

nooma discussion guides

nooma discussion guides offer a unique approach to exploring faith, spirituality, and real-life issues in small groups, churches, and classrooms. These guides are designed to complement the popular NOOMA video series, providing structured questions and thoughtful prompts that foster meaningful conversations. Throughout this article, you'll discover the origins and purpose of NOOMA guides, their key features, and practical tips for effective use in various settings. We'll also examine how these guides benefit group dynamics, encourage deeper engagement, and adapt to different age groups and contexts. Whether you're a group facilitator, educator, or someone seeking resources for spiritual growth, this comprehensive overview will help you make the most of NOOMA discussion guides and enhance your group experiences. Read on to unlock practical strategies, expert insights, and answers to common questions about these powerful resources.

- Overview of NOOMA Discussion Guides
- Origins and Purpose of NOOMA Guides
- Key Features of NOOMA Discussion Guides
- Benefits for Small Groups and Churches
- How to Use NOOMA Discussion Guides Effectively
- Adapting Guides for Different Groups
- Tips for Facilitators Using NOOMA Discussion Guides
- Frequently Asked Questions about NOOMA Discussion Guides

Overview of NOOMA Discussion Guides

NOOMA discussion guides are companion materials created to facilitate conversation and reflection around the NOOMA video series. The NOOMA series, developed by Rob Bell, is well-known for its short, thought-provoking films addressing profound spiritual and life questions. The guides build on the video content, helping groups engage deeply with the themes presented, such as forgiveness, love, purpose, and faith. Designed for use in small groups, youth ministries, church gatherings, and classrooms, NOOMA discussion guides serve as a bridge between watching the videos and applying the lessons to everyday life. These resources are structured to encourage open dialogue, critical thinking, and personal growth, making them ideal for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of spiritual topics.

Origins and Purpose of NOOMA Guides

The NOOMA series was launched in the early 2000s, quickly gaining popularity for its innovative approach to faith-based teaching. Recognizing the need for structured group engagement, NOOMA discussion guides were developed to complement each video episode. The primary purpose of these guides is to prompt meaningful conversations, encourage reflection, and provide a practical framework for discussing complex spiritual themes. Unlike traditional study materials, NOOMA guides focus on open-ended questions and real-life scenarios, allowing participants to share personal experiences and insights. This approach makes the guides accessible to a wide range of audiences, regardless of their background or familiarity with faith topics.

Key Features of NOOMA Discussion Guides

NOOMA discussion guides stand out for their thoughtful design and adaptability. Each guide typically includes a summary of the video, discussion questions, and application challenges. The questions are crafted to be open-ended, inviting diverse perspectives and fostering genuine dialogue. The guides often provide background information about the video's theme, relevant scripture references, and suggestions for group activities.

- Open-ended, thought-provoking questions
- Scripture references and related readings
- Background context for each video
- Application and reflection exercises
- Flexible format for groups of various sizes

This combination of elements makes NOOMA discussion guides a versatile resource for facilitators and group leaders. By addressing both intellectual and emotional aspects of faith, the guides help participants connect the video content to their own lives and beliefs.

Benefits for Small Groups and Churches

NOOMA discussion guides offer several benefits for small groups, churches, and other faith-based communities. Their structured format ensures that conversations stay focused while allowing for authentic sharing. The guides promote active listening, empathy, and respect among participants, building a sense of trust and community. For churches, these guides serve as effective tools for spiritual formation, outreach, and discipleship. Small groups can use NOOMA guides to explore challenging topics in a safe, supportive environment.

Enhancing Group Engagement

NOOMA guides encourage participation from all group members, regardless of personality or background. The open-ended questions invite everyone to contribute, fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect.

Supporting Spiritual Growth

By addressing real-life issues and connecting them to faith perspectives, NOOMA discussion guides help participants grow spiritually and emotionally. The guides encourage self-reflection and personal application, making the lessons relevant beyond the group setting.

Building Stronger Communities

Regular use of NOOMA guides can strengthen group cohesion and trust. Participants learn to listen actively, share authentically, and support one another through life's challenges, creating lasting bonds within the community.

How to Use NOOMA Discussion Guides Effectively

Maximizing the impact of NOOMA discussion guides requires thoughtful preparation and facilitation. Begin by watching the corresponding NOOMA video as a group, allowing time for initial reactions and impressions. Use the guide to structure the conversation, starting with summary points and moving into discussion questions. Encourage participants to share personal experiences and perspectives, keeping the conversation respectful and focused.

Step-by-Step Approach

1. Preview the NOOMA video and discussion guide before the meeting.
2. Set a welcoming tone and establish ground rules for dialogue.
3. Watch the video together, noting key themes and questions.
4. Begin discussion with summary points and open-ended questions.
5. Encourage participants to relate the content to their own lives.
6. Facilitate application and reflection exercises.
7. Close with a summary and optional prayer or meditation.

This structured approach ensures that discussions remain engaging, relevant, and inclusive,

allowing everyone to benefit from the experience.

Adapting Guides for Different Groups

NOOMA discussion guides are designed to be flexible, making them suitable for various age groups, backgrounds, and contexts. Facilitators can tailor the questions and activities to fit the needs of their group, whether working with youth, adults, or intergenerational communities. For younger audiences, simplifying language and focusing on relatable scenarios can enhance engagement. In more diverse groups, allowing space for differing viewpoints and cultural experiences enriches the conversation.

