

## Congratulations!

Congratulations! You are starting a journey that has been ongoing as BIC for the last 61 years in the Junior High Ministry of EvFree Fullerton. In the last few years we've updated the name, the look, the lessons, and the commitment to add life and vibrancy to an already outstanding group of Bible studies.

Roots is a year long experience walking through historic Christian truths. The name comes from Colossians 2:6-7 where Christians are encouraged to continually root ourselves in Jesus. God tells us when we root ourselves in Him and allow the gospel to transform our lives we will find true life and joy. This year we will look at answers to the questions, "Who is God and what is He like?" We'll see how the answers to those questions help us make sense of our lives. Our hope for you is that these truths would deepen your commitment to Jesus and help you hold fast to God in times of struggle.

### ROOTS CELEBRATION AND BIBLE

At the end of this year we will host an event to celebrate what God has done through your participation in Roots. If you complete the requirements for Roots we will present you with a Bible with your name engraved on it. In order to attend the Roots Celebration and receive a Bible you only have to complete three things. Our core group leaders will track your progress as we go throughout the year.

#### THE BIG THREE

- I commit to memorizing all 12 verses. I realize I must be able to quote all 12 verses at the end of the year.
- I will accomplish 75% of the 3 weekly devotions over the course of the year.
- I will be present at 75% of the small group discussions on Sunday mornings.

While the Roots experience can feel like work at times our hope is that you would not look at it as just information about God but as a way in which God wants to transform your mind and heart to be more like His.

If you would like to commit to completing the Big Three this year please sign below.

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WEEK 1 :: ○ ○ ○

The LORD  
is gracious and  
compassionate, slow  
to anger and rich in  
love. Psalm 145:8

WEEK 4-5 :: ○ ○ ○

In the  
beginning was  
the Word, and the  
Word was with God,  
and the Word was  
God. John 1:1

WEEK 2-3 :: ○ ○ ○

Hear, O  
Israel: The Lord  
our God, the Lord  
is one.  
Deuteronomy  
6:4

## memory VERSES

WEEK 6-7 :: ○ ○ ○

For in Christ  
all the fullness of  
the Deity lives in bodily  
form, and in Christ you  
have been brought to  
fullness. He is the head  
over every power and  
authority. Colossians  
2:8-10

WEEK 8-9 :: ○ ○ ○

This  
righteousness  
is given through  
faith in Jesus Christ to  
all who believe. There is no  
difference between Jew and  
Gentile, for all have sinned  
and fall short of the glory of  
God. Romans 3:22-23

WEEK 10-11 :: ○ ○ ○

For  
it is by grace  
you have been  
saved, through faith—  
and this is not from  
yourselves, it is the gift  
of God—not by works,  
so that no one can  
boast. Ephesians  
2:8-9

WEEK 12-13 :: ○ ○ ○

My  
sheep listen  
to my voice; I know  
them, and they follow  
me. I give them eternal  
life, and they shall never  
perish; no one will  
snatch them out of  
my hand. John  
10:27-28

WEEK 14-15 :: ○ ○ ○

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.  
Colossians 3:1-2

WEEK 16-17 :: ○ ○ ○

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.  
Romans 12:1-2

## memory VERSES

WEEK 18-19 :: ○ ○ ○

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

WEEK 20-21 :: ○ ○ ○

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
Philippians 4:6-7

WEEK 22 :: ○ ○ ○

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.  
1 Peter 4:10



# THEO *Who?*

*The LORD is gracious  
and compassionate,  
slow to anger and rich  
in love. Psalm 145:8*

# THEO WHO? :: Week 1

What comes to mind when you hear the word “God”?



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Hebrew word for God is Elohim and the Greek word for God is Theos.



Theology is the study of **The nature of the divine**\_\_\_\_\_.

**Doctrines**\_\_\_\_\_are what the Bible teaches us about a particular subject or topic.

Why should we invest time in thinking about who God is and what He is like?

How should we go about studying what God is like?

1. With a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ **GOD's Help**\_\_\_\_\_.  
Read Psalm 119:18.
2. With an attitude of \_\_\_\_\_ **Humility**\_\_\_\_\_.  
Read 1 Peter 5:5.
3. With your \_\_\_\_\_ **Mind heart Soul**\_\_\_\_\_.  
Read Deuteronomy 6:5.
4. By searching what the Bible has to say as a **Whole**\_\_\_\_\_.
5. With **love**\_\_\_\_\_and **RESPECT**\_\_\_\_\_.  
Read Psalm 139:17



## DISCUSSION ::

ROOTS is not just about gathering information about God and trying to apply it to our lives. It's about letting these truths about who God is shape the way we live and think and move. This can only happen when we invite the Holy Spirit to transform us.

**What is God like? How do you know?**

**What have you heard others say about God?**

**How would you describe God to someone who doesn't know about Him?**

**What is easy for you to believe about God?**

**What is hard for you to believe about God?**

**How should what we believe about God shape the way we live?**

**How do we help each other believe the right things about God and live according to that knowledge?**

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# WHAT IS THE *Bible?*

*Hear, O Israel: The Lord  
our God, the Lord is one.  
Deuteronomy 6:4*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

**This Sunday you'll be looking at what the Bible is.**

What comes to mind or what emotions do you feel when you think about the Bible?

What are some benefits you have experienced from reading the Bible?

What are some disappointments or stressful things you have experienced from reading the Bible?

Do you desire to read the Bible? If yes, why? If no, why do you think that is?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read Proverbs 30:5-6.** This verse talks about how the Bible is God's perfect Word and the ultimate authority on life.

Do you believe the Bible is actually God's Word?

Why or why not?

Does your view of the Bible line up with what the Bible says about itself?

How does your view of Scripture affect the way you live??

## DAY THREE :: What now?

**Some of the things in the Bible are hard to understand and confusing.** It is ok for us to wrestle with these things and be honest with God about things we don't understand or don't necessarily want to believe.

What parts of the Bible are hard for you to believe?

What are some doubts you have about the Bible or the things that it says?

Who have you talked to about it?

Take some time to be alone with God and tell Him about some of the things in the Bible that are confusing to you or are hard to believe.

Spend some time listening to what God says in response. Write them down.

Write down one insight or question you could share or ask this Sunday in small group.

# WHAT IS THE BIBLE? :: Week 2

## TEACHING ::

### WHAT IS THE BIBLE?



#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The word for holy in greek means “different, or uniquely set apart” and the word Bible comes from the greek word for “book.” So Holy Bible means “a uniquely set apart book.”

There are 66 books in the Bible. 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. It was written in three languages: Hebrew, Greek, and a tiny bit of Aramaic. There are around 40 authors over a period of 1500 years who wrote on 3 different continents. Each author wrote in different literary style for different reasons.

#### What do we mean when we say God is the author of the Bible?

- God told each author what to write word for word.
- God handwrote the Bible himself and it magically appeared.
- God’s inspired each author to write the Bible and chose to use their style, voice, and perspective.

