

## Week 1 ~ Alpha Questions

“Who is Jesus?” (Q of L, Chp 2)

*Icebreaker: Have each person say their name & add a positive adjective that describes them. Have the next person repeat the names before them and add their own name. (eg. Dynamic Diana)*

1. How did you **hear about Alpha**? What made you decide to come?
2. Before tonight’s video, what was your **understanding** of who Jesus is?
3. Have your **thoughts changed** as a result of anything Nicky said?
4. Do you think Christianity is a ‘**blind leap of faith**’ or is there enough firm historical **evidence** of Jesus’ divinity?
5. Which of these historical evidences do you think was **convincing** or not convincing? (*His teachings, character, actions, fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, resurrection*)
6. Nicky said there are really only “three realistic possibilities” about who Jesus is. **What do you think** about that statement?
  - Lord (He was who He said He was)
  - Liar
  - Lunatic
7. Of the above choices, which possibility would you agree with the most at this point in your spiritual journey?

**“Searching Issues” book by Nicky Gumbel:**

*Chapter 2 – What about other religions?*

*Chapter 6 – Is there a conflict between science and Christianity?*

*Next week’s topic: Why Did Jesus Die?*

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*Next week’s topic: Why Did Jesus Die?*

## Week 2 ~ Alpha Questions

“Why Did Jesus Die?” (Q of L, Chp 3)

Icebreaker: What is your favorite movie where the hero of the story dies or is killed?

1. What do you think is the difference between the death of Jesus and the death of Socrates, or a martyr, or some war hero?
2. In the video, Nicky said “*sin is the greatest problem that confronts people today.*” What is your understanding of ‘**sin**’?
3. Nicky talked about the **power** of sin, that we become ‘slaves to sin’. Would you agree that sin is addictive and destructive? How so?
4. What are some **examples** of sin that you see in our world today, individually, locally, globally? (*Also physical, emotional, social, etc*)
5. What are your thoughts about the **penalty** for sin. Should all sin be punished in some way? Even our own?
6. Jesus took our place on the cross, not just so we can go to heaven, but so that our quality of life on earth would be very different. How so? (*freedom from sin, forgiveness, clean conscience, relationship with God, peace, joy, healing, future secure*)
7. How would you answer someone who said that “God is unjust because He punished Jesus, an innocent party, instead of us?” (*I & the Father are one, John 10:30; I am in the Father & Father in me, John 14:10,11*)

Next week’s topic:    *How Can I Be Sure of My Faith?*

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## Week 3 ~ Alpha Questions

“How Can I Be Sure of My Faith?” (Q of L, Chp 4)

Icebreaker: *If you were filling out a form that asked your religion, what would you write?*

1. What do you think it means to have a “relationship” with God?
2. Nicky said that it is important to **base our faith** on the promises of the Bible rather than on our own feelings. Why is that so important? *(feelings change & deceive us)*
3. What were some of the **promises** in the Bible that Nicky talked about tonight? *(He will never leave us, we can have fullness of life now & eternal life)* Which of those promises is most meaningful for you?
4. Do you think it is arrogant of someone to say they are **sure** they are going to heaven? *(yes, if it depended on our own good works!)*
5. What are some examples of people trying to be ‘**good enough**’ for God to be pleased with them?
6. Nicky said the Holy Spirit helps us to be sure of our faith in Christ, because we see changes in our lives. What **changes** have you experienced in your character or relationships with others (little or significant)?
7. Last week we talked about “Why did Jesus Die?”. Tonight Nicky spoke about that again. How is the death of Jesus **relevant** to you?

*Next week’s topic: “Why and How Do I Pray?”*

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*Next week’s topic: “Why and How Do I Pray?”*

## Week 4 ~ Alpha Questions

“Why and How Do I Pray?” (Q of L, Chp 6)

Icebreaker: Share how your week was and a couple of your major stresses or challenges going on now.

1. If God knows our needs, why should we pray about them?  
(relationship, not ritual; trust in God)
2. Nicky gave various examples of what to pray for/ **reasons**. Which of these do you relate to: *crisis, protection, guidance, spiritual hunger, etc.*
3. What are some good reasons we **may not always get** what we pray for? (*unconfessed sin, planning to sin, wrong motives, not the will of God, “wait”...*)
4. Can you think of a time or know of an incident where prayer really did **change** circumstances?
5. What **major ingredients** does prayer need to include, according to Jesus’ example in the Bible (Matthew 6:9-13)?  
(*adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication/asking*)
6. How do you know God answered prayer and that it wasn’t just **coincidence**?
7. Take 15 minutes at the end of the group to pray for each other.  
“Let’s take this opportunity to bring our concerns to God in prayer. Let’s go around the group and we’ll each pray one or two simple sentences, maybe about the stresses you shared at the beginning. If you’d rather not pray, feel free to just tell the person next to you, “I’ll pass, go ahead” and that’s perfectly fine.” The leader should begin and end the prayer.