Tips for Customizing Content

- Adjust language and complexity for age and comprehension levels.
- Select discussion questions most relevant to your group's interests.
- Incorporate creative activities or multimedia elements.
- Encourage cross-generational dialogue and sharing.
- Respect different beliefs and perspectives within the group.

Adapting NOOMA guides for your specific context ensures that every participant can engage meaningfully with the material.

Tips for Facilitators Using NOOMA Discussion Guides

Effective facilitation is key to maximizing the benefits of NOOMA discussion guides. Facilitators should create an environment of trust and openness, encourage participation from all members, and guide the conversation with empathy and respect. Preparation is essential—review the guide and video in advance, anticipate potential challenges, and be ready to adapt as needed. Use active listening skills to ensure everyone feels heard, and avoid dominating the conversation.

Best Practices for Facilitators

- Prepare thoroughly before each session.
- Set clear guidelines for respectful discussion.

- Encourage equal participation from all members.
- Use follow-up questions to deepen conversation.
- Stay flexible and responsive to group dynamics.
- Summarize key insights and encourage application.

With these best practices, facilitators can create impactful group experiences that lead to lasting personal and spiritual growth.

Frequently Asked Questions about NOOMA Discussion Guides

NOOMA discussion guides are trusted resources for group facilitators, educators, and church leaders seeking to inspire meaningful conversations. Understanding their features, benefits, and best practices can help you use them effectively in your community.

Q: What are NOOMA discussion guides?

A: NOOMA discussion guides are companion materials designed to facilitate conversation and reflection around the NOOMA video series. They provide structured questions and prompts for small groups, churches, and classrooms.

Q: How do NOOMA discussion guides benefit small groups?

A: These guides promote open dialogue, critical thinking, and personal growth. They help small groups connect video themes to real-life experiences and spiritual development.

Q: Can NOOMA discussion guides be used with youth groups?

A: Yes, NOOMA guides are highly adaptable and can be customized for youth groups by adjusting language, activities, and questions to fit the age and interests of participants.

Q: Do NOOMA discussion guides require prior knowledge of the NOOMA series?

A: While familiarity with the NOOMA videos enhances the experience, the guides provide sufficient background and context for new users to participate meaningfully.

Q: What topics do NOOMA discussion guides cover?

A: The guides address a variety of spiritual and life themes such as forgiveness, love, purpose, faith, and dealing with challenges, aligning with the content of each NOOMA video.

Q: How long does a typical NOOMA discussion session last?

A: Sessions typically range from 45 minutes to 90 minutes, depending on group size, depth of discussion, and additional activities included.

Q: Are NOOMA discussion guides available for all NOOMA videos?

A: Most NOOMA videos have corresponding discussion guides, though availability may vary. Facilitators can also create custom guides based on the video content.

Q: What makes NOOMA discussion guides different from other study materials?

A: NOOMA guides focus on open-ended questions and real-life application, encouraging authentic dialogue rather than simple factual recall or scripted answers.

Q: Can NOOMA discussion guides be used outside of church settings?

A: Absolutely. These guides are suitable for classrooms, community groups, counseling sessions, or any setting where meaningful spiritual conversation is desired.

Q: How can facilitators ensure a successful NOOMA discussion?

A: Preparation, empathy, active listening, and adaptability are key. Facilitators should create a safe environment, encourage participation, and guide conversations thoughtfully using the NOOMA discussion guides.

[Nooma Discussion Guides](#)

Find other PDF articles:

<https://fc1.getfilecloud.com/t5-w-m-e-05/files?dataid=ZhA56-4755&title=glencoe-world-history-answer-key.pdf>

Nooma Discussion Guides: Deepening Your Spiritual Journey Through Meaningful Conversation

Are you ready to take your Nooma experience to the next level? Beyond simply watching Rob Bell's insightful videos, are you craving a deeper, more engaging connection with the material and with others? This comprehensive guide explores the power of Nooma discussion guides and provides you with everything you need to facilitate enriching conversations, fostering spiritual growth and community building. We'll delve into why discussion guides are vital, explore different types available, offer tips for effective facilitation, and provide resources to help you get started.

Why Use Nooma Discussion Guides?

Nooma videos tackle complex theological and philosophical questions with a refreshing perspective. However, the true power of Nooma unfolds when you engage in thoughtful discussion with others. Using discussion guides offers several key benefits:

Deeper Understanding: Articulating your thoughts and hearing the perspectives of others significantly enhances comprehension and retention of the video's core message.

Enhanced Personal Application: Discussion prompts encourage self-reflection, helping you apply Nooma's teachings to your own life experiences.

Community Building: Sharing your thoughts and feelings in a safe and supportive environment fosters connection and strengthens community bonds.

Spiritual Growth: Engaging in thoughtful dialogue with others can stimulate spiritual growth and challenge your beliefs in a positive way.

Improved Retention: The act of discussing the videos helps embed the concepts more firmly in your memory.

