



Search

history

A rounded rectangular search bar with a light gray border and a subtle drop shadow. On the left side, there is a magnifying glass icon followed by a vertical line. On the right side, there are three icons: a camera, a microphone, and another magnifying glass. A black mouse cursor arrow is pointing at the left edge of the search bar.

Study Guide

We live in the information age where what we want to know is only just a few key strokes away. Information is easier to attain than ever. The internet has broadened our ability to search billions of resources from all over the world in the blink of an eye. With so much information at our fingertips, one would think we'd understand more than ever. And yet, the world around us is still searching, looking for an understanding that goes far beyond head knowledge.

Every day Google processes over 3.5 billion searches. According to truthstory.com in 2019, in just one month on average people asked the question “Who is God”, “Who is Jesus”, or “What is the Bible” more than 4,153,000 times! That’s a lot of questioning! The eleventh most common theological question asked is “What is a Christian” with an average monthly search rate of about 450,000 times!

Across the world, over 2 billion people claim to be a Christian. In America, between 65 to 70 percent would title themselves as “Christian”. But overwhelmingly among those who claim to be a Christian, the understanding of what that actually means can vary. Some people believe that being an American who is not otherwise affiliated with another religion automatically makes you a Christian. This is supposedly a “Christian nation” after all. Others would argue that to be a Christian you need at least a cursory belief in God and try to do what is right in most circumstances. While still some would argue that attending a Christian church at least a few times a year is the bare minimum to qualify.

The definition of the word can also vary wildly based on culture, heritage, region, and tradition. Inside the “Christian” label are different denominations and views- each having a different definition of what the term “Christian” really means.

Differing doctrines of faith and arguments about what the Bible really says have divided us for centuries, causing arguments and grudges between denominations so long-lasting and deep that reconciliation seems impossible.

In a world so divided and undecided about what it means to be a Christian, how can we really know what the truth is? Over the next 8 weeks, we are going to take a deep dive into 8 primary tenants of the Christian faith to take a closer look at what the Bible says. We are going to ask some hard questions and we aren't going to stop until we find the answers.

And each week we will focus in on how to have thoughtful, meaningful, and respectful conversations with fellow Christians and non-Christians alike.

Each day will have a Bible verse for you to read and reflection questions. Each week will have a short devotional and conversation starters for you to use as you lean into community and conversation with others. We highly encourage you not to do this study on your own, but to choose to walk through all 8 weeks with a friend, your Life Group, or your family. If at any point in this study, you feel confused or have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can email us any time at info@arborheights.org and we would be happy to help!

We love you all, and we can't wait to take this journey with you!



Week one



Incarnation

Big Idea: God steps into our reality

Reflect:

Historians agree on at least one thing about Jesus Christ - He was a man who lived over 2,000 years ago. Beyond that, opinions about Jesus vary wildly. Some write Him off as just a good man who lived. Others argue that He was a prophet or even an angel. But none of these explanations line up with what Jesus said about Himself or what the Bible testifies to.

The truth is that Jesus was far more than a good teacher, prophet, or angel. He was and is the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, and God in human form. He stepped out of His place in Heaven to take on the form of a human, live a sinless life, and accomplish salvation for us all! He left heaven to enter our world so that we could have a chance to leave our world and step into heaven.

sunday :

Isaiah 7:14

The name “Immanuel” means “God with us” and was spoken in prophecy about Jesus long before He was born. The promise of our Savior brought with it the understanding that when He came, He would be more than just a man. He would be the very person of God in human form. Jesus, God Himself, came in the form of a helpless baby. In that moment, all of history was changed. Jesus, Immanuel, God with us! Take a minute today to really reflect on what that means. Our God is not one who sits in heaven aloof and distant. No, He stepped into our world, made Himself one of us, so that He could save us. He came close and continues to be the God who is with us! How does this picture of a close God differ from how you have seen God in the past?

monday :

John 1:14

In the beginning, Jesus was with God and Jesus was God. He is that through which all things are made. He is the very expression of God. And when the fullness of time came, Jesus stepped out of Heaven to take on flesh and live with us. Through Him, we see the glory of God, full of grace and truth. For the first time in history, mankind could look on the face of God. Jesus crossed the divide that once stood between man and God and revealed Himself to us! The Creator God came to us! What a powerful truth! Knowing that Jesus came to us, how can you challenge yourself to acknowledge Him more today?

tuesday :

Hebrews 1:1-3

For thousands of years before Christ came in the flesh, God spoke through broken and sinful mankind, anointing them to carry His message to the people. And then Jesus came. Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, the very representation of God’s nature, came to bring the ultimate message of God’s love to the whole world. Unlike the message delivered by human hands, Jesus is the perfect, unaltered, and unhindered expression of God’s message to the whole world. How does this truth change the way you see Jesus, why He came, and how you should respond to Him?

