



Time to gear up for the launch of the church's Starting Point Series beginning next week. It's the desire of the church that this season would create opportunities for everyone to move beyond bias, assumptions, preconceptions, and even rooted theology to look at faith with fresh eyes in 2017.

Starting Point provides an environment where honest questions can be investigated together...whether that's in your Life Group, a Men's/Women's Bible Study, or with the Open Wednesday Night group. Additionally, Starting Point can be an opportunity for committed believers to invite friends to The Shoreline or even into their Life Groups, as well as offering a new vocabulary and perspective as they seek to share their faith with others.

HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT OVER THE NEXT EIGHT WEEKS

- **Listen To The Message**

- Each Sunday (beginning January 8) the message will be focused on one element of the Starting Point Series. You can choose to listen to it live at one of our three services or tune in via podcast or video (available early in the week on our website).

- **Read The Book**

- *Don't panic!!!* It's about 4-5 pages worth of reading each week and there are totally pictures. Take some time to highlight any of the text that jumps out at you, whether it's because it spoke to you OR because you disagree...we genuinely want to talk about it. Copies are available in the corridor.

- **Answer The Questions**

- *AGAIN...don't panic!!!* There are about 7-9 questions each week and you already know the answers to them...because they are about your life, your perspective and your experiences.

- **Talk It Out**

- Link up with your group, join one of ours or start your own. The messages and the books will give you plenty to talk about each week. Life Groups are encouraged to go through the study together, but The Shoreline will also be having a few other opportunities for you to plug in:
 - Tuesday or Thursday Morning Men's Bible Study (Begins week of 01/16 from 6:30-7:30am @ The Shoreline)
 - Wednesday Morning Women's Bible Study (Begins 01/25 from 9:00-11:30am @ The Shoreline)
 - Wednesday Night OPEN Study (Begins on 01/18 from 6:30-8:00pm @ The Shoreline w/ childcare)

LEARN MORE OR REGISTER FOR **WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT:**

theshoreline.org/starting-point

Warm Up: George made the statement, "Real relationships require honest questions." In what areas of your life have you seen this played out interpersonally? How did those questions impact these relationships?

This week we spent some time gearing up for the launch of the church's Starting Point series beginning next week. It's the desire of the church that this season would create opportunities for everyone to move beyond bias, assumptions, preconceptions, and even rooted theology to look at faith with fresh eyes. Starting Point provides an environment where honest questions can be investigated together... whether that's in your Life Group, a Men's/Women's Bible Study, or with the Open Wednesday Night group. Additionally, Starting Point can offer a new vocabulary and perspective to committed believers as they seek to share their faith with others.

The title of this week's message was, "God Loves an Honest Question" and one of the examples George used is often the very first target for doubt and confusion...THE BIBLE. Most biblical opposition can be categorized as follows:

- Historical – *Copy of a copy of a copy, Filled with contradictions, etc.*
- Cultural – *Promotes polygamy, Endorses slavery, etc.*
- Personal – *Supernatural events, Restrictive, etc.*

As an example of this, George noted the often-cited idea that the biblical narrative seeks to subjugate women and place them under men in both role and importance. We looked at a number of incidences where women were specifically highlighted in extremely countercultural ways (considering the date and region the events took place).

1. What common objection to the Bible have you held or heard? To what degree was that position investigated?
2. What is the danger of "cherry-picking" verses? Share about a time this impacted you personally?

Dan introduced the idea of *Empirical Evidence versus Forensic Evidence* and shared how this shift in approach helped him as he investigated the honest questions he brought with him during his first Starting Point experience.

Documents of antiquity are verified in two ways: A. quantity of manuscripts and B. date from the event

Book	Composition	Earliest	From Origin	Copies
Thucydides, History of Greece	460-400 B.C.	A.D. 900	1300	8
Julius Caesar, The Gallic Wars	50 B.C.	A.D. 900	950	5
Josephus, The Jewish War	A.D. 80	A.D. 950	870	>30
Tacitus, The Annals	A.D. 100	A.D. 900	1000	2
New Testament	A.D. 50-95	A.D. 100-150	50-100	5600+ (in Greek) 15000 (w/ Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Aramaic) 2.5+ MILLION PAGES OF TEXT

3. How is this "forensic" perspective helpful when approaching some of the questions we have about faith?

"Real relationships require honest questions." In closing on Sunday, George mentioned a handful of instances where honest questions were asked by Abraham, Moses, the Disciples and many others as they sought to understand who God REALLY is! We hope you are as excited as we are to launch into this Starting Point series. Jesus asks each of us, "But who do **you** say I am?" - Luke 9:20b

4. In what ways do you hope to grow over the next eight weeks of Starting Point?