Types of Nooma Discussion Guides

While official, published Nooma discussion guides might be limited, the principles behind them can be applied creatively. You can find resources online offering various approaches:

1. Official Nooma Resources (If Available):

Check the official Nooma website or related resources. They may offer downloadable guides or suggest discussion points for specific videos.

2. Creating Your Own Discussion Guide:

This is a highly flexible and adaptable approach. You can tailor questions specifically to your group's needs and the video's content. Focus on open-ended questions that encourage thoughtful responses rather than simple "yes" or "no" answers.

3. Utilizing Online Forums and Communities:

Engage with online Nooma communities. Many individuals share their interpretations and reflections on the videos, providing a rich source of discussion prompts.

Facilitating Effective Nooma Discussions

Leading a successful Nooma discussion requires skillful facilitation. Here are some key tips:

1. Set a Welcoming and Safe Space:

Emphasize respect and open-mindedness. Encourage active listening and avoid judgmental comments.

2. Start with Icebreakers:

Begin with lighthearted questions to help participants relax and connect before diving into deeper theological themes.

3. Use Thought-Provoking Questions:

Craft questions that stimulate reflection and encourage diverse viewpoints. Consider using a blend of personal, interpretive, and application-based questions. Examples: "How did this video challenge your assumptions?", "What resonated most with you?", "How can you apply this teaching to your daily life?"

4. Manage Time Effectively:

Allocate sufficient time for each discussion point, ensuring everyone has an opportunity to share their thoughts.

5. Summarize Key Takeaways:

At the end of the discussion, summarize the main points and reflections to reinforce learning and provide closure.

Finding and Utilizing Nooma Discussion Resources

While dedicated, official Nooma discussion guides might be scarce, resourceful individuals and groups have created alternatives. Search online for "Nooma discussion questions," "Nooma study guides," or "Nooma small group resources." You might discover blog posts, forum threads, or even independently created guides that align with specific Nooma videos.

Conclusion

Engaging with Nooma through discussion guides significantly amplifies the transformative power of Rob Bell's work. By fostering deeper understanding, encouraging personal application, and building community, these guides offer a pathway to richer spiritual growth. Remember that the most effective guides are those that foster open dialogue, respect diverse viewpoints, and facilitate meaningful connection. So, gather your friends, family, or community group, and embark on a deeper exploration of Nooma together.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1: Where can I find official Nooma discussion guides?

A1: Unfortunately, official, comprehensive Nooma discussion guides are not widely available. Check the official Nooma website and related resources for any available materials.

Q2: How do I create my own discussion guide?

A2: Watch the Nooma video carefully. Identify key themes, concepts, and questions raised. Develop open-ended questions that encourage reflection and personal application. Consider including questions that explore different perspectives and challenge assumptions.

Q3: What if my group struggles to engage in the discussion?

A3: Start with icebreakers. Pose simpler questions to build confidence. Ensure a safe and respectful environment. Offer prompts that relate the video's message to participants' daily lives.

Q4: Can I use Nooma discussion guides with different age groups?

A4: Yes, but adapt the questions and discussion topics to the age and maturity level of the group. For younger audiences, focus on simpler concepts and relatable examples.

Q5: Are Nooma discussion guides only for religious groups?

A5: No, Nooma discussions can benefit anyone interested in exploring themes of spirituality, life purpose, and personal growth. The discussions are open to people of diverse faith backgrounds or no faith background at all.

nooma discussion guides: Collection 001 Nooma Group, Rob Bell, 2009-12-29 NOOMA Group 01, Book 001-004 is designed to accompany the NOOMA Group 01 DVD and is intended to facilitate discussions based on the themes and questions raised in NOOMA Films 001-004. NOOMA Book 001-004 helps viewers delve more deeply and meaningfully into the issues raised in NOOMA Films 001-004 Û 001 Rain, 002 Flame, 003 Trees, and 004 Sunday. Viewers will explore and discuss issues such as where God is in the midst of our pain, the deeper meanings of the word ÔloveÕ, whether or not our lives have any real significance, and the possibility that we get so blinded by religion that we miss out on what God truly wants. Watch the films with friends, open the book, and together begin to search, question, and join the discussion.

nooma discussion guides: Love Wins Rob Bell, 2011-03-15 Millions of Christians have struggled with how to reconcile God's love and God's judgment: Has God created billions of people over thousands of years only to select a few to go to heaven and everyone else to suffer forever in hell? Is this acceptable to God? How is this good news? Troubling questions—so troubling that many have lost their faith because of them. Others only whisper the questions to themselves, fearing or being taught that they might lose their faith and their church if they ask them out loud. But what if these questions trouble us for good reason? What if the story of heaven and hell we have been taught is not, in fact, what the Bible teaches? What if what Jesus meant by heaven, hell, and salvation are very different from how we have come to understand them? What if it is God who wants us to face these questions? Author, pastor, and innovative teacher Rob Bell presents a deeply biblical vision for rediscovering a richer, grander, truer, and more spiritually satisfying way of

understanding heaven, hell, God, Jesus, salvation, and repentance. The result is the discovery that the good news is much, much better than we ever imagined. Love wins.