wednesday :

Philippians 2:5-8

Jesus had every right in the world to stay in Heaven. He had every right in the world to keep His distance. He would have been justified to leave us to our consequences and let us perish. But He didn’t. He gave up His rights, His privilege, His comfort, and His honor to step into our world, to be our Savior, and to purchase for us what we never could have alone. He chose to humble Himself for our sake! Isn’t that amazing? If the Creator God could humble Himself for our needs, how can you choose to pass it along, humble yourself, and meet the needs of others in your life?

thursday :

Galatians 4:4-5

Sometimes we wonder why Jesus came when He did or how He did. For Jesus to redeem us who were under the Law, under the holy judgement of God, He had to step into our place. He had to become a man under the Law to redeem all of us who were under the Law. Because He stepped into our place, He paid the debt we owed to God. He satisfied the Law and the wrath of God. He was our perfect atonement. Because of what Jesus did, all believers can rest in the assurance that we have been redeemed from under the Law. How does that truth give you peace today?

friday :

Hebrews 2:14-18

Jesus was made like us in all things so that He could redeem us from all things! Let that sink in for a minute. God the Father did not spare His Son the agony of humanity. Jesus was tempted like we are. He hurt like we do. He felt the sting of pain and betrayal. He suffered in every way we do as humans. He went through all that so that He could meet us in our mess and redeem us. He came all the way, not settling for almost human or sort-of human. He did it all... for you and me! Knowing that Jesus suffered the same way we do, how can you take your burdens and hurts to Him knowing that He understands and cares?

saturday :

2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus willingly designed and then stepped into the most unfair trade to ever exist. He who is perfect, holy, and without sin, chose to take on our brokenness and sin so that we could take on His righteousness. It wasn't a give-and-take trade where we gave Him something of equal value as what we took. No, Jesus gave us everything and took away our sins. He did it all. Why? Because He loves us. Period. In light of this overwhelming trade, how can you walk in gratitude for what Jesus did, flourishing in the freedom and righteousness that He gave you?

Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. How have you viewed God as distant and far away? How has the truth that He is the God who steps into our reality challenged those views?



2. How does knowing that Jesus made a choice to meet us where we are help you find hope that He will meet you in your specific situations in life? How can we look at His faithfulness then and trust His faithfulness now?



3. Jesus gave us His righteousness and took away our sinfulness. Have you ever failed to see yourself as righteous in the name of Christ? If so, how? How can you begin to own the identity that Christ came to give you?



Feedback

Week two



Revelation

Big Idea: God speaks to us

Reflect:

From the beginning of time, recorded in Genesis 1, God spoke and things happened. Through the Word of God (John 1) all things were made. But God didn't stop speaking after creation. We read that God would come and spend time in the Garden with Adam and Eve. He spoke directly to them, even after sin created a chasm between us and God, He has continued to speak to His creation.

Over and over throughout history, God spoke to mankind. He appointed priests and prophets to share His word. And then, in His ultimate act of connection, Jesus came as the Word of God made flesh. God speaks to us still today if we are willing to listen. Through the teaching of His Holy Spirit in our hearts and minds, through His written word preserved in the Bible, and through those He has called to teach and preach, God continues to speak. He is not silent. We need only to have ears and hearts postured to listen.

sunday :

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Throughout time, God has moved through His people to create for us a written source of His words. The literal translation of this passage says that scripture is “God-breathed”. It proceeds from Him. He breathes it out. The same breath that spoke all of creation into being, that breathed out stars, and breathed life into mankind... that breath gives us our holy scriptures. And as such it is powerful and profitable for us. Through the God-breathed scriptures, we get a glimpse of who God is and who we are. How does the world view scripture and how does that view clash with what God says about His words?

monday :

2 Peter 1:20-21

Sometimes we mistakenly lump prophecy in with fortune-telling and clairvoyance- relegating it to some mysterious force that gives us the heebie-jeebies. But God’s prophecy is far more than some person looking into the future and giving someone the right lottery numbers. Instead, prophecy is the act of God, through the Holy Spirit, moving through mankind to deliver His words to His people. Prophecy is the direct result of God reaching into humanity to connect with His people. And for those who were blessed to be called prophets, God used them to speak His truth. But in the end, God is always the source of the message and the power. It’s His message, given to His people, for His purpose. Have you ever viewed prophecy through a mystical lens? How does understanding what it really is help you to understand how God speaks through prophets?

tuesday :

Psalms 119:105

When travelers in the time of King David set out across the deserts of the Middle East, they would carry with them a lamp or a torch. The light would guide their way in the dark, showing them the next step they needed to take. Likewise, God’s word to us give us our next steps. It lights our path through dark places, giving us guidance and illuminating the obstacles that stand in our way. It also helps us to stay on the path and not wander off into the wilderness. How are you doing at using the word of God to light the path of your life? How could you rely on it more?