Next week’s topic: “Why and How Should I Read the Bible?”

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## Week 5 ~ Alpha Questions

“Why and How Should I Read the Bible?” (Q of L, Chp 5)

*Icebreaker: Name a favourite book you read as a child or adult, and why you liked it so much.*

1. Have you **read any** parts of the Bible? What were your initial thoughts?
2. Have you ever tried reading a **modern translation** of the Bible? Did you find it easier to understand?
3. Jesus had the opinion that “What the Scriptures said, **God** said”. Do you share this opinion? *(make sure people know the Bible is also known as the Scriptures and the Word of God)*
4. Nicky said the Bible is a manual for **all of life**. What topics does the Bible mention that relates to us today? *(purpose in life, emotions, money, relationships, death, etc)*
5. In Nicky’s talk tonight, he described the Bible as a **love letter**. Do you see it as a “love letter” or more of a “rule book”? *(even the rules are given out of love towards us)*
6. Have you ever had the experience when reading the Bible, that you felt God was **saying** something specifically to you?
7. Have you ever read anything in the Bible that **changed** your thoughts or actions?

*Remind people about the Weekend Away coming up!*

*Next week’s topic: “How Does God Guide Us?”*

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*Next week’s topic: “How Does God Guide Us?”*

## Week 6 ~ Alpha Questions

“How Does God Guide Us?” (Q of L, Chp 7)

Icebreaker: *What are some ways people try to find out their future? (Horoscopes, tarot cards, palm reading, etc)*

1. How do you feel about the idea of being **guided** by God? Is that comforting or scary?
2. What do you think of the idea of God having a **plan** for your life? Do you prefer to plan your own life or glad that God is in control?
3. Nicky talked about **5 ways** in which God speaks to people today. Have you ever experienced any of these? (Go through each one)
  - a) *Commanding Scripture – through reading the Bible*
  - b) *Compelling Spirit – as an impression/desire on your heart*
  - c) *Common Sense – thinking rationally & practically about a situation*
  - d) *Counsel of Saints – through the advice/feedback from godly Christians*
  - e) *Circumstantial Signs – as God opens doors/closes doors*
4. What suggestions would you make to someone who was looking for a “**spiritual advisor**”? (*mature Christians, wisdom & experience*)
5. What should we do when **the answer** we need from God is taking a long time? (*trust in God’s timing & His ways/method*)
6. What should we do if we have made a “**mess** of our lives”? (*never too late or too messed up; Joel 2:25, “God will restore the years the locusts have eaten”*)

*Weekend Away Reminder – sign up now!  
Weekend Away First Topic: Who is the Holy Spirit?*

Small Group Leaders: *Be sure to attend the Alpha Team Training: Talk 3, “Praying for Others” DVD.*

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## Weekend Away (1) - Alpha Questions

“Who is the Holy Spirit?” (Q of L, Chp 8)

*Icebreaker: What was your concept of the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost, Spirit of God) before watching this video? Has your opinion changed at all?*

1. Nicky talks about the work of the Holy Spirit & how He still changes lives today. Have you seen a **difference in your life or in others** who became Christians? (*peace, freedom from addictions, broken relationships restored, etc*)
2. Nicky says that “rivers of living water” will flow through us. How can we **show** God’s forgiveness, hope, acceptance, love, healing to others?
3. What are some ways we can focus on the Holy Spirit and **be filled** with the Holy Spirit? (*pray, read Bible, music, meditate, etc*)
4. In the video, Nicky explains what happened on the Day of Pentecost and **speaking in tongues**. Have you heard of this before? What are your thoughts?

Remind your guests that the rest of the talks this weekend will explain more about the Holy Spirit, so if they have a lot of questions, they may be answered by the end of the weekend.