nooma discussion guides: *The Care of Souls* Harold L. Senkbeil, 2019-06-26 Drawing on a lifetime of pastoral experience, *The Care of Souls* is a beautifully written treasury of proven wisdom which pastors will find themselves turning to again and again. Harold Senkbeil helps remind pastors of the essential calling of the ministry: preaching and living out the Word of God while orienting others in the same direction. And he offers practical and fruitful advice—born out of his five decades as a pastor—that will benefit both new pastors and those with years in the pulpit. In a time when many churches have lost sight of the real purpose of the church, *The Care of Souls* invites a new generation of pastors to form the godly habits and practical wisdom needed to minister to the hearts and souls of those committed to their care.

nooma discussion guides: *What We Talk About When We Talk About God* Rob Bell, 2014-09-02 How God is described today strikes many as mean, primitive, backward, illogical, tribal, and at odds with the frontiers of science. At the same time, many intuitively feel a sense of reverence and awe in the world. Can we find a new way to talk about God? Pastor and New York Times bestselling author Rob Bell does here for God what he did for heaven and hell in *Love Wins*: he shows how traditional ideas have grown stale and dysfunctional and reveals a new path for how to return vitality and vibrancy to how we understand God. Bell reveals how we got stuck, why culture resists certain ways of talking about God, and how we can reconnect with the God who is with us, for us, and ahead of us, pulling us forward into a better future—and ready to help us live life to the fullest.

nooma discussion guides: *What is the Bible?: How an Ancient Library of Poems, Letters and Stories Can Transform the Way You Think and Feel About Everything* Rob Bell, 2017-05-16 The New York Times bestselling author Rob Bell, using his inspired and inquisitive approach, focuses on the most widely read book of all time. He provides surprising insights and answers about how the Bible actually works as a source of faith and guidance, showing a brand-new way of reading this sacred text.

nooma discussion guides: *Velvet Elvis* Rob Bell, 2006-06-29 In order to find an authentic understanding of the Christian faith, Bell frees readers to consider God beyond the picture someone else painted.

nooma discussion guides: *Jesus Wants to Save Christians* Rob Bell, Don Golden, 2009-03-17 There is a church not too far from us that recently added a \$25 million addition to their building. Our local newspaper ran a front-page story not too long ago about a study revealing that one in five people in our city lives in poverty. This is a book about those two numbers. *Jesus Wants to save Christians* is a book about faith and fear, wealth and war, poverty, power, safety, terror, Bibles, bombs, and homeland insecurity. It's about empty empires and the truth that everybody's a priest. It's about oppression, occupation, and what happens when Christians support, animate and participate in the very things Jesus came to set people free from. It's about what it means to be a part of the church of Jesus in a world where some people fly planes into buildings while others pick up groceries in Hummers.

nooma discussion guides: *The Luminous Web* Barbara Brown Taylor, 2017-03-31 With her customary grace, intelligence and wit, Barbara Brown Taylor wonders why science and faith have become polarized in the popular imagination. She explores what quantum physics, the new biology and chaos theory can teach people of faith and why scientists sound like poets and why physicists use the language of imagination, ambiguity, and mystery that is also found in scripture. In explaining why the church should care about the new insights of science, Taylor suggests ways we might close the gap between spirit and matter, between the sacred and the secular, and celebrate our shared life in the “web of creation” where nothing is without consequence, where all things coexist, where faith and science together seek to discover the same truths about the universe.

nooma discussion guides: *Everything Is Spiritual* Rob Bell, 2020-09-15 An exciting vision of the future --Michael Eric Dyson *Everything Is Spiritual* is an unexpected and compelling invitation to

see your life in a whole new way. We have the great moments of our lives, the highs, those times when we soar, when it all makes sense, when it feels like it all has purpose and meaning. And then there are all those other moments—the lows and aches and failures and struggles and experiences that leave us wondering what the point of it all is. Are our lives ultimately bits and pieces and fragments—you try to find a little peace and hope and then it's over? Or is there more going on here? In our increasingly polarized and disoriented world, *Everything Is Spiritual* gives us a radical new take on how it all fits together, how it works, how it's all connected. Part memoir, part extended riff on the quantum nature of reality, part history of the universe, Rob Bell takes us back through the twists and turns and struggles of his story in order to help us see the larger story so that we can reconnect with our story.

nooma discussion guides: *Living Well* John Roberto, 2009 This resource presents twelve essential practices for a Christian way of life. Written for adults, parents, and families to use in learning about and living these Christian practices, each chapter presents the Biblical foundation of the Christian practice and a variety of practical suggestions for living it and making it an integral part of everyday life.

nooma discussion guides: *Kickball* , 2005 NOOMA is a new format for spiritual direction. It's short films touching on issues that we care about, that we want to talk about, and it comes in a way that fits our world. It's a format that's there for us when we need it, as we need it, how we need it. Audio: English. Subtitles: English, French, German, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish.

nooma discussion guides: *Thomas Jefferson* Christopher Hitchens, 2007 Hitchens brings the character of Jefferson to life as a man of his time and also as a symbolic figure beyond it. Conflicted by power, Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and acted as Minister to France yet yearned for a quieter career in the Virginia legislature. Predicting that slavery would shape the future of America's development, this professed proponent of emancipation continued to own human property. He negotiated the Louisiana Purchase with France, doubling the size of the nation, and authorized the Lewis and Clark expedition, opening up the American frontier. The Barbary War, a lesser-known chapter of his political career, led to the building of the U.S. Navy and the fortification of America's reputation regarding national defense. In the background is the fledgling nation's struggle for independence, formed in the crucible of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and, in its shadow, the deformation of that struggle in the excesses of the French Revolution.