#### Read the verses below and do some investigating into what the Bible says about who the author is.

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13. Word of God

Read Luke 24:44. Law of Moses & Prophets

Read 2 Peter 3:15–16. Paul according to Wisdom from God

Read 2 Timothy 3:16. Scripture is God Breathed

### WHO IS THE BIBLE ALL ABOUT?

#### Read Luke 24:13–24.

What were they discussing on their journey to Jerusalem?

Jesus

What was their hope for Jesus? Why are they saddened by his death?  
He would be the Messiah

#### Read Luke 24:25–32, 44.

Why is Jesus upset with them? What have they misunderstood?

They didn’t pay attention to what the Scriptures said about Jesus

#### If the Bible is a story, who is the hero of the story?

GOD



## DISCUSSION ::

Why would it matter that the Bible is the Word of God and not just words written by Humans?

Why does it matter that God used humans to write the Bible?

If the Bible is a story, who is the hero of the story? Why does that matter?

How does all this change how we view and read the Bible?

What motivates you to read the Bible?

What keeps you from reading the Bible?

With all this in mind, Is there a book or chapter, that as a group, we can agree to read and discuss next time we meet?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

The Bible is about God - not me!

# OLD MAN ON A Cloud

*Hear, O Israel: The Lord  
our God, the Lord is one.  
Deuteronomy 6:4*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Do you believe that God exists?

If so, what do you see is the strongest evidence of His existence?

Do you know all there is to know about God?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read Psalm 145:3, Isaiah 55:8-9, and 1 Corinthians 2:11.** What do these verses tell you about being able to know God?

**Read Psalm 145:18, Matthew 7:7, and Jeremiah 9:23-24.** What do these verses tell you about being able to know God?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

The Scriptures tell us we cannot fully comprehend what God is like (Job 36:26), and yet God has made a way for us to know Him personally and to be satisfied in our knowledge of Him.

What things do you think we will never fully comprehend about God?

Why do you think God chooses to reveal Himself to us?

Spend a couple minutes talking to God about the things He has been revealing to you about himself recently.

# OLD MAN ON A CLOUD :: Week 3

## TEACHING ::

Match the following Attributes of God with the correct definition:

Omnipresence	God is All Powerful
Omniscience	God is the Ultimate Reality
Omnipotent	God is Fair
Immutability	God is Merciful
Holiness	God is Always There
Justice	God is Perfect
Goodness	God is All Knowing
Truth	God is Unchangeable



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

People have different ideas about God. Agnostics say we can't know God. Hinduism says there are multitudes of gods. Islam says there is one God but no Trinity, and some religions believe you can become god.



A.W. Tozer says "What comes to mind when we think about God is the most important thing about us."

Why do you think Tozer might say something like this?

Read the following verses and write a down what the Bible says about what God is like:

Psalms 139:7-10. Present Everywhere

1 John 4:7-8. God is Love

James 1:17. Every good gift is from God

1 John 1:5 God is light and in Him is NO Darkness

Psalms 145:8. gracious merciful steadfast love

Numbers 23:19. God does not lie

These are just a few verses of the thousands that describe what God is like. In actuality, the whole Bible is about what God is like. It is His revelation to us about Himself. What are some other characteristics you know to be true about God?

Think about what the Bible says about God and His Character. If we believe these things to be true, then how should that change the way we live our lives every day?



## DISCUSSION ::

Go through the verses on the previous page. If Each one is true what should our response be?

How might this be easy or difficult?

How can we as a group help each other live life with the above truths about God in mind?

If you were writing a dictionary, what would you write under the entry: GOD

If you took a survey at school and asked the same question, what might others say about God?

What are other characteristics about God that you know are true?

How do you know this?

What are some negative beliefs about God that people might have?

How have they explained this?

The Bible is meant to reveal to us what God is like, as we read it, we should be asking the question, "What does this tell me about God?"

Read the following passage and write down your answer to this question. Be ready to share your answer with the rest of the group.

Jeremiah 10:1-16

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# THE TRINITY THREE IN *One*

*In the beginning was the  
Word, and the Word was  
with God, and the Word was  
God. John 1:1*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

This Sunday you'll be studying "the Trinity". The idea that God is one in nature but there are three unique persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

When you hear someone say "God" which person of the Trinity do you find yourself thinking about first? Why is that?

What do you know about the idea that there is one God who exists in three persons?

What would you like to learn about the Trinity?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read the following verses.** Write God the Father, Jesus the Son, or the Holy Spirit next to the verse that is talking about that person of the Trinity.

Matthew 6:8-9, 28:19  
Hebrews 7:25  
Romans 8:26  
2 Corinthians 13:14

When you think about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit how do you see each one at work in your life?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

Many Christians struggle with the idea of the Trinity because there is nothing that exists in our world that is exactly like God. So we try to take things we can understand and relate them to the Trinity. So we will say, "God is like an egg, he has a shell, a yoke, and egg whites, but he is one egg. Or God is a like a man who is a Father, a son, and a brother. But these examples all fall short of a true picture of God, because there is nothing in our world that is exactly like God.

Read Ephesians 1:1-14 and look for each person of the Trinity. How does each one impact our life differently?

# THE TRINITY: THREE IN ONE :: Week 4

## TEACHING ::

Let's look at some helpful ways to "understand" the Trinity:



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A nature is  
what one  
is and a  
person is  
who one is.

H<sub>2</sub>O - water, steam, ice  
Fire - warmth, light, smoke  
Egg - shell yoke white  
Apple - skin, pulp, core  
Government - executive, legislative, judicial  
Others?  
How do these fall short?

## FILL IT IN

The word Trinity is not in the Bible but is used to represent how the Scriptures talk about God. The word trinity means threefold. There is only 1 God and He exists in 3 persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The three persons are completely equal in their essence. Each person in the Trinity is fully God, but each has distinct roles and relationships to one another.



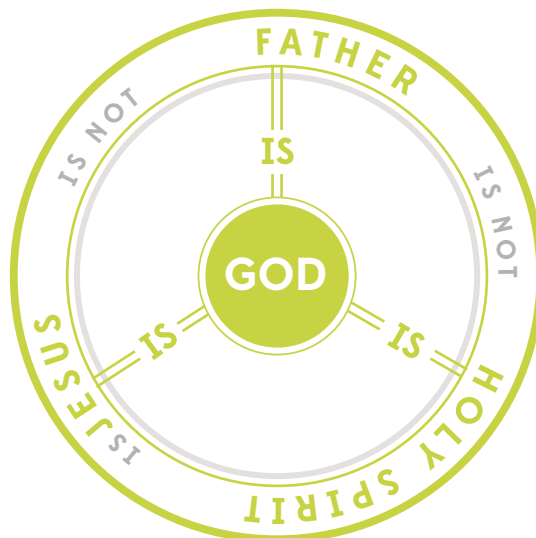
All three members of the Trinity are referred to as God, or referred to as doing things only God can do. **Read the following verses:**

Genesis 1:26, 11:7  
Isaiah 6:8

John 1:1-2, 14  
Acts 5:3-4

Romans 9:5  
1 Peter 1:2

This diagram is helpful to visualize:



## DISCUSSION ::

**When you think of the Trinity, think of these three things:**

1. God is three persons.
2. Each person is fully God.
3. There is one God.

The Trinity Shows that God is in relationship with the other members. If we are made in His image , what does that say about us?

