



Home
Fellowships
JUNE 19 - AUGUST 28 2024

The graphic on the left shows a simple house with a gabled roof and a window with four panes. Three palm trees of varying heights are positioned around the house. The word 'Home' is written in a large, black, cursive font, overlapping the right side of the house graphic. Below 'Home' is the word 'Fellowships' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the graphic is the date 'JUNE 19 - AUGUST 28 2024' in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Essentials of the Faith

The Bible

Even though the Bible remains the most sold book in the world, it's also one of the most neglected ones.

The Bible is owned, read on occasion, even taken to church – but not studied.

Why? Why is it that people do not get into the Scriptures for themselves, to understand it and see it make a difference in their lives?

Here are some reasons people have for not reading and studying the Bible:

- “I don't Know How”
- “I Just Don't Have Time”
- “I Have My Doubts about The Bible”
- “I Can't Seem To Make It Interesting”

We want to suggest three benefits you can expect when you invest your time to study God's Word.

1. Bible Study is Essential to Grow as a Christian - 1 Peter 2:2
2. Bible Study is Essential to Spiritual Maturity - Hebrews 5:11-14
3. Bible Study is Essential to Spiritual Effectiveness - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

What is The Overall Purpose of Bible Study?

In order that you might be equipped for every good work.

Do you want your life to be more effective for Jesus Christ?

What are you doing to prepare yourself?

Bible Study is a primary means to becoming an effective servant of Jesus Christ.

- Bible study is essential to spiritual growth.
- Bible study is essential to spiritual maturity.
- Bible study is essential for equipping and training you, so that you might be an available, clean, sharp instrument in His hands to accomplish His purposes.

A.W. Tozer wrote:

...what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. —

A.W. Tozer, Knowledge of the Holy

It's interesting that the Bible never sets out to prove the existence of God. His existence is assumed from the very start.

The Scriptures declare that, to know that God exists, all you have to do is to look around at all He has made.

In fact, the evidence is so profound that the Bible refers to any man who refuses to acknowledge the existence of God as a "fool." (Read Psalm 14:1)

When we think about what God is like, we must be very careful not to assume He is simply a bigger and stronger version of us.

The Lord even rebukes anyone who might entertain such an idea by saying, "...you thought that I was altogether like you." (Psalm 50:21). Even though we are created in His image, He is nothing like us in His essential nature.

So, let's deal with the question: WHO IS GOD?

When we compile information scattered throughout the Bible, we see a lot about God.

Read the following passages and write down what you learn about Who God is.

1. Isaiah 44:6-8

2. Colossians 1:16

3. Psalm 90:2 _____

4. 1 Chronicles 29:11 _____

5. Psalm 102:25-27 _____

6. Isaiah 43:10 _____

Next, what is God like? (Read the following passages and write down the description of God in each.)

7. Psalm 119:68 God is _____

8. Romans 8:37-39 God is _____

9. 2 Peter 3:9 God is _____

10. Psalm 130:3-4 God is _____

11. Psalm 103:10-12 God is _____

12. Psalm 33:4 God is _____

Something to think about:

What is one specific thing you believe to be most important for you to hang onto concerning who God is and what He is like? _____

#2 Who is Jesus?

July 3rd

Some people believe that Jesus was a great spiritual leader. Others consider Him a great teacher or prophet. But who did Jesus claim to be, and what does the Bible say about Him?

1. Read John 1:1-2 and verse John 1:14 and record your answers.

2. In the passage above, John speaks of Jesus prior to His earthly birth. He refers to Jesus as “the Word.” List below John’s description of “the Word.”

3. Isaiah was written 700 years before Jesus was born and yet it speaks of His birth (Isaiah 7:14)
Based on Isaiah 7:14, complete these statements:

“The _____ shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name _____ .

4. Now read Matthew 1:18–23, which speaks of the birth of Jesus. Notice that Matthew quotes the passage that you read from Isaiah. He also gives you the meaning of the name, Immanuel. What does that name mean?

5. What are your conclusions about Who Jesus is, based on the verses you read in Isaiah 7 and Matthew 1? (Write them below.)?

6. There are three very important things the Bible teaches about Jesus.

Read the passages listed and, on the corresponding lines below, write out what these passages tell you about Jesus.

A. Colossians 1:16

B. John 10:30

C. John 14:6

Take time as a group to discuss how Jesus possesses all of the attributes of God!