nooma discussion guides: *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus* Lois Tverberg, 2012-03-06 In this ebook download of *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus*, Lois Tverberg challenges readers to follow their Rabbi more closely by reexamining his words in the light of their Jewish context. Doing so will provide a richer, deeper understanding of his ministry, compelling us to live differently, to become more Christ-like. We'll begin to understand why his first Jewish disciples abandoned everything to follow him, to live out his commands. Our modern society, with its individualism and materialism, is very different than the tight-knit, family-oriented setting Jesus lived and taught in. What wisdom can we glean from his Eastern, biblical attitude toward life? How can knowing Jesus within this context shed light on his teachings for us today? In *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus* we'll journey back in time to eavesdrop on the conversations that arose among the rabbis of Jesus' day, and consider how hearing Rabbi Jesus with the ears of a first-century disciple can bring new meaning to our faith. And we'll listen to Jewish thinkers through the ages, discovering how ideas that germinated in Jesus' time have borne fruit. Doing so will yield fresh, practical insights for following our Rabbi's teachings from a Jewish point of view.

nooma discussion guides: *At Home with the Patagonians* George Chaworth Musters, 1873

nooma discussion guides: *Anatomy of the Soul* Curt Thompson, 2010 Do you want to improve your relationships and experience lasting personal change? Join Curt Thompson, M.D., on an amazing journey to discover the surprising pathways for transformation hidden inside your own mind. Integrating new findings in neuroscience and attachment with Christian spirituality, Dr. Thompson reveals how it is possible to rewire your mind, altering your brain patterns and literally making you more like the person God intended you to be. Explaining discoveries about the brain in

layman's terms, he shows how you can be mentally transformed through spiritual practices, interaction with Scripture, and connections with other people. He also provides practical exercises to help you experience healing in areas where you've been struggling. Insightful and challenging, *Anatomy of the Soul* illustrates how learning about one of God's most miraculous creations—your brain—can enrich your life, your relationships, and your impact on the world around you.

nooma discussion guides: *The Good and Beautiful Life* James Bryan Smith, 2009-12-14 James Bryan Smith believes we have bought into false notions of happiness and success. In this *Good and Beautiful Series* book, Smith traces through the Sermon on the Mount and helps us replace our false beliefs with Jesus' narratives about life in the kingdom of God.

nooma discussion guides: *The Zimzum of Love* Rob Bell, Kristen Bell, 2014-10-28 As he revolutionized traditional teaching on hell in the phenomenal New York Times bestseller *Love Wins*, Rob Bell now transforms how we understand and practice marriage in *The Zimzum of Love*, co-written with his wife, Kristen. Despite the divorce statistics, people are still committing to each other, instinctively believing and hoping that theirs is a sacred union that will last forever. Yet when these couples encounter problems, they often lack the resources that keep them connected to this greater mystery surrounding marriage. Rob and Kristen Bell introduce a startling new way of looking at marriage, *The Zimzum of Love*. Zimzum is a Hebrew term where God, in order to have a relationship with the world, contracts, creating space for the creation to exist. In marriage, zimzum is the dynamic energy field between two partners, in which each person contracts to allow the other to flourish. Mastering this field, this give and take of energy, is the secret to what makes marriage flourish. Rob and Kristen Bell are brutally honest about their own struggles, their ups and downs, as together they pass along what matters most for couples. In this wise book, they explore the secret of what makes a happy union—probing the mystery at the heart of the extraordinary emotional connection that binds two people. With his down-to-earth charm, a dose of whimsy, and memorable stories, Rob, writing with his wife Kristen, changes how we consider marriage, providing insight that can help all of us create satisfying and sacred unions of our own.

nooma discussion guides: *The Bible in History* Robert B. Waltz, *The Bible in History*. A study of the history, folklore, and occasionally even the mathematics underlying the Bible. A sort of dictionary of scholarly material you likely won't find elsewhere. Dedicated to Elizabeth Rosenberg, Patricia Rosenberg, and Catie Jo Pidel. Please understand that this is not a Biblical commentary. Also, while I try very hard to avoid actual theological discussions, the work is very much based on external evidence -- the manuscripts of the Bible, the evidence of other historical records, the findings of science, the folklore about the Bible. Some of this can be offensive to some, particularly those who try to find exact literal truth in the Bible. I hope you will accept it (or else not read it :-)) in that light. If you are still interested, there is a lot of historical background about the Bible here -- not always direct links to the Bible, but the context of the nations among whom the Israelites lived. There is no Biblical mention of (say) Nabopolassar of Babylon, but his actions would deeply influence Judean history. Knowing even a little of that history can help understand the Bible. Also, where there are variant readings in the manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament, I note it. This may mean that we are uncertain what the Bible says -- and hence what it means. I try either to recover the original meaning or, in some cases, to assess the meanings of both readings. And then there are the tidbits of science and folklore and anything else I can think of.... The result is a grab bag. Some parts may be useful, some may not. The idea is to browse and see what strikes your fancy. With luck, you'll understand more about the Bible after doing so.