*Weekend Away next topic: What Does the Holy Spirit Do?*

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*Weekend Away next topic: What Does the Holy Spirit Do?*

## Weekend Away (2) - Alpha Questions

“What Does the Holy Spirit Do?” (Q of L, Chp 9)

*Icebreaker: Have your parents shared with you any stories about the day you were born? Anything out of the ordinary? Can you share them with us?*

1. What do you think about this idea of being “born of the Spirit” or “**born again**”?
2. How does the Holy Spirit work in our lives even if we are not Christian? (*convicts us of sin & our need for Jesus, convinces us of Truth, helps us put our faith in Jesus*)
3. What **changes** have you noticed in your life since beginning your spiritual journey / or since becoming a Christian? (attitude, values, desires, character)  
*“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” Galatians 5:22*
4. Nicky said that one of the benefits of being adopted into God’s family is having ‘new brothers and sisters’ and that we need to ‘make every effort to **keep the unity**’ (Ephesians 4:3). What are some ways we can keep the unity?
5. How does the Holy Spirit help us develop our **relationship** with God? (*The Holy Spirit helps us to pray and to understand God’s Word.*)

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Ask the group if they have any questions about being born again and having a personal relationship with God. Depending on your group and leadership style, you can invite people to come to you after the group if they would like to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour of their lives.

Another option would be to lead the group in the salvation prayer, and invite everyone to pray out loud as you lead them. Encourage them to come talk to you one on one if they would like more information about being a Christian.

*Weekend Away next topic: How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?*

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*Weekend Away next topic: How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?*



## Weekend Away (3) - Alpha Questions

“How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?” (Q of L, Chp 10)

*Icebreaker: Share with us if you've ever had a supernatural experience and you knew it was God speaking to you at that moment?*

1. Nicky talked about the Day of Pentecost and people being filled with the Spirit and speaking ‘**in tongues**’. What are your feelings about this?
2. What are some reasons a person might be **hesitant** to being filled with the Holy Spirit? (*fear, doubt, inadequacy, etc*)
3. What do you think is the difference between ‘expressing our emotions’ and ‘**emotionalism**’? How do you determine what is going too far?
4. Nicky mentions 3 areas where speaking in tongues is helpful. What are some **other ways** the Holy Spirit might work through us during these times, besides speaking in tongues?
  - Praise & worship
  - Praying under pressure
  - Praying for others
5. If God already knows our thoughts, **why** do you think He gave us the ability to speak ‘in other tongues’?

Allow for an opportunity to pray together, perhaps women with women, and men with men, and ask for the Holy Spirit to come and fill each one.

*Weekend Away next topic: How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?*

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## Weekend Away (4) - Alpha Questions

“How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?” (Q of L, Chp 15)

*Icebreaker: Are you the type of person to set goals and make resolutions or do you prefer to be spontaneous in life?*

1. In what ways does the **world** try to squeeze us into its mould? How can we resist this pressure?
2. The Biblical context of a sexual relationship is within the lifelong commitment **in marriage** between one man and one woman. What dangers are there in going outside these boundaries?
3. What would you say to someone who has crossed these boundaries and now **regrets** what he/she has done? *(if not Christian, become a “new creation”, fresh start, born again; if Christian, confess, accept God’s forgiveness)*
4. Tonight Nicky said, “Until we **leave the rubbish behind**, we cannot enjoy the wonderful things God has for us.” What are some examples of these rubbish things in life?
5. What are some **practical ways** we can make the most of our lives in these areas Nicky mentioned: *time –relationship with God & others; ambitions, possessions & money, body – ears, eyes, mouth, hands*
6. The Bible mentions numerous times that God loves us and wants the very best for our lives. Why is it sometimes **difficult to believe** this? *(we believe the devil’s lies instead)*

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**“Searching Issues” book by Nicky Gumbel:**

*Chapter 3 – Is there anything wrong with sex before marriage?*

*Chapter 5 – What is the Christian attitude toward homosexuality?*

*Next week’s topic: How Can I Resist Evil?*

## Weekend Away (4) - Alpha Questions

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*Next week’s topic: How Can I Resist Evil?*

## Week 7 ~ Alpha Questions

“How Can I Resist Evil?” (Q of L, Chp 11)

Icebreaker: Do you think a power of **evil exists**? Black magic? The occult? Why or why not?

1. Nicky mentioned several **tactics** the devil uses in an individual's life: *deception, doubt, temptation, distraction, shame & blame, false guilt*

In your own experience, which of these tactics has been most challenging for you?

2. What is the **difference** between “temptation to sin” and sin itself? Why is that distinction so important? (*Jesus Himself was tempted but was without sin!*)

3. How does our **relationship to the devil** change when we become Christians? (*no longer slaves to Satan, free from guilt, addiction, fear, death*)

4. Nicky mentioned there is a **spiritual struggle** that takes place when we get closer to God. Have you experienced more challenges since you've begun your spiritual journey?