Which member of the Trinity do you feel like you know best?

Which member of the Trinity do you know least?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# THE \_\_\_\_\_ MAN WITH THE *Plan*

*In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God, and  
the Word was God. John 1:1*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

This week we'll be looking at the first person of the Trinity, God the Father. He is in every way equal to God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and yet he is unique in the Trinity.

God uses family language a lot to describe our relationship to Him. In the Bible God is often referred to as our Father and disciples are called His children. What do you think a loving father looks like?

God the Father is our perfect example for all earthly fathers. He is holy, just, and fair but above all else He is loving. **Read 1 John 4:8.**

While our earthly fathers often do the best they can they all inevitably mess up. But because God is perfect His love will always be perfect. This means He will never allow anger, jealousy or bitterness to cause Him to love you any differently. **Rest in that knowledge.**

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

Let's look at some Bible passages that describe how God like a Father?

Read Matthew 6:9

*A Father insists on our respect and obedience. We should approach Him with respect and honor.*

Read Romans 8:32

*God fathers us by His gentle loving care and willingness to provide and protect His children.*

Read Romans 8:14-16

*God calls us His children. Children have rights and privileges for being a member of a family. What rights and privileges do you have because you are part of God's family?*

## DAY THREE :: What now?

The Trinity is a beautiful mystery for Christians. It's so complex we can't fully understand it and yet God reveals Himself this way and so we try to understand Him the best we can. But, if we were all honest it can be frustrating sometimes.

How do you live in the tension between wanting to know God fully but also knowing you will never fully comprehend what He is like?

# THE MAN WITH THE PLAN :: Week 5

## TEACHING ::



Today we are looking at God the Father, the first person of the Trinity. Christians believe there is one God who exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. While each is equally all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving they each have unique roles and relationships to one another within the Trinity.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God the Father is fully God, not 1/3 God, but entirely God and has existed and will exist for all time.



### GOD THE FATHER'S UNIQUE ROLE IN:

**Creation Redemption Stories show us God the Father's Unique Role**

**Read Gen. 1:1-3**

Who is creating? God the Father

Who Spoke? God the Father

**Read John 1:3**

Whom did creation happen through? through Jesus

God Spoke and creation came about according to His PLAN through Jesus.

### Redemption

**Read John 3:16 and Gal. 4:4**

What did the Father do? sent His Son

The Father was behind the Plan for redemption. He Sent the Son and it happened according to His Will.

We see that the Father uniquely, Plans, sends and Directs.

**Jesus and Holy Spirit are sent and directed by the Father. They submit to His plan and are obedient to His will. father Son and Holy Spirit are equal in being but subordinate in role.**



## DISCUSSION ::

### Read Ephesians 1:3-12

Make a list about everything we learn about God the Father in these verses:

What should our response be to each of the things on the list above?

### Read Matthew 9:9-13

Who does Jesus address His prayer to?

Whose will is Jesus asking to be done? Whose kingdom is He anticipating? Why is this significant?

What do you think makes God the Father's role unique from God the Son and the Holy Spirit?

If we know that the Father is behind the plan for creation, redemption and the world, how can our lives reflect our understanding of this?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# THE IMAGE OF THE *Invisible*

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. Colossians 2:8-10*



## Day One :: What do you think?

In many churches Christians are often taught to “ask Jesus into their heart.”; but the Bible teaches that Jesus rose from the dead and that He still has a physical body. Where do you think Jesus is now? Is He physically present in every Christian’s heart? How do you know?

Often when we think of Jesus we think of what he’s already done for us. We know he died for our sins on a cross 2000 years ago. But what does Jesus do for believers today? Is he sitting around waiting for the time when he will come back?

## Day Two :: What does God say?

**Read Hebrews 9:24.** Where does this verse say Jesus is? What does this verse say Jesus is doing?

**Read 1 Peter 3:21-22.** What does this verse say about Jesus’ present status and location?

Is this different from what you thought on Day One? How? Who lives with us? (see John 15)

## Day Three :: What now?

The Bible teaches that Jesus is in Heaven at the right hand of the Father. It also teaches that Jesus has the ultimate rule over all creation and that He goes to God the Father on our behalf when we pray.

**Read Hebrews 4:16 and 10:19-25.** How do these verses say we should act in light of this view of Jesus? Is that different from the way you approach God? How?

Spend a few minutes talking to Jesus about what He has been teaching you lately.

# THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE :: Week 6

## TEACHING ::



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If you search Jesus on Amazon you'll find there are 203,558 books about Jesus.



Read these verses and write down what each of them tell you about Jesus.

Matthew 1:18 He was born

Matthew 4:2 he was hungry

Luke 2:52 He grew

John 4:6 He got tired

Hebrews 2:18, 4:15 He suffered and was tempted like us

If you could sum up what these verses say about Jesus in one sentence, it would be:

He is 100% Human

Now read the following verses and write down what they say about Jesus.

Colossians 1:15 image of the invisible God // first born

Colossians 2:9 fullness of deity dwells in Him

Titus 2:13 God and Savior

John 1:1 (in this verse, John uses "Word" to refer to Jesus): in the beginning with God and IS God

If you could sum up what these verses say about Jesus in one sentence, it would be:

Jesus is God

The Bible teaches that Jesus is **fully God**, and **fully man**. Another way of saying this is that Jesus was 100% God and Jesus was also 100% man.

### Jesus' Unique Role

Read the following verses and write down what each one says about Jesus

1 Timothy 2:5 Jesus is our priest..

Deuteronomy 18:15-18 Jesus is a prophet..

Luke 19:38: Jesus is our King..

## DISCUSSION ::

Why is it significant that Jesus is fully human?

Why is it significant that Jesus is fully God?

How would describe the following roles in general?

Prophet:

Priest:

King:

What does it mean that Jesus is all three of these roles?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

I WILL  
SEND

A

Helper

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. Colossians 2:8-10*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

This Sunday you'll be looking at who the Holy Spirit is and what role he plays in your life. If you are confused about the Holy Spirit's role, relax you're not alone.

If someone asked you to explain who the Holy Spirit is, what would you say?

According to Scripture, the Holy Spirit lives inside you empowering you to live a godly life. Have you noticed his presence in your life? What could it look like to listen to the Holy Spirit?

What would be some signs that a person has the Holy Spirit in their life?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read John 14:15-17, 25-26.**

Is it comforting to you to know the Holy Spirit dwells in you and wants to help you live the life God wants for you?

According to Jesus the Holy Spirit is here to help us and to remind us of the things Jesus taught. Have you ever seen the Holy Spirit do this in your life?

**Now read Romans 8:1-11.**

According to this passage we can choose to allow our minds to be controlled by our sinful desires or by what the Holy Spirit desires. Have you wrestled with that tension between something you want to do that's wrong, and a sense of God convicting you to do what's right?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

What 3 words would you use to describe your relationship with the Holy Spirit?

Take some time right now and thank God for giving you the Holy Spirit. Be honest with him about how you feel about the Holy Spirit's work in your life. Express your feelings to God whether you're doubtful or thankful or you just have questions.

