help generate discussion. Encourage discussion as time allows. Use the provided connection point to reinforce the truths from the video, point to Scripture, and transition to the next video.

Connection Point: Many people have wrong ideas about angels because of the way they have been portrayed through history and in pop culture. The Bible describes angelic beings as messengers and servants of God. They are spiritual beings, though they are sometimes given temporary physical bodies (e.g., Genesis 19:15). They are spoken of in the masculine sense and are created beings. Humans do not turn into angels when they die. Likewise, demons are often misrepresented in pop culture. Most importantly, Satan is not God's equal. God will defeat Satan and if we submit to God, the devil must flee from us (James 4:7). Satan doesn't rule over Hell but suffers torment like all others who rejected and rebelled against God.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

- What do you think angels are like? What do they do?
- Is it easier to believe in aliens or angels?

Episode 1: Segment 4

Alien Righteousness

VIDEO

Watch the fourth segment of Road Trip to Truth Episode 1. Encourage students to take notes.

Main ideas:

- Many view the Bible and its descriptions of the spiritual realm as mythology.
- Some claim that it would be easier to believe the Bible's teachings about the spiritual realm if someone from there came and told us about it.
- Jesus did come from the spiritual realm, put on flesh, and teach us about spiritual things.
- Alien righteousness refers to the righteousness of Christ that is given to us through salvation.
- We are alienated from the holy God by our sin but God offers reconciliation through his Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for our sin and gives us his righteousness instead.

DISCUSSION

Have students write down if and why their answer to the fourth question has changed after watching the video. The main ideas listed for each video segment can become talking points or questions to help generate discussion. Encourage discussion as time allows. Then, use the provided connection point to reinforce the truths from the video, and point to Scripture.

Connection Point: When talking about religion, most people would agree that it can be hard to believe something without seeing it. And yet many hold to the possibility that aliens exist despite the lack of evidence. It is easier to believe in aliens because of the hope that evidence may yet be found. But the real reason it is easier is because it doesn't require surrendering oneself to the Creator God. God is holy, completely different from us. We are not holy. We are in rebellion and cannot be near God; his presence would destroy us. God must judge sin and those who set themselves up as little gods (Rom 3:23). We are the aliens, separated from God and needing reconciliation. But God does not leave us in that state. His alien righteousness is available to us through trust in him and his work here on earth (Luke 19:10).

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

- Have you ever thought of Jesus as an alien? What does the word "alien" mean?
- What does it mean that we are alienated from God? How can we be reconciled?

CONCLUSION

Use whatever time remains to answer questions, make announcements, and close in prayer.

Episode 1:

Additional Sources

GotQuestions.org. *“How would it impact the Christian faith if it was discovered that aliens exist?”* GotQuestions.org. Accessed September 9, 2022. <https://www.gotquestions.org/aliens-Christian.html>.

The Bible gives us no reason to believe that there is extraterrestrial life. However, if a discovery were to reveal alien life, there would be no effect on genuine Christianity. The Word of God is our absolute authority in every area of life, and no discovery can change that. The Earth and mankind are unique in God’s creation, and the Bible reveals the history of mankind in relation to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The presence of extraterrestrial life, however unlikely, in no way undermines the authority of Scripture.

Slick, Matt. *“Does the Bible mention extraterrestrial or alien life?”* CARM.org. September 24, 2013. Accessed September 15, 2022. <https://carm.org/about-the-bible/does-the-bible-mention-extraterrestrial-or-alien-life>.

The Bible makes no mention of extraterrestrial life. It does, however, mention otherworldly forces—namely, angels and demons. Although the Bible is silent on the issue of aliens, many speculate that biblical theology rules out the possibility of such life. Romans 8:22 states that the whole of creation groans because of the effects of Adam’s sin. This suggests that any other life forms would also be fallen and in need of a redeemer. However, Jesus came to live a human life in order to reconcile mankind to God. So if another sentient species exists, they have no redeemer.

Griswold, Alexander. *“Ancient Aliens: I Don’t Want to Believe.”* Juicy Ecumenism. July 26, 2013. Accessed September 15, 2022. <https://juicyecumenism.com/2013/07/26/ancient-aliens-i-dont-want-to-believe>.

There are many off-the-wall theories regarding aliens, UFOs, and conspiracies about alien influence in ancient civilizations. In particular, some people point to biblical accounts with unexplained phenomenon or supernatural occurrences as evidence of alien life. Though some of these proponents claim to be Christian, many are using the possibility of aliens as alternative explanations to the miracles that God told us He performed. We can be certain that speculation has gone too far when it attributes the works of God to extraterrestrials.

Lisle, Dr. Jason. *“Are Aliens Real?”* Chapter 18 in *The New Answers Book 1*. Master Books, 2007. Accessed September 15, 2022. <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/alien-life/are-aliens-real>.

Many Christians have bought into the idea that extraterrestrial life could exist in other areas of the universe. Although the Bible is silent on the existence of aliens, it is important to note that the idea of extraterrestrial life stems largely from evolutionary ideas. If life evolved here, it is likely that it has evolved somewhere else as well. Another troublesome consideration is that of God’s plan of redemption. All of creation has been subjected to the effects of sin, and yet Jesus came to save the sons of Adam. We should also consider that we have no evidence that there may be life elsewhere. The lack of evidence lines up with a biblical understanding that aliens likely don’t exist. Most of the hype about aliens come from evolutionary speculation or an attempt to explain the world without God. As Christians, we must start with the Bible, and it gives us no reason to expect to find alien life.