

# Is There More to Life Than This?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 1

### Tips and Ideas

1

Introduce guests to Alpha  
– What is it? Who is it for?  
How long does it last?  
What's the format?

2

Always finish on time and try to do something social afterwards to carry on chatting – perhaps at a restaurant or coffee shop.

3

Remember that the first session is different from others; it's more about getting to know each other. In future weeks we'll have more discussion about the session's talk

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Start getting to know each other. Play icebreakers, such as the Name Game or Desert Island/Stuck in a Elevator. Try to discourage Christian-related answers
- How and why did you end up coming here today?
- If it turned out that God existed and you could ask one question, what would it be?

### Good Points to End on

- We hope you enjoyed this evening, it's a bit different from other weeks. If you're feeling a bit frustrated, don't worry – there will be lots more time for discussion next week
- Next session's talk: Who Is Jesus?
- If you want to watch tonight's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Books

#### ***What's So Amazing About Grace?***

Philip Yancey

#### ***The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming***

Henri J. M. Nouwen

#### ***Searching Issues: Does Religion Do More Harm Than Good?***

Nicky Gumbel

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# Who Is Jesus?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 2

### Tips and Ideas

1

Welcome any new guests. Let them know that last week we spent time getting to know each other and assure them they've not missed out

2

Remember that small groups are at the heart of Alpha

3

The best way for a small group to work is if everyone has the chance to participate. Explain how it should work and that there's no pressure to talk, but that everyone should feel able to

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Before you heard the talk tonight, what was your concept of Jesus? Has it changed? If so, why?
- When you think of Jesus, what do you feel?
- What aspects of the evidence presented in the talk today did you find convincing/not convincing?
- If you had a chance to meet Jesus, how would you feel and what would you say to him?

### Good Points to End on

- We hope you enjoyed today's session. Don't worry if you feel your questions haven't all been answered. Alpha's a bit like a jigsaw or crossword puzzle; hopefully, over the sessions, more will become clear
- Next session's talk: Why Did Jesus Die?
- If you want to watch tonight's talk again, or if you missed last session's talk, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Books

#### ***Mere Christianity***

C. S. Lewis

#### ***Jesus Is \_\_\_\_.***

Judah Smith

#### ***Orthodoxy***

G. K. Chesterton

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# Why Did Jesus Die?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 3

### Tips and Ideas

1

Welcome any new guests. Introduce everyone and remind guests that small groups are at the heart of Alpha

2

Remember that everyone should have the chance to participate – explain to guests how it should work. There's no pressure to talk but we want everyone to feel able to

3

Suffering and other religions are issues that frequently come up on this session. See Nicky Gumbel's Searching Issues book or the booklet *Searching Issues: Why Does God Allow Suffering?* for guidance

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- What do you think or feel about the idea of forgiveness? What is it? Have you ever forgiven anyone?
- What do you think or feel about the idea of guilt? Have you ever received forgiveness? What do you think it takes to receive God's forgiveness?
- What is your reaction to Jesus' death?
- Do you think that sin is an outdated concept or is it something you can relate to?

### Good Points to End on

- If you want to watch tonight's talk again, or if you missed last session's talk, Who is Jesus?, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: How Can We Have Faith?

### Books

#### ***The Cross of Christ***

John Stott

#### ***Searching Issues: Why Does God Allow Suffering?***

Nicky Gumbel

#### ***Mud, Sweat and Tears***

Bear Grylls

#### ***Why Jesus?***

Nicky Gumbel

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# How Can We Have Faith?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 4

### Tips and Ideas

1

Introduce the idea of the Alpha weekend or day. Try to get the most enthusiastic person to say what they think about it first

2

Encourage the group that there is no pressure to talk but that everyone should feel able to. Think about those who are quieter; look out for signs that they might be about to speak and encourage them

3

If anyone missed last session's talk, they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- How do you feel about the idea of a relationship with God?
- Do you associate love or fear with God?
- What do you think when you hear about people's lives being transformed as a result of coming to faith?
- When it is said that becoming a Christian will make a change in your character, how do you feel?