wednesday :

1 Corinthians 2:12-13

When we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, we are given the Holy Spirit to reside inside us. As the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts and minds, teaching us the words and message of God. Unlike the people of God in the Old Testament, the Spirit never leaves us. He takes up residence inside us to guide us, convict us, and help us. The more we learn to listen to His voice in our lives, the more we can grow in our understanding of God. Have you been able to identify the voice of God in your life through the Holy Spirit? If not, who can you talk to this week to help you grow in this area?

thursday :

John 10:27

Jesus taught us that when we are His people, people who have accepted His Lordship in our lives, we will hear His voice and follow Him. But in order to follow Him, we have to recognize His voice above all the others vying for our attention. In order to recognize His voice, we have to know Him and spend time getting to know Him. How about you? Are you able to distinguish the voice of Jesus over the rest? How can you grow in your relationship with Jesus to better hear His voice?

friday :

Romans 10:17

Unlike you and me, Jesus doesn't just talk to hear His own voice. His words have meaning and purpose. They have a goal. And that goal is salvation for anyone who listens and receives His truth. When we choose to listen to His words, believe them, and put them into practice, we participate in His message of salvation. When we receive the words that flow from the Word of Life Himself, allowing the truth of His salvation to flood our souls, we find everything we could ever need. Knowing that Jesus' words are more than just flippant or casual, that they lead to salvation, how does that make you want to listen even more?

saturday :

Revelation 3:20

Jesus comes to each of us and calls out, knocking on the door of our heart. His words draw us into relationship with Him. But we have to choose to respond. We can hear the words of Jesus, hear Him knocking, and choose not to respond. Or we can open the door to Him and invite Him in, welcoming Him to continue to speak to us. This is a choice that everyone has to make. Jesus has called out to everyone, and we all have the opportunity to respond. Have you or someone you know not yet opened the door to Christ and responded to His call?

Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. How do you feel about the fact that the God of the universe wants to and does speak to you? Does that frighten or excite you?



2. How can you lean into the words of Christ more, seeking conversation with Him and tuning your heart and mind to listen more?



3. Can you think of one person in your life who needs to hear the words of Jesus that you can share them with?



Feedback

Week three



Creation

Big Idea: God is the sole Creator

Reflect:

Our God is the Creator God. There is no other, nor will there ever be another. God, eternal in existence, spoke and all was created. Through Jesus, the Word of God, all things were made that have been made. Unlike polytheistic religions around the world, we understand that our single God is the sole creator of everything. He created the world, the heavens, and all that reside in them.

And God is creating still today. Every day, all around us we can witness the creative outpouring of our God who is intimately involved in His creation. From a beautiful sunrise that paints the sky with radiant colors, to the microscopic creation of life inside a mother's womb, to the regeneration of every living cell inside your body on a regular basis- God continues to create and build upon His masterpiece. His hands are intimately upon His creation, uniquely shaping and creating in mysterious and beautiful ways that only He can do.

sunday :

Genesis 1:1

At the heart of our faith is the rejection of any other God. We believe that there is only one God and that He is responsible for all of creation. We reject the idea that any force outside of Him created the world. He is the source of any and all creation. God, existing eternally, created time and space, and inside that time and space, He created everything. Nothing was created apart from Him. What other narratives do you hear from the world, and even from inside the church at times, that counter this truth?

monday :

Isaiah 42:5

Some view God as having created the world, set it in motion, and then stepping back and disconnecting. But when we read scripture, this is not the picture we see. God is an intimate Creator. So intimate, in fact, that He literally breathes His breath into each living person giving us life. Talk about connected! The very life inside us is the breath of God in us. Stop and think about that today. How does that truth resonate with you? Does it help you to feel closer to the God who created you?

tuesday :

Colossians 1:16-17

Did you know that science can't fully explain why the universe, or even our atoms hold together. There is still so much mystery surrounding creation. In the Bible, we find the answers. God not only creates everything, but He holds it all together as well. Through His power, the universe and all its inhabitants cooperate in a perfectly succinct rhythm, moving and interacting in a divine perfection. The odds of it happening randomly are impossible. Through God alone, we exist, move, and survive. Take a look around you today and allow yourself to focus in and appreciate the beauty of God's perfect design.

wednesday :

Revelation 4:11

When we look at creation and all that God has made, the honest and natural response is praise. When we behold and appreciate the majesty of His wonder, our souls overflow in adoration. We were literally created to give Him praise and honor. And He is a God so worthy of all our praise and more! How can you allow the beauty of God's creation spark praise in you today? What is one thing that you can glorify Him in today?

thursday :