# I WILL SEND A HELPER :: Week 7



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Because the Holy Spirit is a person he is referred to in Scripture as a “he” and not “it.”



## TEACHING :: WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

This week we will be focusing on how the Holy Spirit is both a person and God. Sometimes it can be tempting to think of the Holy Spirit as some sort of impersonal force. But the Holy Spirit, like the Father and Son, is referred to in Scripture as a person. Let's look at a few passages to clarify.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON

**Read Acts 8:29, 11:12, 13:2**

The Holy Spirit Speaks. He communicates directly with people.

**Read 1 Corinthians 2:9-11**

The Holy Spirit has thoughts. He thinks and acts like a person.

**Read 1 Corinthians 12:11 in ESV**

The Holy Spirit has a Will. He determines to do things like people.

**Read Ephesians 4:30**

The Holy Spirit has Emotions. We can grieve him.

Because the Holy Spirit is a Person and not an impersonal force or power he cares for you. He can speak to you. He can intercede on your behalf in prayer, he will guide you in making Christ-like decisions and he will remind you that you're a child of God.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD

**Read Acts 5:3-4**

Who does Peter associate lying to the Holy Spirit with? lying to God

**Read 2 Peter 1:21**

Who inspired the Prophets to declare God's messages? HS

**Psalms 139:7**

The Holy Spirit is everywhere. Who else is everywhere? God

## WHAT IS HIS ROLE?

**John 14:15-17** Helper - he will be with us forever

**John 14:25-26** Teach and Bring things to remembrance

**John 16:7-13** Convict of Sin. guide into all truth

**Ephesians 3:16 & Acts 1:8** strength and power



## DISCUSSION ::

If the Holy Spirit is a person and not a force, how does that impact the way we relate to Him?

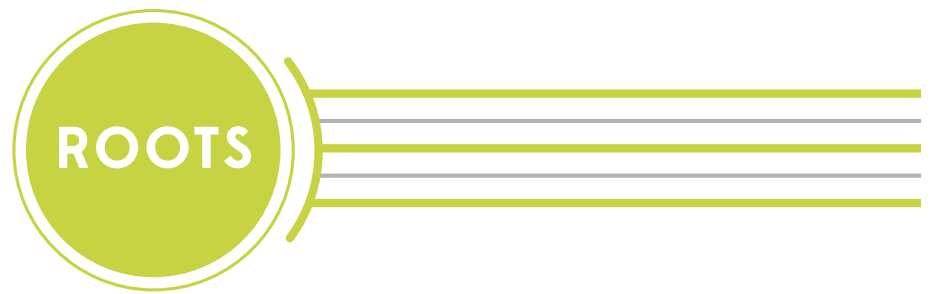
Look over the verses that talk about the role of the Holy Spirit. Have you seen any of these at work in your own life? How?

Much of the work of the Holy Spirit is in speaking to us in some form. How do we hear from the Spirit?

Galatians 5:22 talks about the fruit of the Spirit. These are not things we are meant to practice but are traits that overflow from a life dependent on the Spirit for guidance. How can your group encourage one another to be more dependent on the Holy Spirit?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH





# *Section* --- **2**

## **Weeks 8-15**

Week 8 :: Imago Dei	36-39
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# IMAGO — Dei

*This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:22-23*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Find a mirror and take a long look at yourself. How would you describe yourself?

**Read Genesis 5:1–2.** What do you think it means to be made in the likeness of God?

**Read Ephesians 2:10.** The word for workmanship implies that humanity is God’s masterpiece. It is saying that you were made with great care and detail. Is that hard to believe when you read it?

Why would God make you in His Image?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read Genesis 1:26–27.** Verse 26 talks about our role as rulers over the creatures of this Earth. What does it mean to rule over the earth?

**Read Psalm 8:3–8.** What does this say about our value compared to the rest of creation?

What does this say about our value to God?

We can sometimes be guilty of treating people in a way that doesn’t reflect how God views them. What could you do to try to show value to people this week?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

**Reread Ephesians 2:10.** Going forward, how can knowing that you are God’s masterpiece affect your relationship with God? How does it affect your identity?

Sometimes it’s tough to accept that we are valuable because we don’t feel it in our hearts. It’s been said that the longest distance in the world is from your head to your heart. Do you struggle to believe that God made you wonderfully?

## IMAGO DEI :: Week 8

### TEACHING ::



#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The latin  
word  
Imago  
means,  
“image,  
shadow, or  
likeness.”  
The word  
Dei means,  
“God.”



#### THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN

TO START, LET'S READ IN GENESIS 1.

Read Genesis 1:20-25

What does God create? Humans

What are they to do? help rule & care for creation. Be a steward

Read verse 26.

What is different about how God creates humans? He breathed into us. Made us in His image

How are you like a lion and how are you different?

How are you like a tree and how are you different?

Read verses 26-31

What does it mean to rule or have dominion over the earth?

God delegated authority to man to have responsibility for creation

Can you imagine what our world would be like if humans weren't at the top of the chain?

#### FOUR WAYS WE REFLECT AN IMAGE OF GOD

Read Genesis 2:7 and John 4:24.

We are spiritual. The core of who we are is physical and spiritual.

Read Romans 11:34

We are intelligent. We can think and plan and use our brains with reason.

Read Genesis 2:18

We are relational. God has existed for all time in relationship in the Trinity.

Our human desire to be in relationship is God-given.

We are social and emotional. Created for community

Read Exodus 20:13

We are moral. We believe there are right and wrong ways to live, act, and behave. We don't buy the lie that whatever works for you is all that matters.

How do these four things make us distinct from everything else in creation? We have a personality and a soul. We have a self consciousness

Can you think of other ways that we reflect being made in God's image?

## DISCUSSION :: WE EASILY FORGET OUR IDENTITY

One of the repercussions to the sin that occurred in the Garden of Eden is that we forget that we are created in God's image. Although sin separated us from God, His Son Jesus came to restore that relationship. Because sin is still alive on earth, we continue to struggle with what it means to be created in God's image.

What image are you trying to show the world - an image that is tarnished or the image of God in you? How can Christians be an accurate reflection of God?

1. God reasons and makes choices. He made us to be like Him as we reason and make choices too. He made us to reflect His character in our thoughts, creativity, opinions, perceptions and feelings? In what ways do your thoughts, creativity, opinions, perceptions and feelings reflect God's Character?

2. God called his creation "very good". This means He distinguishes between good and evil. God made us like Him in this too. In what ways do you struggle with knowing and making good choices?

3. God is relational. And He made us for community as well. What are some of the benefits of relationships in your life that help you in your relationship with Jesus?

**If you were honest, how are you doing at reflecting the image of God right now?**

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# GOD'S — PEOPLE — ON *God's* *Mission*

*This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:22-23*





## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

When you hear the word “church” what is the first thing that comes to mind?

The “church” is sometimes looked at negatively in America. Why do you think that is? Do you think most people understand what the church is and why it exists?

We tend to think of a building when we hear “church” but the New Testament speaks of the church as a collection of people united together. **Read Acts 5:11, 9:31, 11:22, 12:5.** When these passages refer to church, who are they talking about?