- Omnipresent - Matthew 28:18-20
- Omnipotent - Matthew 28:18
- Omniscient - John 16:30
- Eternal - John 1:1-2
- Holy - Acts 3:14
- Creator - Colossians 1:16-17
- Faithful - 2 Thessalonians 3:3
- Merciful - Jude 21

Extra Notes

#3 Who or what is the Holy Spirit?

July 10th

Many people view the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force that is used by God, but is that what the Bible says?

1. Write out what Psalm 139:7-8 tells you about the Holy Spirit.

2. 1 Corinthians 2:11 - What does the Apostle Paul tell us that the Holy Spirit knows?

Therefore, is the Holy Spirit an impersonal force like gravity or wind?

3. Read Acts 5:3-4

A. Peter accused Ananias of doing something to the Holy Spirit. What was it?

B. In verse 4, Peter said to Ananias: "You have not lied to man but to _____."

Based on what we see in Acts 5:3-4, we conclude that:

- The Holy Spirit is a Person (This is because He can be lied to. It is impossible to lie to a force like gravity or wind).
- The Holy Spirit is called "God".

4. The Holy Spirit gives us the assurance of our salvation:

A. According to Romans 8:16-17, what does the Holy Spirit bear witness of in our lives?

B. What is the guarantee of our future life according to Eph 1:13-14?

5. What does the Holy Spirit do when we are saved?

A. John 3:3-8 _____

B. Titus 3:4-7 _____

C. 1 Cor 3:16 & 6:19 _____

D. John 7:37-39 _____

E. Eph 1:13-14 _____

Take time as a group to discuss how The Holy Spirit possesses the attributes of God!

- Omnipresent - Psalm 139:7-10
- Omnipotent - Luke 1:35
- Omniscient - John 14:26, John 16:12-13
- Eternal - Hebrews 9:14
- Holy - Romans 1:4
- Creator - Job 33:4, Psalm 104:30

Extra Notes

#4 What is sin and how does it affect us?

July 24th

The literal definition of sin means to miss the mark. And the mark is God's standard of righteousness, which we've all missed.

But, when you say the word "sin", most people assume we're talking about an action — in other words, something that someone has done, such as lying, or stealing.

But sometimes, the Bible speaks of sin as a condition — something we've inherited from our first parents.

The devastation caused by sin is immense and it can be found everywhere — in our corrupted speech, in our broken relationships, our hurtful actions and even in our broken, physical bodies.

Sin's influence is universal.

1. What is Sin?

A. Romans 3:23 _____

B. Isaiah 53:6 _____

C. 1 John 3:4 _____

2. Who Sins?

A. 1 Kings 8:46 _____

B. Romans 3:23 _____

C. 1 John 1:8 _____

#5 How did God deal with our sin and why was it necessary for Jesus to die?

July 31st

1. Read Galatians 4:4-5. This passage tells us that God sent His Son to do something...
What was it?

2. Look up the word redeem in a dictionary and write the definition below:

3. Read Mark 10:45. What did Jesus say that He came to do?

4. The word ransom means: a sum of money or other payment demanded or paid for the release of a prisoner - but Jesus didn't ransom us with money.

Read 1 Peter 1:18-19. How did Jesus ransom us from death?

5. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. What does it mean that we might become the righteousness of God?

6. What does it mean to live for righteousness (1 Peter 2:24)?

Something to think about...

Have you ever thought about why God couldn't just forgive us? I mean, why did Jesus have to give His life in order for us to be forgiven?

The answer is in a passage you've already looked up (in lesson #4) — Romans 6:23 which says: "...the wages of sin is death..."

God is perfectly just, which means He cannot overlook sin. It is impossible for a Holy God to sweep sin under the rug. It must be punished.

God in His perfect wisdom set up a plan to satisfy the demands of His own justice and righteousness against all who had sinned, while at the same time, provided a way to express His tender mercy and love toward all lost sinners.

"Moved by the perfection of His holy love, God in Christ substituted Himself for us sinners. That is the heart of the cross of Christ." ~John. R.W. Stott (The Cross of Christ)

"...when we are united to Christ a mysterious exchange takes place: He took our curse, so that we may receive His blessing; He became sin with our sin, so that we may become righteous with His righteousness." ~John. R.W. Stott (The Cross of Christ)

#6 What must we do to be saved?

August 7th

1. According to John 3:16, what did God’s love motivate Him to do?

2. John 3:16 shows us what we must do in order to be saved. What does it reveal?

In our modern society, the word “believe” means simply to acknowledge that something exists or is true. We might say, “I believe that man once walked on the moon.” We acknowledge that belief but, in the end, it really doesn’t have a significant effect on our lives.