Acts 17:24-28

All of creation tells the glory of the Lord. And when we look closely, we cannot help but see the fingerprints of God. He does not need us, but He chooses us! He created everything and there is nothing that we could ever offer Him that He does not already own. Instead of empty sacrifices, His desire for you and I would be that we would find Him, know Him, and love Him. He draws near to us not because He needs us, but because we need Him. In His goodness, He meets our need. Let that sink in for a minute. How can you come to God openhanded, offering the very thing He wants from you- your heart?

friday :

Psalms 139:13-14

God not only created the heavens and the earth, but He created YOU! Inside your mother's womb, He knit you together. His hands intentionally and specifically created you. He made you with a design and with purpose. You are a wonderful work of His. You are fearfully and wonderfully made! What lies have told you the opposite? What lies have kept you from viewing yourself as a masterpiece of God? How can you use this verse to defeat those lies today?

saturday :

Ephesians 2:10

The word "workmanship" denotes the idea that God put His hands in and created you. Like a potter at the wheel, He fashioned you with a plan and intention. He drew near, pouring out Himself in the creation of something completely unique and beautiful. He measured and calculated with a final design in mind. All because He has a purpose for you. You were not created by accident. You were created on purpose. How does that truth resonate with you this week? Is it hard to accept? Why or why not?

Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. How has your view of God as Creator grown this week? What was the most surprising realization for you?



2. What is one way that you want to commit to a life that intentionally sees the Creator and gives Him praise?



3. How does the truth that God is intimately involved in your creation, with a purpose and a plan, help you to connect with Him more this week? Do you struggle with this truth? Discuss this with someone this week.



[Feedback](#)

Week four



Image

Big Idea: We bear the image of God

Reflect:

When God created us, He created us to reflect Him. In His image, He fashioned mankind. Because we are created in His image, we have immense worth.

We reflect His creativity, His compassion, His relational nature, and His life. In the garden before sin entered the world, Adam and Eve reflected God in a perfect display of His glory. But since then, sin has marred the image of God, causing the goodness that once was meant to radiate from us to become blocked and skewed. As if looking into a dirty mirror, the reflection of God in us is diminished by sin.

But, praise God, He didn't leave us that way. Jesus came to restore what was lost and to make us new. In His name we are transformed from death to life. And the more we draw close and allow His Spirit to sanctify and redeem us, the more we begin to reflect Him again. We are being transformed into the image of Christ, restoring what was marred.

Through the redeeming power of Christ and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, we can begin to clear away the sin that has kept us from displaying

sunday :

Genesis 1:26

In the beginning, we were created to reflect the glory of God. We were made in His image and with the reflection of His nature in our lives. No other species on the planet was made in the image of God. As humans, we are unique and special, the pinnacle of God's creation! We are cherished and loved by Him. How does that truth make you feel about yourself and those you know?

monday :

Genesis 5:1-2

When God created mankind in His image it included His creation of both men and women. Each gender is different and special in the eyes of God, created to uniquely display His glory in specific ways. As equal displays of God's glory, we all get the privilege of showing the world an image of our God. He loves us all, and we are all image bearers of God. When we all work toward displaying God in our unique way, together we display the glory of God more fully to the world! What is one way that you are uniquely called to display the image of God in

tuesday :

James 3:8-10

Because we are made in the image of God, He expects us to treat each other with honor and dignity. When we use our words to hurt each other, we hurt God. He cares for us and values us as His beloved children. With that in mind, how can you choose to use your words to honor the image of God in other people?

wednesday :

Colossians 3:10

When we say Yes to Jesus, He makes us into a new creation, fashioned in the image of Him who made us. When we choose to walk in His ways, we take off the old self, the image of this world that we inherit through sin, and put on the new self, the true self, made in the image of a Holy and perfect God. The more we shed the old image to put on the new, the more we reflect the image of God in our lives. What is one piece of the old self, the image of sin, that you need to commit to intentionally putting off this week so that you can put on the image of Christ?

thursday :

2 Corinthians 3:18

When you look in the mirror you see a reflection of yourself. Likewise, when we look at Christ, we want to reflect His image. The glory of the Lord stares back at us showing us what we were made to look like. But sin clouds the mirror and skews our view of what we were designed to look like. Marks and smudges hide the truth. But Christ came to wipe away the grime and give us a clearer picture of what we were always intended to be. Take a minute today to ask yourself what “smudges” are hiding the person you were always meant to be. What is one step you can take to allow Jesus to clean the sin away and allow you to better see His glory?

friday :

Romans 8:29

We all have different callings in this life. Some are called to be doctors, others are called to be teachers. Some are called to be stay-at-home parents, others are called to be CEO's. Wherever God has called you, one thing is always the same. You were destined to reflect His image in everything you do. And as such, God will use the different pieces of your life to grow you into the person you were always meant to be. He will use the good and the bad to shape you and make you into the image of Jesus. How might God be using the situation you are currently in to mold you and shape you into the image of Christ?

saturday :


Ephesians 4:24


As believers in Jesus, when we put on the image of Christ, we put on His righteousness, His holiness, and His truth. Any time that we act or think in a way that doesn't reflect those things, we are having an identity crisis. We've forgotten who we are, who He has called us to be. When we say Yes to Jesus, we are given a new self. But sometimes we still act or think like the old self. So, every day, sometime multiple times a day, we have to remind ourselves who we really are. We have to choose to put on the image of Christ. This is the continued work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Take a minute today to welcome


Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. What does it mean to you personally to view yourself as someone who is made in the image of God? 