### Good Points to End on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: Why and How Do I Pray?

### Books

#### ***Searching Issues: Is Faith Irrational?***

Nicky Gumbel

#### ***The Reason for God***

Tim Keller

#### ***The Hiding Place***

Corrie Ten Boom

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# Why and How Do I Pray?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 5

### Tips and Ideas

1

Encourage guests to start registering for the Alpha weekend or day. If there is a cost then lead by example and pay first

2

If you are offering scholarships to those who can't afford the cost, don't forget to mention this to your group

3

Last session's talk was, How Can We Have Faith? If anyone missed it they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Has anyone ever tried praying? What happened?
- What do you think about the idea of God answering prayer?
- Has anyone had a time when a 'coincidence' happened relating to prayer?
- In the talk, various reasons for praying are given. Which do you relate to and why?

### Good Points to End on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can watch it on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: Why and How Should I Read the Bible?

### Books

#### ***God on Mute***

Pete Greig

#### ***Too Busy Not to Pray***

Bill Hybels

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# Why and How Should I Read the Bible?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 6

### Tips and Ideas

1

Remind guests about the Alpha weekend or day. Ask someone who has been before to describe their experience to the group. Perhaps a helper who did Alpha recently as a guest

2

Encourage guests to register for the Alpha weekend or day and mention costs, and options for scholarships if you are offering them. Collect payments where necessary

3

Last session's talk was, Why and How Do I Pray? If anyone missed it they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Has anyone ever tried reading any of the Bible? How did you get on?
- Have you ever read a modern translation of the Bible?
- Have you ever read anything in the Bible that has challenged an aspect of your beliefs or behaviour?
- What do you feel about the suggestion that the Bible is a 'manual for life'?

### Good Points to End on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: How Does God Guide Us?

### Books

#### ***Why Trust the Bible?***

Amy Orr-Ewing

#### ***30 Days***

Nicky Gumbel

#### ***The Bible***

The Message is an accessible version

Read the daily Bible in One Year commentary by Nicky Gumbel at [alpha.org/bioy](http://alpha.org/bioy) or download the BIOY app from the App Store.

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# Why and How Should I Read the Bible and Pray?

HOST NOTES: SESSION 5 & 6

## Tips and Ideas

1

Encourage group to start registering for the Alpha weekend or day. If there is a cost then lead by example and pay first

2

If you are offering scholarships to those who can't afford the cost, don't forget to mention this to your group

3

Remind guests that they can catch up on previous talks at [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

## Small Group Questions

### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Has anyone ever tried praying or reading the Bible? What happened?
- What do you think about the idea of God answering prayer?
- Has anyone had a time when a 'coincidence' happened relating to prayer?
- Have you ever read anything in the Bible that has challenged an aspect of your beliefs or behaviour?

## Good Points to End on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

## Books

### ***Why Trust the Bible?***

Amy Orr-Ewing

### ***God on Mute***

Pete Greig

### ***Too Busy Not to Pray***

Bill Hybels

### ***30 Days***

Nicky Gumbel

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# How Does God Guide Us?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 7

### Tips and Ideas

1

Remind the group about the Alpha weekend or day. Any new guests signing up?

2

Arrange transport for the Alpha weekend or day if necessary. Make sure your group are looked after, know where they are going etc. Perhaps get contact details for everyone

3

Last session's talk was, Why and How Should I Read the Bible? If anyone missed it they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- In the last few weeks, has anyone had any experience that they think might be God guiding them?
- How do you feel about the idea of God having a plan for you?
- What are the ways that God speaks to people today? Have you ever experienced this?

### Good Points to End on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Books

#### ***Listening to God***

Joyce Huggett

#### ***Chasing the Dragon***

Jackie Pullinger

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# How Can I Resist Evil?

HOST NOTES: SESSION 12

## Tips and ideas

1

Hear back from those who went on the Alpha weekend or day – how did they find it? Give guests the opportunity to express what God might have done in their lives. Start with a positive person!

2

Remember to include those who did not go on the Alpha weekend or day in the discussion so they don't feel left out

3

If anyone has missed a session they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

## Small group questions

### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Before today, did you have a concept of the devil? Has it changed?
- Why do you think bad things happen?
- Why do you think the world is in 'such a mess'?
- Do you believe in the supernatural, black magic or the occult?