Spend time with God today, asking Him to open your heart to what you’re going to learn this week regarding His Church and the mission he has for it.

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

God has called the church to something far greater than just showing up at a building twice a week. **Read Acts 9:31.** What things characterized this young church? What happened to them as a result?

**Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26.** Why do you think God made the members of the Church and the parts of the body so different? What is the purpose of that?

As you look at your life what roles do you enjoy playing in the church? Do you like to work with kids? Helping with hospitality? Do you find yourself wanting to teach?

Have you considered that God may have uniquely gifted you to do what you are passionate about?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

The church is the collection of people who have by faith entered into God’s kingdom and who are engaged in God’s ongoing mission. **Read Ephesians 2:10.** What does God call us to do as His workmanship? Are you joining God’s mission in what He is doing in your neighborhood, school, or your teams?

What questions do you have about church? Where do you struggle with the Church?

## GOD'S PEOPLE ON GOD'S MISSION :: Week 9 TEACHING ::



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Going to  
church  
doesn't  
make you  
a Christian  
anymore  
than  
standing in  
a garage  
makes  
you an  
automobile  
-Billy  
Sunday.



### WHAT IS CHURCH? The People of God // A Gathering Place

#### OUR IDENTITY: \_\_\_\_\_ God's Kingdom People\_

Mark 1:15 The Kingdom is \_\_\_\_\_ HERE \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:5-12 The Kingdom is full of different \_\_\_\_\_ nationalities \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ ethnicities \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ languages \_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 2:38-39 The Kingdom is for \_\_\_\_\_ everyone \_\_\_\_\_.

#### OUR ROLE : \_\_\_\_\_ God's Kingdom Communities \_\_\_\_\_

Read Acts 2:42-47. What are some words that characterize citizens of God's kingdom?

Share, Help,

#### OUR MISSION: God's Kingdom Expands

John 20:19-21

I am sending YOU

Matthew 28:16-20

Make disciples - teach baptize

## DISCUSSION ::

### Read Acts 2:42-47 again

Where have you succeeded in loving your church family well? Where have you failed to love your church family?

How can your small group model and demonstrate this love?

**What does it look like to live on a mission?**

How can your small group work together to help each other live on a mission?

**What are some obstacles to loving others and to living on a mission?**

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# Whoops

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8–9*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

This week we are going to be looking at sin and why it is such a big deal. How do you decide what is right and wrong?

**Read Exodus 20:3–17.** Do you agree with the ten commandments 100% of the time?

If you were to make rules for what was right and wrong, what would your laws be?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read Genesis 3:1–7.** What is the first thing that the serpent says to Eve in v. 1? What is he challenging?

What is the serpent saying about God's commands in v. 4?

The serpent tempts Eve by saying that God's commands are not good. Do you ever question why God has given you a specific rule/command? Why?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

God has given us commands to follow and we have the choice to obey. At the root of every sin is the belief that we know better than God. When looked at it this way, sin is rebellion against the Kingdom of God.

Is there any sin in your life that you know is in rebellion to God? What is it?

God promises to help us with our sin but he can only do so if we really want to let go of thinking that we know best.

**Read Galatians 5:24–25.** How does the Spirit help you in your fight with sin?

Are you ready to do that with the sin in your life? If so, spend some time confessing your sin to God and praying that he would help bring you back under his rule.

## WHOOOPS - SIN :: Week 10 TEACHING ::



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One translation of the word for sin in Greek is related to archery and is what was called out when an archer would miss the desired mark. However, the other 6 ways of translating sin all imply that sin is less like trying our best to hit the mark and failing and more like we took the bow and shot wherever we wanted.



Read Genesis 3:1-7. Up to this point **God**\_\_\_\_\_ has been the one who defined what was good and what was evil. The act of Adam & Eve eating the fruit was a \_\_\_\_\_ **rejection**\_\_\_\_\_ of God's definition of **good**\_\_\_\_\_ and **evil**\_\_\_\_\_.

Rejecting God's \_\_\_\_\_ **standard**\_\_\_\_\_ of what is good and evil for \_\_\_\_\_ **our own standard**\_\_\_\_\_ is Very simply, **SIN**\_\_\_\_\_.

**Read Romans 3:23** . According to this verse, who is guilty of sin? Everyone

**Read Romans 6:23** According to this verse, what is the result of sin? Death

"Sin" is a word we use a lot at church. It is important to understand that sin can be things that we do and it can also be things we don't do.

Read 1 John 3:4 Sins of Comission:

Things we do that are directly against what God would have us do

We commit sin

Read James 4:17 Sins of Omission:

When we can and should do the right thing but we choose to do nothing

We omit truth or the right thing

## DISCUSSION ::

Why do you think there is such an extreme penalty for sin?

How can we know God's standards?

How do we fight the temptation to sin?

**Read 1 John 1:9.** What happens when we confess our sins to God?

**Read James 5:16.** What happens when we confess our sins to others?

How can we help each other fight the temptation to sin?

How does God help us fight the temptation to sin?

Is there any struggle you would like to share with your group today?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# Jesus PAID IT All

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9*





## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Try to recall when you first made the decision to put your faith in Jesus for salvation. What motivated you to trust in Christ?

What do you think Jesus saved you from?

Do you ever struggle with thinking you aren't really "that bad?" Why or why not?

**Read Romans 5:8.** Think about the type of love it takes to forgive someone who is sinning against you. God tells us he loves us enough to forgive us and save us even when we were sinning against him. How much love does that take? Thank God in a time of prayer for that type of love.

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

Why was it necessary for Jesus to give his life to save ours? Why didn't he come up with a plan to save us that didn't require his death?

In the Old Testament God required the priests to make a blood offering to pay for sins. When the animal died it would represent the sin being paid for. **Read Hebrews 9:22 and 10:10-13.** According to these verses, what was necessary for the forgiveness of sins? Do we still need to make sacrifices for our sin?

**Read Romans 6:10-11.** The Bible tells us Jesus' death has satisfied God's wrath against our sin once and for all. While we can still sin and can receive forgiveness we don't need to worry that our sin will cause us to lose our salvation.

## DAY THREE :: What now?

Not only did Jesus die for us, but He was raised from the dead and offers us new life with Him.

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Romans 6:4-6.** In Jesus you have the opportunity to live a new type of life. You don't have to be a slave to your sin and desires.

What does it mean to live as a new creation?

What does it mean that our old lives have died with Christ?

# JESUS PAID IT ALL :: Week 11

## TEACHING ::

How does someone become a Christian?



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There are 613 laws in the Old Testament. 365 of those laws require you not to do something and 248 are laws requiring you to do something.



### THE GIFT OF GRACE

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

How would you define the word saved? What is it that people need to be saved from?

redeemed, transformed from a life of sin

What do **Romans 3:23** and **6:16** say about us?

All have sinned and fallen short of God's standard

We are under sin's control

How would you define mercy? Not getting what you deserve

How would you describe what grace is?

Getting what you don't deserve

Free undeserved favor from God

God's Riches at Christ's Expense

What makes something a gift? What is God's gift to mankind?

we did nothing to earn it.

Salvation through the death of God's son/ sacrifice

Eternal Life

According to the Ephesians passage what do you have to do to be saved?