nooma discussion guides: *Love Wins (Enhanced Edition)* Rob Bell, 2011-11-15 This enhanced edition of *LOVE WINS* includes extras such as the complete *LOVE WINS COMPANION* as well as the book trailer video that started it all and ten brand-new videos featuring Rob Bell discussing each of the chapters. In *LOVE WINS*, bestselling author of *VELVET ELVIS* and the 2 million-plus selling Nooma videos, Rob Bell, reveals a secret deep in the heart of millions of Christians—they don't believe what they have been taught are the essential truths of their faith. Bell brings out to the open and faces squarely the questions on everyone's mind: Does it really make

sense that God is a loving, kind, compassionate God who wants to know people in a personal way, but if they reject this relationship with Jesus, they will be sent to hell where God will eternally punish them forever? Bell goes to the heart of these issues and argues that the church's traditional understanding of heaven and hell is actually not taught by the Bible. Bell is emphatically not offering a new view of heaven and hell—instead, he closely examines every verse in the Bible on heaven and hell and shows what they really teach. And he discovers that Jesus's most fundamental teaching about heaven and hell is, Love wins.

nooma discussion guides: Sex God Rob Bell, 2010-01-02 Sex. God. You know the two subjects are connected; you just don't have the words for how they are connected. And they cannot be separated. Where the one is, you will always find the other. When you actually live and feel and engage, you discover that the physical things around us are like windows into more. And when you talk about sexuality, you quickly end up in the spiritual—because 'this' is always about 'that.' Something deeper. Something behind it all. You can't talk about sexuality without talking about how we were made. About how we relate to each other. About how we were made to relate to each other. And that will inevitably lead you to who made us. At some point you have to talk about God. To make sense of the one, we have to explore the other. That is what this book is about.

nooma discussion guides: In the Dust of the Rabbi Ray Vander Laan, 2006 This sixth Faith Lessons volume takes you to Galilee in Israel where Jesus called his first disciples to follow Him. Then on to Priene and Didyma in Turkey where their disciples learned what it meant to follow the Rabbi.

nooma discussion guides: The Good and Beautiful God James Bryan Smith, 2009-12-14 Turning to the Gospels, James Bryan Smith invites you to compare your ideas about God with what Jesus himself reveals about his Father. In this Good and Beautiful Series book, Smith leads you through a process of spiritual formation that includes activities aimed at making these new narratives real in your body and soul as well as your mind.

nooma discussion guides: Drops Like Stars Rob Bell, Don Golden, 2012-07-24 In Drops Like Stars, the New York Times bestselling author of Love Wins explores the complex relationship between suffering and creativity. Rob Bell (“One of the country's most influential evangelical pastors” —New York Times) suggests that art can be found in the agony of our lives. Fans of the thought-provoking works of Donald Miller, N.T. Wright, Brian McLaren, and Timothy Keller will find true enlightenment in this thoughtful and engaging book from this vibrant, progressive voice for a new generation of Christians, the prolific pastor whom Time Magazine named one of the most influential people of 2011.

nooma discussion guides: Galatians N. T. Wright, 2021-05-25 The first major biblical commentary from the pen of N. T. Wright While full of theological import, Paul's letter to the Galatians also captures and memorializes a significant moment in the early history of Christianity. This commentary from N. T. Wright—the inaugural volume of the CCF series—offers a theological interpretation of Galatians that never loses sight of the political concerns of its historical context. With these two elements of the letter in dialogue with each other, readers can understand both what Paul originally meant and how his writing might be faithfully used to respond to present questions. Each section of verse-by-verse commentary in this volume is followed by Wright's reflections on what the text says about Christian formation today, making this an excellent resource for individual readers and those preparing to teach or preach on Galatians. The focus on formation is especially appropriate for this biblical letter, in which Paul wrote to his fellow early Christians, “My children—I seem to be in labor with you all over again, until the Messiah is fully formed in you!”

nooma discussion guides: You 015---Rob Bell Discussion Guide (5-Pack) Rob Bell, 2007-11-06 Many people often debate the central claims of the Christian faith. But maybe a better understanding of the history of the early Christian movement would give new perspective to these discussions.

nooma discussion guides: Spellbound Marcia Montenegro, 2013-08-05 Our culture is saturated with the supernatural. TV shows such as Medium, Charmed, and Lost all have an

other-worldly theme. Most of them blur the lines between good and evil. This past year was a record year for Hollywood in the production of films that dealt with the supernatural/paranormal. While we choose our entertainment, our kids don't often have the luxury of choosing whether to be exposed to these things at school. This book seeks to present a lucid and comprehensive examination of the paranormal and occult by breaking down the principles of paranormal practices, giving key points about the practices so that parents can readily identify them. The book discusses the occult view of supernatural energy and of good and evil, and how these concepts are seen in some popular literature and movies. The book also explains the dangers and gives a biblical basis for concern. Christian parents need to be equipped to discuss these matters with their children!

