

God

Understanding who God is and who we are

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN
FOUNDATIONS

1A

Connect with each other

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your reason for joining this study?
2. Do you believe in a spiritual world? Do you believe there is a God?

Introduction

In this series we will find out about God from the Bible. In the past, God revealed himself to certain people and inspired them to write testimonies (records) of their experiences with him. These written records were collected over time and now form the Bible as we know it today. God especially revealed himself when he came and lived on earth as the man Jesus. The Old Testament was written between 1500-400BC and predicts the coming of Jesus. The New Testament was written between 40-75AD after Jesus' death and resurrection and four of its books record Jesus' life. The theme of the Bible is how to know God and live in loving relationship with him and other people now and forever.

The reliability of the Bible.

"The entire New Testament was written while most of the eyewitnesses were still alive. The New Testament is a first-century, firsthand report of what Jesus taught". "The New Testament is not only the best documented but also the most accurately copied book from the ancient world with the exception of the Old Testament, which was copied equally as well or better."

("A Popular Survey of the Old Testament" by Norman Geisler, 1977, p11, Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, MI 49516)

Bible Passage: Genesis 1:1 -2:3

Background: Genesis is the first book of the Bible. It begins by telling us how God created the universe. This lesson will focus on what Genesis 1 tells us about God.

Bible Discussion Questions:

1. How did God create the universe?
2. In 1:2, what form of God was present at the beginning of creation?
3. Did God create anything bad? (1:31)
4. How does the creation of man (human beings) differ from other creatures? (1:26-28)
5. What aspects of God's image (character) do we see here in the passage that we also see in man?
6. Consider your answers to Q 4 and 5. What value as a person do you have? Why?

In the Genesis passage God refers to himself as "us". The following passages explain why.

Bible Passage: John 1: 1-3, 14, 17-18

Background: This is a passage from the New Testament. The writer John knew Jesus for three years as his closest friend. He records what he discovered about Jesus.

Hear God's Word and understand it

Bible Discussion Questions:

1. What is the similarity between John 1:1 and Genesis 1:1?
2. Who is the "Word"? What eight things do the verses John 1:1-3, 14, tell us about him?
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3. What do verses 17-18 tell us about the Word?

In Genesis 1:2 we see the Spirit of God. In John 1 we see God the Son and God the Father. The next passage helps us understand this further.

Bible Passage: Luke 3: 21-22

Background: The Bible uses the terms Jesus, the Word and Son of God to mean the same person. In this scene, Jesus who is God the Son, is being baptized. God the Spirit comes like a dove and God the Father says "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased". We see that God is three persons in one nature and entity. This 3-in-1 and 1-in-3 is called the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "Entity" means "having distinct and independent existence."

Bible Discussion Point:

These verses give us a glimpse of how God is relational within himself because each person of the Trinity continually relates to the others in unity and love. Here the Father declares his love and pleasure in the Son. We are made in his image and so we have the same relational character. That explains why it is possible to have a loving relationship with God and why loving relationships are so important to us.

Discuss this.

Here is a good example of a deep and loving relationship with God.

Bible Passage: Psalm 36: 5-10

Background: This psalm is one of the many written by King David in approximately 1000BC. Here David describes his close relationship with God.

Bible Discussion Questions:

1. What do we learn about God's character?
2. How would you describe the quality of relationship that David has with God?
3. According to David, can God be known? (v10)

Apply God's Word

Summarise

1. What new things have you have learned about God today?
2. Which of these things surprised you most?

Apply

What do you think about God, the world and yourself now that you have learnt these things?