5. What are some everyday examples that we can ‘put on the ‘armour of God’?

- **Belt of truth:** (*foundation of Truth to recognize devil's lies*) read Bible, go to church, home groups, Christian books
- **Breastplate of righteousness:** (*right living protects our heart*) connecting with God & others
- **Shoes of the Gospel of peace:** (*readiness to speak God's hope & healing everywhere we go*)
- **Shield of faith:** (*faith*), stops the devil's attacks, opposite of doubt, cynicism, etc
- **Helmet of salvation:** (*salvation*), protects our thots, peace of mind, total assurance we are saved
- **Sword of the Spirit:** (*Word of God*), offensive, move forward; study, speak & live the Word of God
- **Praying in the Spirit:** intentional, specific, according to the will of God

Next week's topic: *Why and How Should We Tell Others?*

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Next week's topic: *Why and How Should We Tell Others?*

## Week 8 ~ Alpha Questions

“Why and How Should We Tell Others?” (Q of L, Chp 12)

*Icebreaker: What are some negative and positive ways Christians have tried to ‘spread the Gospel’? (without giving specific names of churches or groups)*

1. What have your friends’ and family’s **reactions** been when you told them you are attending Alpha? Was this difficult for you?
2. Since everyone is at a different place in their spiritual journey, what are some things you can **‘tell others’** about what you’ve learned or experienced so far? (*love, acceptance, forgiveness, etc*)
3. Nicky mentioned the **“two opposite dangers”** when telling others about Jesus (*insensitivity & fear*). Which one of these do you identify with more?
4. The Bible says we need to be ‘the salt of the earth’ and the ‘light of the world’. What are some ways we can **live this out** in our daily lives at home, at work, with friends?
5. How should we respond when people have **negative reactions** to our sharing about Jesus?
6. Nicky said that **‘prayer** is essential in the area of telling others the good news’. Is there someone you know that we can pray for, who might be searching for more to life than this? Let’s pray they will come to Alpha when it starts up again next term.

*Next week’s topic: Does God Heal Today?*

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*Next week’s topic: Does God Heal Today?*

## Week 9 ~ Alpha Questions

“Does God Heal Today?” (Q of L, Chp 13)

*Icebreaker: Do you know anyone who has been healed miraculously? What was the circumstance?*

1. Nicky shared a few stories from the Old and New Testament (Bible) about people who were healed, and said that healing **still applies to us today**. What do you think?

2. In the video, Nicky said “the commission to heal is for all of us.” What do you think about **ordinary Christians** being used by God to heal other people?

3. Not everyone we pray for will be healed, but it is important to reassure people of God’s love for them regardless of whether they are **healed or not**. How can we ensure this?

4. Have you heard of the **Second Coming** of Jesus and the ‘age to come’? How do you feel about this?

5. What are some ways God can heal people emotionally? Mentally? Socially? Financially?

Allow enough time at the end of the group to pray for each other. Perhaps have all the women together in one group and all the men in another group, so they will feel more free to share.

“Let’s take this opportunity to pray specifically for healing at this time. We will go around the group and share one or two things you’d like healing for, either for yourself or someone you know.

Let’s support each other by praying for the person on our right, pray one or two simple sentences. If you’d rather not pray, feel free to just tell the person next to you, “I’ll pass, go ahead” and that’s perfectly fine.” The leader should begin and end the prayer.

**“Searching Issues” book by Nicky Gumbel:**  
*Chapter 1 – Why does God allow suffering?*

*Next week’s topic: What about the Church?*

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## Week 10 ~ Alpha Questions

“What About the Church?” (Q of L, Chp 14)

*Icebreaker: What’s the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word ‘church’?*

1. The Greek word for church is ‘ekklesia’ which means ‘a gathering of people’. Which **type of gathering** have you experienced personally – large: celebration event, medium: congregation gathering or small: cell group.
2. Nicky said, ‘we **cannot be Christian alone**’. Do you agree with this or not? Why?
3. There seems to be so much **division** between churches and sometimes within churches. What do you think about Meldenius’ quote: “On the necessary points, unity; on the questionable points, liberty; in everything, love.”?
4. In our world of emails, Facebook, MySpace etc, we seem to have lost the gift of each other’s **presence**. Professor Gordon Fee wrote, “*Nothing else can take the place of presence, not gifts, not telephone calls, not pictures, not momentos, nothing.*” How does church help us regain this gift?
5. **Holy Communion** (also called the Lord’s Supper or the Eucharist) is a way that Christians offer thanks to God, remember the Second Coming of Christ, and celebrate unity. What are your thoughts about this tradition?
6. If you were looking for a church to attend, what are some important **qualities** that you would look for?

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