Have faith

It is NOT by doing good things/works

### THE MIND AND THE HEART

Putting your faith in Jesus involves both intellectual agreement to who He is and what He accomplished on the cross, but it's also an act of our will. It involves both our minds and our hearts. Let's look at this:

According to **Romans 10:9** what do you need to do to be saved?

Confess with mouth that Jesus is Lord, submit to his authority

Acknowledge he is God

Believe in your heart

Learn to be like Him (become a disciple)

## DISCUSSION :: THE ONLY DOOR

Why is it important that salvation is a gift?

**Read Romans 10:9 again.** What is the significance of confessing Jesus as Lord?

**Read John 14:6.**

What is important about what Jesus says in this verse?

## WHERE ARE YOU?

Have you made a decision to put your faith in Christ?

If not, what's holding you back?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# — NOTHING CAN *Separate* US —

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:27-28*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Last week we learned about what it means to be saved. This week we will wrestle with the question, "once I'm saved can I ever lose my salvation?"

Have you ever doubted your salvation in Christ? Have you ever re-prayed "the prayer" just to be sure?

Are there any habits or tendencies in your life that you think can separate you from God's love and eternal security in Him? What are they?

**Read Romans 8:38-39.** If you really believed that nothing could separate you from God, how would it affect your life?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**According to Colossians 1:13-14,** what does someone who has been rescued by Jesus receive? What does it mean to be transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light?

**Read John 5:24.**

What gain is there for those who hear the words of Jesus and believe in them?

How does knowing you get to spend eternity with God sound?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

How confident are you in your relationship with God? Are you ever worried that God will leave you if you don't meet his standards?

**Read John 10:27-29.** Jesus promises that we will never perish or be snatched out of His hand. What does this mean for you in your walk with God?

Spend some time with God today, talking to Him about your relationship with Him and whether or not you truly feel secure that it can't be taken from you. Come ready to talk about this on Sunday.

# NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US :: Week 12

## TEACHING ::



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Here are the top 5 things that are most commonly lost.

1. Keys
2. Flashdrives
3. Cell Phones
4. Sunglasses
5. Gloves



### THE STRUGGLE

It's not uncommon to struggle with believing you are saved. As disciples of Jesus, we've received an amazing gift from God in salvation and we sometimes worry that we will ruin it. But what confidence can we have that if we have Jesus we have eternal life? Let's look at the first letter of John for some discussion.

**Turn and read 1 John 5:9-13.**

Normally when we hear testimony we think of giving our testimony in a courtroom. What exactly is a testimony?

Someones account of how something happened

What makes a testimony trustworthy?

The credibility of the person

If we trust in people's testimony how much more can we trust God's testimony based on his character?

like a whole lot

According to the passage who is God's testimony about?

Read verse 9 —> The son

As disciples of Jesus we can respond to what God says in two ways: we can believe him or we can choose not to believe him.

According to v. 10 if we choose not to believe God, what are we in essence doing?

It's like calling him a liar—> not meant to scare you into believing

In v. 11 God's testimony says that two things are true. What are they?

1. God has given us eternal life
2. This life is in his son  
meaning it is through Jesus alone

Read 1 John 3: 9  
encourage students to read the whole book

## DISCUSSION ::

According to the passage there are two kinds of people in the world, those who have eternal life and those who do not.

Answer True or False to these questions.

True / False	It is possible to have the Son and not have the life.
True / False	It is possible to not have the Son and still have the life.
True / False	It is possible to think you have the life but don't.
True / False	It is possible to have the life but not be sure.

**Read verse 13 again.**

Who is John writing to?

Have you ever felt like you have lost your salvation? Or have you ever been unsure that you really are saved?

Do you think John believed that it is possible to know we can have eternal life? Why?


How would it change your relationship with God if you weren't worried about losing your salvation?

What do you think having confidence that God will never leave you can do for your relationship with Jesus?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

*<sup>1</sup> This study was based on a Cru Bible Study called Stepping from Uncertainty to Confidence.*

# THIS IS *War*



*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:27-28*





## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

How often do you think about angels and demons? Do you believe that they exist in this world?

Have you had any experiences with angels or something that seemed demonic?

**Read Ephesians 6:10-12.** Paul seems to say that there is a spiritual battle going on. Does this verse change the way you typically look at the world?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

Why do you think God created angels?

**Read Revelation 5:11-12.** What are the angels doing at the end of time when they see Jesus?

We study angels not just because angels are fascinating. We study angels because they proclaim the glory of Jesus. Take some time now to listen or sing your favorite worship song and join in with the angels in worshipping Jesus.

## DAY THREE :: What now?

When we talk about angels and demons, it is easy to become fascinated with the spiritual realm. However, we can't lose sight of what's really important.

**Read Hebrews 1:3-4.** What does this passage say about Jesus' relationship to angels? Who are we supposed to be focusing on and worshipping?

Angels are fascinating and glorious, but Jesus is far greater than all of them. Spend some time praying and praising Jesus for how amazing He is.

## THIS IS WAR :: Week 13

### TEACHING ::

**Read Ephesians 6:12.** According to Paul, what is our struggle against? rulers, authorities, cosmic powers of darkness. Spiritual forces of evil



**Read Colossians 1:13-14.** What does Paul say happened when we gave our lives to Christ? Who's kingdom are we now part of?

we are delivered from darkness and transferred to Kingdom of Light

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Did you  
know the  
average  
person  
takes  
17,000  
breathes  
every day?

The Bible teaches that there are two kingdoms that are presently at war with one another. There is the Kingdom of the Light where Jesus is King, but there is also the Kingdom of Darkness that is ruled by Satan. Both of these kingdoms have soldiers. Angels for the Kingdom of Light and demons for the Kingdom of darkness.

#### A Look at Angels

Theologian Wayne Grudem defines angels this way, "Angels are \_\_\_\_created\_\_ and \_\_\_\_spiritual\_\_ beings with moral \_\_\_\_judgement\_\_ and high intelligence, but without \_\_\_\_physical\_\_ bodies."

**Read Hebrews 1:14 and Psalm 91:11-12.** What do these verses tell you about the relationship between angels and God's people? In what ways can angels minister or support believers? they serve those who believe/ guard and protect us/ lift us up

#### A Look at Demons

Theologian Wayne Grudem defines demons as follows: "Demons are \_\_\_\_evil\_\_ angels who sinned against God and who now \_\_continually\_\_ work \_\_\_\_evil\_\_ in the world." He also says that Satan is the head of all demons. It is important to look at how this dark kingdom works so that we can guard and fight against it. It's kind of like when our military uses spies and recon teams to gather info on the enemy.

**Read 2 Corinthians 11:14-15, 1 Peter 5:8, Zechariah 3:1, and John 8:44.** Make a list of all the things you learn about the activities of Satan and his kingdom.

He disguises himself as good/ roaring lion, accuses, murders, lies

#### It is NOT a fair fight!

The war between these two kingdoms is not a struggle against \_\_\_\_equal\_\_ powers but against \_\_\_\_opposites\_\_.