In the same way, someone might say, “I believe in Jesus” and they are simply acknowledging that a man named Jesus once existed. But other than that, they have no real personal connection to Him.

In the Bible, the word “believe” carries a deeper meaning. It means to entrust yourself to someone and to have faith in them.

When the Bible says we must “believe” in order to be saved, it is speaking of placing our confidence in the death of Jesus on the cross on our behalf

3. Read John 1:12. John uses the word believe, and then he uses a word to help us understand the action of believing in Jesus.

A. What is that word? _____

B. Why is that an action word? _____

#7 What is water baptism?

August 21st

Water baptism is a wonderful declaration by a believer of their newfound faith, but there is also some confusion about it as well.

1. It was God's idea.

Read Matthew 28:19. List all the things in this passage that believers are supposed to do as they carry the Gospel to others.

2. Baptism doesn't save you.

Some people have been taught that getting baptized in water is required to be saved. That's incorrect. Baptism is something we do AFTER we get saved.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9. In this passage Paul writes that our salvation is a "_____ from God." What does the word "gift" imply?

3. Baptism is an act of obedience.

Read Acts 2:37-38. Water baptism is a public declaration of your allegiance to Jesus as the Christ and commitment to Him as Lord.

4. Baptism identifies you with Christ.

Read Romans 6:3.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus allowed Himself to be baptized by John? That seems strange since we know that John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. Jesus didn’t have anything to repent of since He was sinless. But Jesus came to IDENTIFY with sinful mankind. That is why He submitted to the waters of baptism.

Christian baptism is different from the baptism of John, but our reason for doing it is similar, in that we are also identifying with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection.

In the passage above, the Apostle Paul speaks of being baptized into the death of Jesus.

5. Baptism is a symbol of new life.

Just as baptism identifies us with Christ in His death, in the same way, it also identifies us with His resurrection, which will take place when Jesus returns for His Church — something the Bible calls our “blessed hope.” (Titus 2:13)

The resurrection from death is a future event, but in terms of the way we live, it is also a word that describes the new way we live our lives. Jesus has raised us from our former way of living and shown us a new way to live and act.

So, in a very real sense, we can enjoy a resurrection from our old sinful ways even today!

You might be wondering, who should be baptized in water?

We’ve already seen the answer to that question in Matthew 28:19. Look at it again. Who does Jesus tell us should be baptized?

Extra Notes

Christian discipleship is a term that many of us never hear outside of our Christian experience, so it might be helpful to understand it from a biblical perspective.

The word for “disciple” is a learner who follows a master teacher.

In Jesus’ time, discipleship was very relational, it meant much more than just the transfer of information . . . it referred to imitating the teacher’s life, his values, and reproducing his teachings. Therefore, Christian discipleship connotes a relationship with a master teacher, following him, and adhering to his way of life because his teaching shapes your own worldview.

Jesus’ expectation for His followers was clear: to become more and more like Himself (Luke 6:40). The disciple of Christ desires above all else to be like Him. Christ told us how this would happen: “Then He said to the crowd, ‘If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow Me’.” (Luke 9:23, NLT).

To be a disciple involves more than just responding to an invitation or a simple prayer of accepting Jesus into your life. It means going to great lengths to maintain a true commitment to the Lord and His will. A disciple is passionate about Jesus Christ; therefore, knowing Him and following Him becomes the most important pursuit in his life.

What is a disciple?

1. A disciple puts Jesus Christ above all other relationships.

Read Luke 14:26 and James 4:4. How can other relationships hinder you from fully committing to follow Jesus Christ?

2. A disciple puts God’s will above everything else.

Read Luke 14:27 and Luke 9:23-24. What are some things, desires, or pursuits that can interfere with doing what God calls you to do?

3. A disciple is one who bears his cross.

Read Matthew 16:24

In Jesus' day, the cross spoke of death. It represented ultimate submission to God's will and purpose. Today, the cross means that we are to die to our old ways, our sinful lifestyle, and everything that doesn't please the Lord. What areas of your life do you need to "die" to?

4. Being a disciple requires putting Jesus Christ before all your possessions. It means laying aside anything that would hinder your spiritual growth as a disciple. Anything that prevents you from doing God's will must be put away.

A. What should your priority be as a disciple? (Read Matthew 6:19-20)

B. Why? (Read Matthew 6:21)

5. A disciple is dedicated to God's Word.

If you want to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, know the will of God, and grow closer in your relationship with Him, then you must commit to a regular, consistent and systematic study of God's Word.

A. What did Jesus say is the mark of a true disciple? (Read John 8:31)

B. What is the result of discipleship? (Read John 8:32)
