

# **Boundless**

## *You Need a Bigger God (June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020)*

### **PREPARATION**

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Opening Prayer:** (1-2 minutes)

*In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestion of how your group can invite God into your time together.*

Thank the Father for being the God who is infinitely large, yet tangibly existent and immanent in our every-day lives! Pray that as we navigate the chaotic waters of our cultural moment that we would humbly listen and obey your voice. Pray that the Father would fill us with His Holy Spirit and give us the words to speak in our daily lives as we interact with the people in our social circles. Finally, pray that we would continue to learn how supreme your authority is and how to submit to your word as we await your coming kingdom!

#### **Discussion:** (45-60 minutes)

##### **What's Going on This Week**

This Sunday, Pastor Danny led us into our new series titled *Boundless*. Pastor Danny focusses in on the words of the prophet Isaiah in *Isaiah 46* in order to address how we should approach the complex issues we are facing right now. Pastor Danny explains how we often feel like we have to be in a position to logically “carry” or defend the God of the universe and His actions upon earth, but the result is so often a diminished and false image of God that does more harm than good. Pastor Danny concludes that sometimes the best way to approach complex issues is to acknowledge that we do not know the ways of the Lord and yield to Him humbly so that the sovereign will of God “carry” us!

**“God is big enough to handle everything in our world today!” – Pastor Danny Strange**

## Suggested Questions

**Check-In:** *Icebreaker* – What was one *faulty* perspective you had of God when you were growing up?

**Study Tip:** Oftentimes, you will hear the following argument from skeptics: *If God is loving and all powerful, why do bad things happen?* Logically, this question suggests that if God is completely in control of everything, including devastation, then perhaps He is not all-loving. On the other hand, if God is all loving and wants the best for us, then perhaps He has no control over bad things from happening. As we wrestle with this question in real time, Pastor Danny has brought us to the words of Isaiah; a prophet who spoke during a time where Israel faced the same questions. Isaiah, meaning YHWH saves, spoke directly to the kingdom of Judah ranging from 739 - 686 B.C. (1:1; Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah) During this crucial moment in Israel's history, the Assyrian empire would take over the tribes of the northern kingdom (722 B.C.). Under Hezekiah, Sennacherib of Assyria brought Jerusalem to the brink of destruction, but the Lord miraculously spared the city of David (2 Kgs. 18-20). Furthermore, Hezekiah eventually allowed the Babylonians into the storehouses of the temple causing Isaiah to predict the coming Babylonian captivity (Is. 39; 2 Kgs. 20). This week's text in Isaiah 46 comes in the middle of a peculiar section that is believed to have been written either by Isaiah prophesying in the midst of a future context or one of Isaiah's later disciples. Regardless, this text speaks of events *after* the Babylonian exile occurs (around 580 – 530 B.C.) At this time, the Israelites would have looked back on their immediate history with various questions: Is the Lord loving? Is YHWH all powerful? More powerful than the god's of Babylon who just "conquered" Him? As you walk through this study guide, keep this tension in mind and reflect on how the Lord responds to the vulnerable Israelites through Isaiah, particularly in Isaiah 46. Then determine how God's response might apply to your context today!

### **Objective #1: Explore your group's view of God in this moment and any theological implications**

*Primary Texts: Isaiah 39:1-8; 40:27-31; 42:24-25; 46:5-7* – Pastor Danny begins his sermon talking about the chaotic nature of these last four months. He explains that seasons like this can cause us to want to "carry" the Lord as we attempt to explain and rationalize God's whereabouts in tough situations. Pastor Danny points to Isaiah because the Israelites experienced similar questions and doubts regarding their captivity in Babylon leading them to question their entire theology. As you reflect on our current situation, how would you honestly try and explain to someone what our God is doing in the world right now? What do your similarities / differences suggest about your own perspective of who God is?

### **Objective #2: Reflect on any underdeveloped ideas about God you may have.**

*Primary Texts: Isaiah 46:1-13; Ecclesiastes. 5:2* – Pastor Danny uses the scripture in Isaiah to talk about the *sovereignty* of God. He explains that God is supreme, all powerful, bigger than any human ideology or perspective, and can choose to do whatever He wants because He is in charge. Therefore, we should be very careful when we begin to speak on behalf of God. Have you seen brokenness in the world because Christian people have invented a false version of God? Where are some areas where you feel you may have an underdeveloped view of the real God?

### **Objective #3: Commit to humbling ourselves before our sovereign and boundless Lord!**

*Primary Texts: Acts 17:16-34* – Finally, Pastor Danny explains that it is okay to not know what God is up to, approach God with a listening ear, and allow God to carry us! He closes the sermon by reading Paul's words to the pluralistic culture in Athens that describes a God who is boundless and cannot be contained by anything made by human hands! Since God cannot be contained by anything, what would it look like for you to take a humble posture before our Sovereign God this week?

## **Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)**

*In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.*

Thank our Heavenly Father for revealing Himself to us in the person of Jesus! Ask that the Holy Spirit would continue to teach us how to live and love like Jesus in situations like the one we face today. Finally, pray that we as a church would develop a boundless understanding of our Heavenly Father so that we could rest in the assurance that the Lord is in control and He is the God of salvation for His people!

## **THROUGHOUT THE WEEK**

**-Further Reading and Exploration:** *Read 2 Kings 15 – 20* The key text this week comes from the words of Isaiah the prophet in order to apply some of the basic doubts of Israel to today's context. One helpful way of understanding Isaiah is reading about the context in which he lived. For this, take a look at these passages and follow the downward trajectory of the kings. Then, think back to the major prophecies found in Isaiah and see why they would have been groundbreaking within their context.

**-Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities:** Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to [3Crosses.org/coronavirus](https://3Crosses.org/coronavirus). If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at [3Crosses.org/neighborhood](https://3Crosses.org/neighborhood)

**- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week!** Pray that the members of your group would unite under our heavenly Father as His image bearers! Seek to encourage them, comfort them, and urge them towards the scriptures this week!