**Read 1 John 4:4.** What does this tell you about who is the greater power? God is greater than the world or anyone in it

**Read Colossians 2:15.** What does this tell you about what Jesus accomplished on the cross? He defeated/ disarmed and triumphed. Ultimate victory forever



## DISCUSSION ::

When we become believers in Christ the Holy Spirit lives in us. This means that nothing else can live in our hearts because that seat is already taken. However, this does not mean that the enemy cannot attack. What are some things you have learned about how the enemy can affect us?

**Reread Ephesians 6: 10-18.** Knowing how the enemy works can help us be on guard when they attack. How do we defend against the enemy?

**Read James 4:7.** What does it say?

How do we resist the Devil?

Spend time as a group praying **against** the enemy and **for** God's protection over each person in the group.

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# THE RETURN OF THE *King*

*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Colossians 3:1-2*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Think about all of the evil in the world. There's a lot of it. Is it hard for you to have hope for something better when there is so much suffering and hurting?

**Read Titus 2:11-14.** What is the "blessed hope" for Christians? How does this help us endure hardships in this life?

How does our hope help us to live godly lives?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.** What is going on in this passage? What struggle is this church having? What does Paul say to encourage them?

Do you ever think about what it will be like when Jesus returns?

Spend some time picturing what it would be like if Jesus returned today.

## DAY THREE :: What now?

As Christians, we have hope and perseverance because we know that no matter how dark the world gets, Jesus will come back one day and set everything right.

**Read Revelation 19:11-16.** Does it encourage you to know that your Savior will one day come back like this?

There are a lot of injustices occurring in our world. People are oppressed, mistreated, even brutally killed. While God has allowed a season on earth where he permits this, he promises that he will one day restore things back to their created order. The power of sin, Satan, and his kingdom will be destroyed and He will get a righteous vengeance.

Spend some time praying and talking to Jesus about all of this and come ready to talk about the return of the King.

# THE RETURN OF THE KING :: Week 14

## TEACHING ::



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Since Jesus left people have been making predictions about when he would return. The most famous recent example was Harold Camping who predicted Jesus would return May 21st, 2011. Like many famous preachers before him, he was wrong.



### When?

**Read Mark 13:32-33.** People have all sorts of ideas about when Jesus will return, but according to this passage should we spend a great deal of time trying to discern the day or hour?

nobody knows but the Father

**Read 2 Peter 3:8-9.** What does this passage say about God's timing? What does this passage say about why Jesus hasn't returned yet?

He wants everyone to hear and no one to perish

### Why?

**Read Hebrews 9:27-28.** Why is Jesus going to come back?

To bring his kingdom and reign forever. To defeat evil

**Read Romans 10:9.** This verse says that Christians are already saved. If Jesus is going to come back again to save His followers, what is He saving them from this time?

War with sin and Satan

### How?

**Read Revelation 19:11-16.** What are some words you would use to describe this second coming of Jesus?

### SECOND COMING:

Justice, glorious, eternal, final King

## DISCUSSION ::

### Our Hope

How does knowing Jesus is going to come back like this make you feel?

**Read 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 and 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4.**

Jesus' second coming is supposed to be what we look forward to as Christians. We are supposed to be encouraged by knowing that Jesus is going to come back and put everything back in its rightful place. For many the day Jesus returns will be a frightful day because they have chosen to reject him, but as disciples of Jesus, we should eagerly await that glorious day.

**Read Hebrews 10:37,38** How are Christians called to live in the inbetween time?

What is faith?

How can we grow in our faith and encourage each other in to grow in their faith?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# THERE'S STILL *Hope*

*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.  
Colossians 3:1-2*





## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Have you thought much about Heaven? What do you think it will be like? Where did you come up with these ideas of what it would be like?

Imagine the world's longest rope going on forever that represents eternity. It has no beginning and it has no end. How much of the rope would represent your 70 years on earth? And yet the Bible is clear that what we believe and how we live in these short 70 years will affect the rest of our eternity. Think about that for a little while.

### **Read Colossians 3:1-2**

What does Paul urge us to do? How do we do this in our everyday lives?

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

Most Christians are pretty uniformed about what Heaven and Hell will be like. We carry around ideas that Heaven will be floating in the clouds playing a harp and signing songs to Jesus forever. If you were honest, when you think of Heaven do you ever think it might get ... boring?

**Read Revelation 21:1-5 and 22:1-5.** Did you know that Heaven as it presently exists will join with a renewed earth to form our eternal dwelling place? Many people think heaven is just a "spiritual place" and that we will leave to go off to some far distant spiritual realm. But Rev. 21:2-3 says God will come to dwell with us.

Jesus says the earth will eventually be renewed, not destroyed. It will be restored back to it's glory with none of the effects of sin like pollution, crime, fires, famine, or hate. Take a minute and imagine how beautiful this planet can be. There are places like the Caribbean islands, Sequoia National Park, or the mountains of Europe. Does it excite you to think that Heaven will have an earth-like feel?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

Satan is smart. He knows he doesn't have to try to convince you that Heaven doesn't exist. Instead, he tries to convince you that it will be boring.

**Read John 10:10.** The thief Jesus is speaking of is Satan. How has he killed or stolen your joy about Heaven?

What questions do you have about Heaven? What questions do you have about Hell? Come Sunday ready to talk about them.

## THERE'S STILL HOPE :: Week 15

### TEACHING ::

#### HELL

Let's go through some common views about Hell by looking at the analogy of marriage:

- Marry Me and bring your abusive exhusband too (Anyone can enter)
- Marry Me, or I'll kill you (God says you've got this option so come with me or I'll kill you)
- Marry Me or I'll lock you in the basement until you love me (Hell is only a temporary holding place until people come around)
- Marry Me, or go your own way.  
- 2 types of people: those who say to God, "Your will be done" and those to whom God says, "Your will be done."

**Genesis 1:1** God created the \_\_\_\_\_Heavens\_\_\_\_\_and the \_\_\_\_\_Earth\_\_\_\_\_.

So how does Hell fit into the picture?

It's important to understand that Hell is not an \_\_equal part\_\_ of our world.  
And it is NOT the \_\_\_\_\_counterpart\_\_\_\_\_to Heaven

Hell is described in the Bible as both an \_\_invading power\_\_\_\_\_ and an \_\_actual Place\_\_\_\_\_.

**Read Revelation 21:8, 2 Thessalonians 1:9 and Romans 8:39.** What do these verses say about Hell?

Jesus is the one who talks most about Hell. The word He uses to describe it most often is the word \_\_Gehena\_\_\_\_\_.

Read these other verses that talk about Hell. How do they describe what it will be like?

**Matt. 25:46, Romans 2:6-8, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Matt. 10:28**

This is where the people of God went to \_\_betray\_\_\_\_\_ God in secret.

Eventually these practices\_\_ crept into the city and \_\_threatened\_\_ God's people.

So with this understanding Hell actually becomes a \_\_good thing\_\_ Because God's plan is to take those things that would creep into our lives and pull us away from God and remove them from His Creation..