2. How have you see your own personal sin hide and skew the image of God in you? 

3. What is one mark of God on your life that you want to celebrate this week? 

[Feedback](#)

Week five



The Fall

Big Idea: Sin has entered the world

Reflect:

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve sinned and mankind was changed forever. Passed down from one generation to the next, we all are now cursed with a sin nature. Sin is anything that misses the mark of God's holiness. Inside all of us is the ability and desire to sin, to do it our own way. No one escapes it; no one is sinless. We all have fallen short of God's standard. We all sin. Regardless of whether you have sinned a little or a lot- even just one sin makes you a sinner. And let's be honest, no matter how much we wish it were true, none of us is innocent.

Our sin separates us from God who is perfectly holy. His holiness cannot have communion with sin. So, a chasm divides us from the One we were created to love and serve. But God loved us too much to let that chasm go unbridged. Jesus came to take on the stain of our sin so that we could take on the righteousness of

sunday :

Isaiah 64:6

Sin stains us; it makes us unclean. Imagine a perfectly white tablecloth with a dark red wine stain on it. Even if most of the cloth is clean, that stain changes that cloth. It's no longer perfect, no longer unmarred. There's no denying that it is stained. Likewise, we are stained by sin. Even if we try to be clean, the stain still remains. It doesn't matter how big or small the stain is, it's still a stain. We can try to excuse it away, but it remains all the same. What we need is a powerful stain-remover. And that is exactly what Jesus is for us! How does the imagery of the wine stain help you to understand your sin?

monday :

Romans 3:23

Sometimes we like to believe that we are the exception to the rule. When we look at others around us, we can fall into the trap of comparing our sins and making ourselves out to be better than we really are. We can tell ourselves that we are good enough or that we aren't a sinner because (fill in the blank). But the Bible is clear. There is no one who is innocent, no one who is sinless. Because the measure of sinlessness or innocence isn't the other people we know- It is Jesus Christ alone. And when we use Him as a measuring stick of our righteousness, we are all found lacking. How have you compared yourself to other people to make yourself feel better about your sin?

tuesday :

Romans 8:19-21

When sin entered the world, not only did we as humans feel the effects, but the whole world was affected. Death entered the world causing everything to look differently than God designed. The Bible tells us that all of creation waits patiently for the day that Jesus will defeat sin and death, restore everything to perfection, and reside with us. When you look around at the whole world, how do you see the effects of sin and brokenness?

wednesday :

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

As humans, we are responsible for the presence of sin in this world. Everything is affected by sin- our bodies, nature, animals, even the earth itself. The brokenness of this world falls heavy on the shoulders of humanity. But praise God, even though we were the ones to blame, He came to redeem. He stepped into our humanity to redeem that which humanity broke. He took on human flesh to purchase back what humans lost. And through His sacrifice and victory over death, one day, everything that is currently broken by sin will be renewed and restored! Praise God! How does this truth give you hope amidst the brokenness of the world today?

thursday :

Proverbs 28:13

When we sin, it is so incredibly tempting to hide. It's what Adam and Eve did in the garden when their eyes had been opened and they heard God. They ran from Him and hid. We all have the natural tendency to hide our sin- hide it from ourselves, from others, and from God. When we push sin into the dark recesses of our lives, it doesn't go away. Instead, like most bad things in the world, it only grows in the darkness. But when you shine light on it, when you pull it out, face it, and let others face it with you, victory can be found. What sins do you hold on to that you have shoved into the dark hoping they will go away? How can you take a step today to bring it out into the light and let God defeat it?

friday :

1 John 1:8-10

Sometimes we forget the faithfulness of our Savior. We believe the lie that this sin is just too much for His redemption. Or we tell ourselves that we don't need Him or His grace. We try to convince ourselves that it's no big deal. And we try to keep on going as if nothing were wrong. But all the while we are just lying to ourselves and to God. However, when we face our sin and bring it to our loving and faithful Savior, He cleanses us. He doesn't reject us or leave us in our mess. Instead, He heals us and makes us new. He is faithful- always! How can you better trust in the faithfulness of God to forgive and cleanse you of sin?

saturday :

1 Peter 2:24

Did you know that when Jesus went to the cross, He took your sins with Him? Even though you were not yet born, He paid for the sins you would one day commit. His love and His victory are enough to reach across time and space to redeem and restore you, more than 2,000 years later. His redemption is that big! This shouldn't give us a license to sin. Instead, this should motivate us to live for Him more, honoring His sacrifice and living out of an overflow of the grace we have received! What is one change you can make in your life to better honor the love of Christ?

Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. What messages do you hear from the world about sin? How does the truth of the Gospel compare to those messages?



2. If you were to get real about your sin and call it what it is, how would that change your life, your habits, your thoughts, and your relationships?



3. Have you ever felt trapped by your sin? If so, how can you claim the victory of Christ today to get “unstuck”?



[Feedback](#)

Week six



Trinity

Big Idea: God is three persons in one being

Reflect:

The trinity is a concept that has stumped philosophers and theologians for centuries. The idea of three persons in one being is hard for our brains to comprehend. Through the years, many people have tried to use physical examples to explain the substance of the Trinity. But every attempt to explain the Trinity in human terms has left us short of the truth at best and heretical at worst. The best thing we can do is to stop trying to fit something so divinely unique into our earthly definitions and just rely on God's revealed truth. God has expressed Himself in truth through His word and He defines Himself as three in one. Him. He died to defeat the sin that stood between us and Him. Through Him, we are reconciled to God. Through Him we are made clean, and our relationship with God is restored. Through Him, we are no longer slaves to sin. We are given a new identity in Him.

sunday :

Deuteronomy 6:4

The Hebrew people had spent generations in a culture that worshiped many gods. After being delivered out, Moses wrote this passage to remind the people that their God was not one of the myriads of demigods they had left behind or those of the people whose land they were about to encounter. He wrote to remind them that God was one, not many, and that He was supreme. Though not surrounded by the traditional demigods of the past, we are surrounded by many false gods that promise salvation (money, esteem, achievement, etc.) Reflecting on this passage, how can you comit to serving the One True God? What false gods are currently attempting to steal your allegiance and faith?

monday :

Ephesians 4:4-6

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit exist in perfect unity, each person fully God. They are equal in power and authority. And they exist in perfect relational unity. Three in one. Because of the oneness of God, we are created to crave oneness both with Him and with His people. This passage highlights the oneness that is found in God. When we lose that oneness, we see division and pain. Where in your life have you lost the oneness that you were created for? How could your relationship with God and others better reflect the oneness of our God?

tuesday :

Matthew 3:16

At the baptism of Jesus, God the Father spoke from Heaven while the Holy Spirit descended on Christ. In this recount we see all three members of the Trinity present and active. A misunderstanding about the Trinity that has arisen in the past is "modalism"- the idea that each person of the Trinity is just an expression, or mode, of God, that the one God is expressed in three ways. But this account helps us to understand that is not true. All three persons are present and active and none of them ceases to exist when the other shows up. Have you ever heard the ideas of modalism taught or something similar? How can you draw from this passage to help you understand and explain that God is three persons in one, not just three expressions of one?

wednesday :

2 Corinthians 3:17

Many people have mistakenly believed that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force, an instrument of God to do His will and carry His words. But the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person who feels, moves, convicts, and strives. Some have also argued that though the Holy Spirit is a person, He is not an equal part of the Godhead, viewing Him as a lesser member of the Trinity or not a part of it at all. However, today's passage is just one of many that refutes those ideas. The Lord is the Spirit! Have you ever wondered if the Holy Spirit is really a part of the trinity? How could you use today's passage to help you or someone else understand that the Holy Spirit is an equal part of the Trinity?

thursday :

Matthew 28:19

Just before Jesus left earth, He gathered His followers together for one final command. In the call to make disciples, He tells us to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Notice that this baptism is to be in the name of all three persons of the Trinity, not just one or two. This call from Jesus emphasizes that all three are equal in power, authority, and Godhood. All three are part of the One God and you cannot baptize someone in the name of God without baptizing them in the name of all three persons of God. Have you ever wondered why we baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? How does this passage help you to understand that better?

friday :

Genesis 1:1-2 & John 1:1-3

From the beginning of all eternity, all three persons of God were present together. The Father, Son, and Spirit existed in perfect harmony, working as one God in and through all of time and creation. A false belief that has surfaced about Jesus is that He is a created being and not eternally present in the Godhead. Yet when we read these passages, we learn that Jesus was with God and was God before creation, and that everything was created through Him. How do these passages help you to refute the lie that Jesus is not eternally God? How does the eternal deity of Christ help you to better understand the awesomeness of the gospel?

saturday :

Colossians 2:9

A lie that has filtered into the church over the years is that Jesus gave up His deity to become a human. Some believe that He was only a man while living on earth and that He no longer held His place in the Trinity. But we are reminded often in the bible that Jesus was 100% God while still being 100% man. Our finite brains struggle to understand this, but in His divine power, Jesus was able to be fully both without sacrificing either of the two. Because He was fully man, Jesus was able to become our sacrifice. But because He was fully God, He was able to become our Savior. How can you rest in the truth that though Jesus was a man, He was also fully God?

Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. How have you struggled to understand the Trinity in the past? How do you continue to struggle?



2. Have you ever believed one or more of the misunderstandings and lies highlighted in this week's reading? If so, did you realize at the time that they were a falsehood?



3. What other religions or denominations do you know about that believe some of the falsehoods about the Trinity? How can you use the verses from this week to share the truth?



Feedback

Week seven



Church

Big Idea: God has given us a family

Reflect:

Once alienated from God, believers in Christ have received adoption as sons and daughters of the Most High King. Regardless of our physical, earthly families, we now belong to a heavenly, eternal family. No longer are we orphans, we belong. As such we are called to care for one another. God calls us to shift our focus from just ourselves to one of community and connection. In Scripture, this cooperative interlacing of the people of God is called the body of Christ.

With Christ as our head, we are all called to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. We are one in Christ, unified under His headship, and intertwined with other believers. Each of us is called to be an important part of the body of Christ, and He equips and grows us in order to benefit us as a person and the body as a whole.

sunday :

Acts 2:46-47

We have this beautiful picture painted of the early church coming together like a family under the name of Christ. To be a Christian at that time often meant the loss of community, family, position, and sometimes even your income. But in the wake of losing so much, these believers found a family whose bonds went so much deeper than blood- they went soul deep. As brothers and sisters in Christ, they found a connection with each other that would last for eternity. And out of that connection, they lived a life where everyone cared for one another. How do you see where our culture has moved away from the community mindset we see in scripture to a more individualistic one? How has this hurt us?

monday :

Ephesians 2:19-22

Before Christ, those who were born outside the lineage of Abraham were seen as aliens. God always made a way for the outsider to come into the family of God and there are multiple times in the Bible we read about non-Hebrew people worshipping the One True God. Unfortunately, though, there was still a stigma that had developed- you were either part of the chosen people or you were not. But through the work of Jesus, He tore down the dividing wall and brought us all into the family of God. No longer was the Gentile to be seen as the outsider. We are all now one in the name of Jesus! Take a second to consider what it might have felt like for first century Gentiles to finally feel acceptance and belonging to the family of God.

tuesday :

1 Peter 2:9-10

Before coming to Christ, all of us were like aliens with no place to call home. We didn't belong to anything or anyone. We were eternally homeless and without citizenship. But when we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, we are adopted into His family. We become a part of His people, a chosen people, with a purpose and a home. Our identity shifts from orphans to those who have a family, a home, and a hope. What does it mean to you to be adopted into the family of Christ?

wednesday :

Colossians 3:12-16

As members of the family of Christ, we are called to walk in unity and peace with one another, bearing each other's burdens, having patience with one another, and loving each other. We are no longer to think as an individual, only looking out for the needs of ourselves, but we are to think and act as a member of the body of Christ. Instead of a me-focused life, we are called to live a we-focused life. When one member hurts, we all hurt. When one member wins, we all win. How is this corporate minded way of thinking easy or hard for you?

thursday :

Romans 12:4-5

The beauty of the family and body of God is wrapped up in our diversity. God designed an amazing structure called the Church where we are all called to be unique while still called to be one. In our unity we find the beautiful and cooperative expression of our individuality. Removed from the body of Christ, individuality causes us to be distanced and pulled away from community. But in the body of Christ, our individuality allows us to use the unique way that God has made us for the greater good. Each person has a special and beautiful part to play. And when we all celebrate our individuality in light of the unity of the body, we see the body flourish. How have you allowed your unique giftings and individuality to draw you away from community instead of into it?

friday :

Ephesians 4:12-13

Each of us is called to be an active part of the body of Christ. Your calling will be different than your brothers and sisters in Christ. But no matter what your calling is, it is meant to serve the body. Each of us is called to build up the body. We are called to bring our gifts, talents, strengths, and insights to the family of God, not just for our benefit, but for the benefit of the whole. In this, the whole body is strengthened to better serve the call of Christ. What is one thing that you have held back from the body of Christ that you could bring in order to strengthen and build up others?

saturday :


1 Corinthians 12:12-13


Each of us has at least one gift from the Holy Spirit that He gives. A gift of the Spirit is different than a talent. Talents are all about us- our strengths, our aptitude. But a gift of the Spirit is all about Him and how He works in and through us. He is the center and the point of every gift He gives us. And when we allow Him to use us for His good, everyone benefits. There is nothing that is more satisfying than to use the gifts the Spirit has given you. That is what you were made for! Do you know your spiritual gift? If not, seek a mentor or spiritual leader or friend who can help you figure it out. truth that though Jesus was a man, He was also fully God?


Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. How has your earthly understanding of family helped or hurt your understanding of the family of God? 

2. Do you find that you have a more me-focused or we-focused way of looking at life? Does your individuality draw you into community or away from it? 

3. What is your spiritual gift and are you taking steps to use it for the good of the body? 

[Feedback](#)

Week eight



Kingdom

Big Idea: God's Kingdom is coming

Reflect:

Throughout history, kingdoms and rulers have come and gone, some good, others not so good. No matter how hard we've tried, humanity has always gotten it wrong because we are sinful and broken. But the victory of Jesus ushered in a kingdom that would never end, far above all other kingdoms or rulers.

Jesus, the ultimate King, welcomes His followers to enter into His kingdom. In God's kingdom, all that was once broken and lost is restored. Sin has no hold and death has no victory. The promise of eternity in His kingdom is the hope of every believer who puts their trust in Jesus. He promises to one day wipe away every tear and take away every hurt. As believers, our citizenship is no longer of this world. We belong to the kingdom of God forever.

sunday :

Daniel 2:44

Daniel was a righteous man of God through whom God shared His message. He prophesied about a kingdom that God would establish that would have no end. This prophecy spoke of the eternal kingdom of God that Jesus would establish. And through the redeeming work of Jesus, this kingdom is at hand! It will never fail. It will never be destroyed. It will never end! When you think of the eternal kingdom of God, what sort of feelings does it stir? Are you excited? Hopeful? Fearful? Take a minute today to ask yourself why you feel the way you do.

monday :

Mark 1:15

Whenever teaching about the kingdom of God, Jesus calls His listeners to repent and believe. There is a sense of urgency in His call, a seriousness that demands a closer look. Jesus knew that the time was short. None of us is promised our next breath and life can be over in an instant. That is why Jesus urges all of us not to wait. The kingdom of God is at hand. Don't wait to make sure you are a citizen of it! How about you? Can you say with certainty today that you are a citizen of God's eternal kingdom?

tuesday :

Colossians 1:13

As sinners, we belonged to the kingdom of Satan, the dominion of darkness. But through the blood of Jesus and His salvation we are rescued from eternity in darkness and brought into the kingdom of God. He has redeemed us, literally purchasing us back from hell, to live eternity with Him. Through Him, we are safe. Through Him, we have hope and a future. Take some time to really reflect on that truth. Celebrate and thank God for how He rescued you.

wednesday :

Ephesians 2:4-7

The Bible tells us that we are already seated in the heavenly places with Christ. His work is THAT complete! Through His redemption, we have a place at His table... not just any place- our place. We have a seat that is reserved just for us, where we belong, and where we will get to live with Jesus forevermore! The victory is already won! We don't have to worry or question whether it's enough. He has already promised- if you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, then you belong to Him. Period. How does that truth give you hope today?

thursday :

Matthew 6:33

There are so many reasons to worry and fear. Our eyes can so easily shift to all the things in this world that stress us or worry us. But Jesus reminds us that we don't need to focus on the needs, fears, and worries of this world. When we fix our eyes on His kingdom and His righteousness, not only do we have a hope for our eternal future, but He guides us through our earthly future too. When we fix our eyes on the kingdom of heaven, we can't help but see the power, supremacy, and goodness of our King. And in light of that truth, how could we ever fear anything? How have your eyes shifted away from Jesus and His kingdom, causing you to fear or worry about earthly things? What is one practical step you can take to shift your focus back to Jesus?

friday :

John 3:3-6

When speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus explained that no matter how good you act, no matter how religious you are, unless you have been born again you cannot see the kingdom of God. Jesus went on to explain that though we are born of the flesh we also need to be born of the Spirit. When we choose to follow Jesus as Lord, the Holy Spirit takes up residence inside us and gives us new life. Through this rebirth, we are born into the family and kingdom of God.

saturday :

Revelation 21:4

As a believer in Jesus, we have so much to look forward to. Our heavenly kingdom is one where Jesus rules- where sin, sickness, death, and pain are no more. One day, Jesus will do away with this broken world and we will live with Him forever in a kingdom that will never end. One that is perfect and beautiful, far beyond our wildest imaginations. No matter how hard this life is, we can rest in the promise that there is something amazing awaiting us. Take a second to think back to the beginning of this week and how you felt then. Has your image of the kingdom of God changed? Are your feelings still the same? What makes you excited about the kingdom of God?

Relate

Discussion questions to keep the conversation going



1. What does it mean to be a citizen of the kingdom of God?



2. Who in your life do you know that is not a citizen of the kingdom of God? How can you lean into a relationship with them to share what you know?



3. What excites you the most about eternity with Jesus?



[Feedback](#)



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