

Leader's Guide - International Christian Foundations

Unit 1

STUDY 1A: GOD. Understanding God and us

Bible Passages: Genesis 1: 1 - 2:3, John 1: 1-3, 14, 17-18, Luke 3: 21-22, Psalm 36: 5-10

Session Objective:

Establish a basic understanding of God's nature, especially in creation, and his original purpose for us to live in loving relationship with Him and other people now and forever.

Unit 1 is an evangelistic Bible study series. It is designed to explain the basics of the gospel to our new friends and give them the opportunity to decide to follow Jesus. Remember that the person you are leading is just enquiring so do not to ask them to participate in something they have not committed to eg prayer.

In the "Connect" section, be sure you get to know one another, since you may be meeting for the first time.

Avoid turning this lesson into a debate about evolution. The purpose is to understand what we learn about God.

Genesis 1: Q1: By speaking. Q2: The Spirit of God was present in creation. Q3: No, all God made was very good. Q4: We are made in God's image and made to rule over the earth. Q5: We see that God and man both can speak, are relational, intelligent, creative, purposeful, good, and exercise authority. Q6: We have immense value because we are made in the image of God. We are in a different category of creation from any animal.

The passages from John and Luke introduce the Trinity as basic to God's nature. This implies that God is relational within himself. We are also relational as we are made in his image.

John 1: Q1: "in the beginning ...". Q2: The Word existed in the beginning; he was with God; he was God; all creation was made through him; he became flesh (a man) and lived on the earth; he displayed the glory of God; he came from God the Father; he was full of grace and truth. Q3: The Word is Jesus Christ, God's Son, who has made God known.

Psalm 36: Q1: He is faithful, righteous, just, a sustainer, loving, caring and protecting, an abundant provider, a source of delights, life and light, one who can be known! Q2: We can infer that God is a close friend, like a good father. Q3 Yes!

STUDY 1B: SIN. Understanding our condition

Bible Passages: Genesis 2: 15-17, 3: 1-13, Romans 5: 12, Romans 3: 23, Acts 17: 22-31.

Session Objective:

To understand how man lost relationship with God; sin, its origin and effect on man. God's judgement of sin because he is holy and just, and that his answer to our problem of sin.

Connect: Q2: You cannot force someone to love you. Love must be chosen freely and come from the heart.

Genesis 2. Q1: To work the Garden of Eden and take care of it. The man was not free to do everything. Q2: It involved believing and obeying God. Q3: Whether or not to believe and obey God by not eating from the tree. If he disobeyed he would die.

God is love, and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit live in unity by free choice. Therefore God gave us freedom of choice because he made us in his image and wanted our relationship with him and others to be one of love.

Genesis 3. Q1: They were deceived by Satan's appeal to improve themselves by believing him instead of God. Q2: They realised they were naked which now disturbed them; they hid from God because of fear and guilt; they blamed God, each other and the serpent.

Romans 5. Q1: It brought sin and death into the world and all people from that time onwards were affected.

Romans 3. Help your friend to think through the concept that we are all sinners by nature and that we have all confirmed that by what we have done. The Bible's diagnosis of our condition best explains the facts.

Acts 17: Q1: For man to seek God and find him. Remind your friend that God made us to know him and live in a loving relationship with himself. Q2: He commands all people everywhere to repent. Make sure your friend knows that to repent means to decide to turn from living for ourselves to living for God. Q3: Because God created the universe and us and gives us our life. He has set a day on which he will judge the world.

STUDY 1C: JESUS. Fully God and fully man

Bible Passages: Luke 1: 26-35, Luke 4: 31-39, Luke 7: 11-17, 8: 22-25, Matthew 9: 1-8, Matthew 16: 13-17, John 10: 24-33

Session Objective:

To understand that Jesus is fully God and fully man from predictions of his coming, from demonstrations of his authority and power in life and from the testimony of Peter and Jesus himself.

Luke 1. Q1: A son born to a virgin, he will reign on David's throne, his kingdom will never end.

Make sure your friend understands that man has a sinful nature at birth but in Luke 1:35 we see that Jesus was holy at birth. Jesus maintained his pure nature throughout his life, though he is "one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin." Hebrews 4:15

Jesus has authority in the following areas of life:

Luke 4: 31-32: Teaching. 33-37: Evil spirits. 38-39 Sickness.

Luke 7: Life and death (raising a dead man to life).

Luke 8: Nature (a storm).

Matthew 9: To forgive sins and heal the body.

Matthew 16: Q1: The Christ, the Son of the Living God. Q2: This truth was revealed to Peter by God the Father.

John 10. Q1: Jesus pointed to his words (v25 and v30) and his miracles (v25). Q2: Because Jesus was clearly claiming to be God.

In the "Clarify" section, go through the diagram with your friend, following each of the pathways. "Was he a legend?" means "Was Jesus just a popular myth?". "Lunatic" means a crazy person or a fool.

In the "Apply" section help your friend to consider that Jesus was fully God and fully man. This was proved by the following: He was an historical person. He fulfilled prophecies about His own birth and life. He demonstrated he was God in the things He did. The testimony of Peter who realised who He was. He declared in His own words who He was. The offense taken by some who understood his claims and hated him for it.