#### HEAVEN

**Read Revelation 21:1-7** Heaven is often thought of as this place far off in the clouds that we go after die, but the picture we should have in our minds of heaven is the\_\_ **Garden of Eden**\_\_\_\_\_

**Read Revelation 21:1-7** Here we see restoration of \_\_God's\_\_\_\_\_ space with \_\_Man's\_\_\_\_\_ space in a union that is meant to last forever! This is our hope and what we look forward to as Christians.



#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Most people think there won't be animals in Heaven, but God created animals before there was sin and they were a part of the perfect earth. If Heaven is a restored earth then it strongly suggests there will be animals in heaven.



## DISCUSSION ::

How does this understanding of Hell affect the way we view God?

How does this understanding of Heaven affect the way that we view God?

If this is true about Hell, how does this change the way we tell others about our Lord?

If this true about Heaven how does this affect the way we describe what we hope for?

Paul speaks of the powers of Hell trying to pull us away from God. How can we help each other resist sin and temptation to cheat on God like the Israelites did in Gehena (Valley of Hinnom)?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH



# *Section*

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# 3

## **Weeks 16-21**

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# GOING

# Public

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1–2*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

This week we'll be looking at what it means to be baptized. As you think about it, what questions do you have about baptism?

If you have been baptized, try to recall what your experience was like. How has it shaped your relationship with God?

If you haven't been baptized what do you think is holding you back? Do you think it's important to be baptized?

Spend some time talking with God about where you are at when it comes to baptism. If you're afraid, share that with him. If you are excited to get baptized, let him know it!

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

Did you know Jesus wants you to be baptized as a way of identifying with his life and mission? **Read Matthew 28:18-20.** What does Jesus ask his disciples to do as they set up the church?

Peter also talks about baptism. **Read Acts 2:38.** What does Peter tell those who would want to follow Jesus to do?

In the time of Jesus baptism would have involved a person being fully immersed underwater. There is a symbolic nature to the act of being baptized, but there is also a public declaration of your identity as a follower of Jesus.

**Read Romans 6:1-7** and see if you can catch some of the symbolism of baptism. What do you think going under the water represents? What does coming out of the water represent?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

This week you'll be presented with an upcoming opportunity to be baptized. Does that opportunity make you excited or nervous?

Baptism has to be your choice. No one can make that decision for you. But it's also a command from Jesus. If you feel resistant towards baptism, why do you think that is?

What questions would you like answered to help you feel more confident to get baptized?

## GOING PUBLIC :: Week 16

### TEACHING ::



#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Baptism looks similar to a Jewish cleansing ritual in a public bath called a Mikveh. Any person who wanted to become Jewish needed to be fully immersed in a mikveh as a part of their conversion.



#### What is Baptism?

In the time of Jesus baptism was all about commitment. It was a public act of repentance and returning back to obedience to God. Baptism was also Identification. It meant your loyalty was to Jesus, a man who was considered a threat to Rome and to Caesar. So by being baptized in Jesus' name it meant you were willing to be identified with him even if it meant you would be criticized or attacked for it.

The Greek word "*baptizo*" means to, "immerse" something in water.

Before Jesus left the earth he sent out his disciples with this task.

#### Read Matthew 28:18–20.

What does Jesus ask his disciples to do as they share the gospel? **Baptize**

Is that a request or is it a command from Jesus? **command**

Why do you think Jesus would want his followers to be baptized? **to be a public testimony of internal faith**

Do you think it's an act of disobedience to refuse to be baptized? **yes**

Baptism is about way more than just being dunked in water. It's also a symbolic act.

#### Read Romans 6:1–7.

It is a symbolic act joining us to Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

#### The Faith of the Ethiopian

Turn and read Acts 8:25–38.

Who was Philip? **disciple/apostle**

How does the Ethiopian official respond to the news about Jesus? **immediately gets baptized**

Was there anything preventing this new Christian from being baptized? **No, heard the gospel and responded with full commitment**



## DISCUSSION ::

Have you been baptized?

Share why or why not .

If you havem share about your experience.

Why is baptism important?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH

# STOP AND *Remember*

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1–2*



## DAY ONE :: What do you think?

Imagine if you brought a non-Christian friend to church and communion was being celebrated. What would you say to your friend if he/she leaned over and said, "what's this all about?"

Have you ever taken communion? Why did you take it? If you haven't taken communion before, what has stopped you?

This week you will be learning all about communion. Sometimes it may seem like something you have to do or maybe for you all it's been is a snack during church. Regardless of where you are, we hope you examine more closely why we practice communion.

**Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26** and take time to reflect on it today. Talk with God about where you stand when it comes to communion. Be honest, whether your experience has been good or bad.

## DAY TWO :: What does God say?

**Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.** Why do you think it's important to stop and remember Jesus' death?

**Read 1 Corinthians 11:27–29.** Before taking communion, what are we commanded to do?

Why do you think Paul asks us to do this?

Do you think Jesus cares about the heart behind why you take communion?

## DAY THREE :: What now?

**Read Matthew 26:26–29.** What does Jesus tell His disciples to remember as they take communion?

How does this compare to the way communion is taken today?

This Sunday, you will study communion further with your group and you will also be given the opportunity to take communion together. Maybe you've never taken communion or you haven't taken communion as seriously as you should. Spend some time with God today, asking Him to help you remember what communion represents.

## STOP AND REMEMBER :: Week 17

### TEACHING ::

If someone who knew nothing about church or God asked you to explain communion, how would you describe it? What is it all about?

It is a remembrance of what Christ did on the cross. It is related to the Jewish feast of Passover

It is very easy to think of communion as something every Christian should do, without identifying the true purpose and symbolism of it.

### A CLOSER LOOK

Roughly 2000 years ago Jesus gathered his disciples the night before he would be arrested for an annual Jewish meal to remember the Passover. The meal was filled with all sorts of symbolism about how God had rescued the Hebrew people from the power of Pharaoh. As we examine this passage together we'll see that Jesus is now going to take that meal and use it to symbolize how God has again saved us through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**Read Matthew 26:26–29.**

According to Jesus what does the bread symbolize? **Jesus' body**

What about the cup? **Jesus' blood**

Why do you think Jesus wants us to remember these things?

Many years later the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth to remind them of the importance of the church participating in communion regularly.

**Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–28.**

How should you prepare yourself to take communion? **Confess sin**

How can you honor God when taking communion? **with a grateful heart. Worshipfully remember all he did.**

What are ways that you can dishonor God when taking communion? **taking it when you have someone you have wronged. With unforgiveness, with hypocrisy. just to eat something.**



### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One of the most famous paintings in the world is Leonardo Di Vinci's 1498 painting "The Last Supper." It took him 3 years to paint and you can still visit it today in a monastery in Milan, Italy.



Why do you think every year on September 11 everyone takes time to remember what happened?

Do you find yourself to be a forgetful person? How does regularly celebrating communion help forgetful people?

How do you think practicing communion can help you grow in your closeness with Jesus?

Today you are going to be given the opportunity to take communion together. As you learned, Jesus established communion to help us remember his death on the cross and what he accomplished in it.

Before you take communion take some time to examine your life. What areas do you need to give to Jesus? What sin in your life did Jesus need to die for? How are you thankful that Jesus paid your death penalty? Is there any sin in your life that you would want to confess to Him?

### TAKE HOME TRUTH