## Good points to end on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: Why and How Should I Tell Others?

## Books

### ***The Screwtape Letters***

C. S. Lewis

### ***Café Theology***

Mike Lloyd

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# Why and How Should I Tell Others?

HOST NOTES: SESSION 13

## Tips and ideas

1

Get your group to start thinking about having a small group reunion once Alpha has ended. Put a date in the diary now, perhaps for one or two weeks after the final session

2

If any guests have missed a session, they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

## Small group questions

### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Has anyone told their friends, family or colleagues at work that they are doing Alpha? What was their reaction?
- If you didn't know anything about Christianity, how would you like to be told about it?
- What do you think or feel about the idea of 'telling others'?

## Good points to end on

- If you want to watch this session's talk again, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: Does God Heal Today?

## Books

### ***The Case For Christ***

Lee Strobel

### ***Searching Issues***

Nicky Gumbel

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# Does God Heal Today?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 14

### Tips and Ideas

1

Remind guests about your small group reunion. If you haven't already arranged one, this is the perfect time. What would people like to do? Coffee? Dinner out? Bowling? etc

2

Last session's talk was, Why and How Should I Tell Others? If anyone missed it they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

3

Note for hosts: This session you are encouraged to pray for healing for your guests after the talk. You might want to pray for words of knowledge to share with them, if this is appropriate

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Ask if any of your guests would like prayer for healing or if they have someone they know who they'd like to be prayed for
- If some people don't have healing related prayer requests, ask if they would like prayer for anything else
- Always respect those who don't want to be prayed for
- Be prepared for someone who may want to give their life to Christ

### Good Points to End on

- If anyone wants to have prayer for anything but didn't feel comfortable saying so in front of the group, encourage them to talk to you afterwards
- If you want to watch this session's talk again, or any others, you can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)
- Next session's talk: What About the Church?

### Books

#### ***Dancer Off Her Feet***

Julie Sheldon

#### ***Power Evangelism***

John Wimber

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# What About the Church?

## HOST NOTES: SESSION 15

### Tips and Ideas

1

If you have organised a small group reunion in the next couple of weeks, confirm details. If not, there's still time to arrange one

2

Remember to hand out your guest questionnaire, if you're doing one, and ask guests to fill it in, if they're happy to

3

Last session's talk was, Does God Heal Today? If anyone missed it they can catch up on [alpha.org/tv](http://alpha.org/tv)

### Small Group Questions

#### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Go round the group and ask each person to summarise what they have experienced or learnt over the course of Alpha. Try to start and end with an enthusiastic person
- Has anyone attended a church service since starting Alpha?
- Is there anything anyone would like to pray about?

### Good Points to End on

- Ask the group what they would like to do next. Try to encourage them to stay connected as a group
- Ideas for what's next: regular reunions, start reading the Bible together or organise to go to a church service together
- If you are running Alpha again in the future, you might want to let your guests know so they can invite friends along

### Books

#### ***Questions of Life***

Nicky Gumbel

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# What About the Church and Telling Others?

HOST NOTES: SESSION 13 & 15

## Tips and Ideas

1

If you have organised a small group reunion in the next couple of weeks, confirm details. If not, there's still time to arrange one

2

Remember to hand out your guest questionnaire, if you're doing one, and ask guests to fill it in, if they're happy to

## Small Group Questions

### TO GET DISCUSSION GOING AFTER THE TALK

- Go round the group and ask each person to summarise what they have experienced or learnt over the past course of Alpha. Try to start and end with an enthusiastic person
- Has anyone told their friends, family or colleagues at work that they are doing Alpha? What was their reaction?
- If you didn't know anything about Christianity, how would you like to be told about it?
- Has anyone attended a church service since starting Alpha?

## Good Points to End on

- If you are running Alpha again in the future, you might want to let your guests know so they can invite friends along
- Ask the group what they would like to do next. Try to encourage them to stay connected as a group
- Ideas for what's next: regular reunions, start reading the Bible together or organise to go to a church service together

## Books

### *The Case Against Christ*

Lee Strobel

### *Questions of Life*

Nicky Gumbel

### *Searching Issues*

Nicky Gumbel

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