nooma discussion guides: The Idolatry of God Peter Rollins, 2013 We must lay down our certainties and honestly admit our doubts to identify with Jesus. Rollins purposely upsets fundamentalist certainty in order to open readers up to a more loving, active manifestation of Christ's love. He explores how the Good News actually involves embracing the idea that we can't be whole, that life is difficult, and that we are in the dark. By joyfully embracing our brokenness, and courageously accepting the difficulties of existence, we truly rob death of its sting and enter into the fullness of life.

nooma discussion guides: Her Gates Will Never Be Shut Brad Jersak, 2010-01-01 Everlasting hell and divine judgment, a lake of fire and brimstone--these mainstays of evangelical tradition have come under fire once again in recent decades. Would the God of love revealed by Jesus really consign the vast majority of humankind to a destiny of eternal, conscious torment? Is divine mercy bound by the demands of justice? How can anyone presume to know who is saved from the flames and who is not? Reacting to presumptions in like manner, others write off the fiery images of final judgment altogether. If there is a God who loves us, then surely all are welcome into the heavenly kingdom, regardless of their beliefs or behaviors in this life. Yet, given the sheer volume of threat rhetoric in the Scriptures and the wickedness manifest in human history, the pop-universalism of our day sounds more like denial than hope. Mercy triumphs over judgment; it does not skirt it. *Her Gates Will Never Be Shut* endeavors to reconsider what the Bible and the Church have actually said about hell and hope, noting a breadth of real possibilities that undermines every presumption. The polyphony of perspectives on hell and hope offered by the prophets, apostles, and Jesus humble our obsessive need to harmonize every text into a neat theological system. But they open the door to the eternal hope found in Revelation 21-22: the City whose gates will never be shut; where the Spirit and Bride perpetually invite the thirsty who are outside the city to Come, drink of the waters of life.

nooma discussion guides: Your God is Too Safe Mark Buchanan, 2001-02-05 Here's a thoughtful, probing exploration of why Christians get stuck in the place of complacency, dryness, and tedium -- and how to move on to new levels of spiritual passion! Buchanan shows how the majority of Christians begin their spiritual journey with excitement and enthusiasm -- only to get bogged down in a borderland -- an in-between space beyond the old life but short of the abundant, adventurous existence promised by Jesus. Citing Jonah, he examines the problem of borderland living -- where doubt, disappointment, guilt, and wonderlessness keep people in a quagmire of mediocrity -- then offers solutions ... effective ways to get unstuck and move into a bold, unpredictable, exhilarating walk with Christ. Inspired writing!

nooma discussion guides: What We Talk About When We Talk About Love Raymond Carver, 2015-05-25 The most celebrated story collection from "one of the true American masters" (The New York Review of Books)—a haunting meditation on love, loss, and companionship, and finding one's way through the dark that includes the iconic and much-referenced title story featured in the Academy Award-winning film *Birdman*. Raymond Carver's America is ... clouded by pain and the loss of dreams, but it is not as fragile as it looks. It is a place of survivors and a place of stories.... [Carver] has done what many of the most gifted writers fail to do: He has invented a country of his own, like no other except that very world, as Wordsworth said, which is the world to all of us. —The New York Times Book Review

nooma discussion guides: *Beyond Homelessness* Steven Bouma-Prediger, Brain J. Walsh, 2008-06-03 This book is a brilliant use of metaphor that makes clear why the world leaves us feeling so uneasy!

nooma discussion guides: Cultural Apologetics Paul M. Gould, 2019-03-12 Renewing the Christian voice, conscience, and imagination so that we can become compelling witnesses of the Gospel in today's culture. Christianity has an image problem. While the culture we inhabit presents us with an increasingly anti-Christian and disenchanted position, the church in the West has not helped its case by becoming anti-intellectual, fragmented, and out of touch with the relevancy of Jesus to all aspects of contemporary life. The muting of the Christian voice, its imagination, and its collective conscience have diminished the prospect of having a genuine missionary encounter with others today. Cultural apologetics attempts to demonstrate not only the truth of the Gospel but also its desirability by reestablishing Christianity as the answer that satisfies our three universal human longings—truth, goodness, and beauty. In *Cultural Apologetics*, philosopher and professor Paul Gould sets forth a fresh and uplifting model for cultural engagement—rooted in the biblical account of Paul's speech in Athens—which details practical steps for establishing Christianity as both true and beautiful, reasonable and satisfying. You'll be introduced to: The idea of cultural apologetics as distinct from traditional apologetics. The path from disenchantment with how we understand reality to re-enchantment with the reality of the spiritual nature of things. The practical tools of good cultural engagement: conscience, reason, and imagination. Equip yourself to see, and help others see, the world as it is through the lens of the Spirit—deeply beautiful, mysterious, and sacred. With creative insights, *Cultural Apologetics* prepares readers to share a vision of the Christian faith that is both plausible and desirable, offering clarity for those who have become disoriented in the haze of modern Western culture.

nooma discussion guides: The Handbook of Religion and Communication Yoel Cohen, Paul Soukup, 2023-03-01 Provides a contemporary view of the intertwined relationship of communication and religion The *Handbook on Religion and Communication* presents a detailed investigation of the complex interaction between media and religion, offering diverse perspectives on how both traditional and new media sources continue to impact religious belief and practice across multiple faiths around the globe. Contributions from leading international scholars address key themes such as the changing role of religious authority in the digital age, the role of media in cultural shifts away from religious institutions, and the ways modern technologies have transformed how religion is communicated and portrayed. Divided into five parts, the *Handbook* opens with a state-of-the-art overview of the subject's intellectual landscape, introducing the historical background, theoretical foundations, and major academic approaches to communication, media, and religion. Subsequent sections focus on institutional and functional perspectives, theological and cultural approaches, and new approaches in digital technologies. The essays provide insight into a wide range of topics, including religious use of media, religious identity, audience gratification, religious broadcasting, religious content in entertainment, films and religion, news reporting about religion, race and gender, the sex-religion matrix, religious crisis communication, public relations and advertising, televangelism, pastoral ministry, death and the media, online religion, future directions in religious communication, and more. Explores the increasing role of media in creating religious identity and communicating religious experience Discusses the development and evolution of the communication practices of various religious bodies Covers all major media sources including radio, television, film, press, digital online content, and social media platforms Presents key empirical research, real-world case studies, and illustrative examples throughout Encompasses a variety of perspectives, including individual and institutional actors, academic and theoretical areas, and different forms of communication media Explores media and religion in Judeo-Christian traditions, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, religions of Africa, Atheism, and others The *Handbook on Religion and Communication* is an essential resource for scholars, academic researchers, practical theologians, seminarians, and undergraduate and graduate students taking courses on media and religion.

nooma discussion guides: Hearing God's Call Ben Campbell Johnson, 2002-10-08 God is still calling believers today, just as He did in earlier times, and God's empowering call extends to clergy and laity alike. ... this book will help anyone seeking to hear God's call with greater clarity and act on it with greater conviction -- BACK JACKET.

nooma discussion guides: Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage Mark Gungor, 2009-03-03 By using his unique blend of humor and tell-it-like-it-is honesty, he helps couples get along and have fun doing it.

nooma discussion guides: Primal Mark Batterson, 2010-11-02 The best-selling author of *In a Pit with a Lion* explores the foundational elements of Christianity--compassion, wonder, curiosity and power--to help believers rediscover the significance of their faith.

nooma discussion guides: How to do Mission Action Planning Mike Chew, Mark Ireland, 2016-06-16 *How to Do Mission Action Planning* (SPCK, 2009) was the first book to appear on the MAP process, at a time when it was beginning to have a significant impact. In this fully revised and expanded edition, the authors offer further critical evaluation and theological reflection, by drawing on the experiences of people who have been using the MAP process in different contexts from their own: Fr Damian Feeney, parish priest and Catholic Missioner of Lichfield diocese Canon David Banbury, leader of Parish Mission Support, Blackburn diocese The Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith, Bishop of St Albans Dr Stephen Hance, Canon Missioner of Southwark diocese Linda Rayner, the United Reformed Church co-ordinator for Fresh Expressions 'This is a rare book - a refreshing meditation on planning for mission - and one that is rooted in spirituality. As the authors show, the church and its mission arise from our vision of God. And once that vision has been realised, churches are able to become more intentional about their mission. Our vocation to share God's love is not an option or an afterthought. It is the heart and soul of our faith. Mission - and our planning of it - should not fill us with fear or foreboding. Rather, as the authors argue, the call to share God's love can be evermore meaningful, even as mission becomes more methodical.' The Very Revd Prof. Martyn Percy, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford 'This is a must-read for anyone using MAP. The rich theological reflection, the detailed unpacking of the 4 MAP phases and the learning offered by the 5 guest practitioners add up to an impressive offering. This book enables good questions to be asked, overflows with wise reflection and contains oodles of practical examples, ideas and resources. I commend it to all local church leaders who are seeking to discern how best to translate the prayer 'your kingdom come' into appropriate church and congregational action.' John Dunnett, General Director, CPAS 'This timely revision is honest, well researched and carefully put together - an important contribution to the necessary change of culture required in today's Church.' Julian Henderson, Bishop of Blackburn

nooma discussion guides: Who Is God? , 2010

nooma discussion guides: Who Is God? Francis Chan, 2010-12 This book is for use by individuals in a small group setting as they go through BASIC. Who is God? A Small Group Experience, the interactive, DVD-driven study. BASIC. Who Is God? A Follower's Guide is a seven-session book that features two sessions of study on each of the following films: BASIC. Fear God, BASIC. Follow Jesus, and BASIC. Holy Spirit, with a final session that wraps up the study of the trinity.

nooma discussion guides: Radical Forgiveness Antoinette Bosco, 2009 A woman who has learned to forgive offenses we can hardly imagine teaches us to free ourselves from the anger and resentment that chains us to those who hurt us, including our own selves. Toni Bosco lost one son to suicide and later another son and his wife to the hands of a murderer. Her life since then has been a dramatic journey to radical forgiveness and inner peace. In *Radical Forgiveness* she shares with us what she has learned about life's most difficult, and most healing, virtue. *Radical Forgiveness* is rooted in the life of Jesus, saints, and people living today. It offers us freedom from the awful, angry, unforgiving thoughts that gnaw at our consciousness, burn us, haunt us, and won't let us go until we let them go. This wise book offers freedom and peace and a leap into gratitude!