

WHAT WE BELIEVE – WEEK 2

The Bible & The Human Race

BIBLE STUDY

2. THE BIBLE

GET THINKING!

1. How do people think we can know God?

LOOKING AT THE BIBLE

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky displays his handiwork. 2 Day after day it speaks out; night after night it reveals his greatness. 3 There is no actual speech or word, nor is its voice literally heard. 4 Yet its voice echoes throughout the earth; its words carry to the distant horizon. In the sky he has pitched a tent for the sun. 5 Like a bridegroom it emerges from its chamber; like a strong man it enjoys running its course. 6 It emerges from the distant horizon, and goes from one end of the sky to the other; nothing can escape its heat. 7 The law of the LORD is perfect and preserves one's life. The rules set down by the LORD are reliable and impart wisdom to the inexperienced. 8 The LORD's precepts are fair and make one joyful. The LORD's commands are pure and give insight for life. 9 The commands to fear the LORD are right and endure forever. The judgments given by the LORD are trustworthy and absolutely just. 10 They are of greater value than gold, than even a great amount of pure gold; they bring greater delight than honey, than even the sweetest honey from a honeycomb. 11 Yes, your servant finds moral guidance there; those who obey them receive a rich reward. 12 Who can know all his errors? Please do not punish me for sins I am unaware of. 13 Moreover, keep me from committing flagrant sins; do not allow such sins to control me. Then I will be blameless, and innocent of blatant rebellion. 14 May my words and my thoughts be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my sheltering rock and my redeemer. (Ps. 19:1-14 NET)

1. How does David say God reveals himself to us in vv.1-6?
2. What limits do you think that kind of revelation has?
3. How does David say God reveals himself in vv.7-11?
4. Why do we need that kind of revelation?

5. What limits does David recognise on himself in vv.12-14?

6. Why should that make us humble in our reading of the Bible?

FOR US

1. Why do we need to read and teach the Bible?

3. THE HUMAN RACE

GET THINKING

1. How do you think people around us would describe what humanity is like?

LOOKING AT THE BIBLE

God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. (Gen. 1:27 NET)

16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your labor pains; with pain you will give birth to children. You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you." 17 But to Adam he said, "Because you obeyed your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' cursed is the ground thanks to you; in painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, but you will eat the grain of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat food until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you will return." (Gen. 3:16-19 NET)

"Whoever sheds human blood, by other humans must his blood be shed; for in God's image God has made humankind." (Gen. 9:6 NET)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, (Col. 1:15 NET)

And we all, with unveiled faces reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Cor. 3:18 NET)

1. What makes the creation of humans special?

2. What happens to the image of God after the Fall?

3. How does Jesus change things with respect to the image of God?

FOR US

1. How should we view people made in the image of God? What impact should this have on our attitudes to those who are weaker, in trouble, suffering etc.?

2. How should the fall cause us to view ourselves and others?

3. Why is becoming Christlike and therefore restoring the image of God a good thing?

DAILY READINGS

2. THE BIBLE

DAY 1

Read

24 So he said to them, "You foolish people- how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things written about himself in all the scriptures. (Lk. 24:25-27 NET)

44 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures, 46 and said to them, "Thus it stands written that the Christ would suffer and would rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Lk. 24:44-47 NET)

We want our attitude to the Bible to be the same as that of Jesus our Saviour.

Reflect

1. What place does Jesus give to the Bible (here the OT) in explaining his mission?

2. How would you describe Jesus' attitude to the Bible here?

Pray

Pray we would have the same attitude to the Bible as Jesus.

DAY 2

Read

I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth pass away not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter will pass from the law until everything takes place. (Matt. 5:18 NET)

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (Matt. 24:35 NET)

12 "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but will speak whatever he hears, and will tell you what is to come. 14 He will glorify me, because he will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you. (Jn. 16:12-14 NET)

15 And regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as also our dear brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him, 16 speaking of these things in all his letters. Some things in these letters are hard to understand, things the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they also do to the rest of the scriptures. (2 Pet. 3:15-16 NET)

Reflect

We're thinking about the authority of the New Testament today.

1. How does Jesus view his teaching compared to Old Testament teaching?
2. How does Jesus ensure that the teaching of his disciples will be God's word?
3. How do the apostles view each other's teaching?

Pray

Pray we would be united in the teaching of the Bible at REC.

DAY 3

Read

1 Now the serpent was more shrewd than any of the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Is it really true that God said, 'You must not eat from any tree of the orchard'?" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit from the trees of the orchard; 3 but concerning the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard God said, 'You must not eat from it, and you must not touch it, or else you will die.'" 4 The serpent said to the woman, "Surely you will not die, 5 for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like divine beings who know good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one

wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (Gen. 3:1-7 NET)

Reflect

We're spending the next few days thinking about the fall and how sin came into the human race.

1. How does the serpent tempt Eve? What specific temptations does he offer?
2. How can we similarly be tempted?

Pray

Confess your sin, pray for forgiveness and strength to resist temptation.

DAY 4

Read

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the orchard at the breezy time of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the orchard. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 The man replied, "I heard you moving about in the orchard, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." 11 And the LORD God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave me, she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it." 13 So the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman replied, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." (Gen. 3:8-13 NET)

Reflect

1. How do we see the new sinful nature in Adam and Eve come out in actual sins?
2. Reflect on how you're tempted to sin in the same sort of ways?

Pray

Confess your sin, pray for forgiveness and strength to resist temptation.

DAY 5

Read

14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the wild beasts and all the living creatures of the field! On your belly you will crawl and dust you will eat all the days of your life. 15 And I will put hostility between you and the woman and between

your offspring and her offspring; her offspring will attack your head, and you will attack her offspring's heel." 16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your labor pains; with pain you will give birth to children. You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you." 17 But to Adam he said, "Because you obeyed your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' cursed is the ground thanks to you; in painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, but you will eat the grain of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat food until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you will return." (Gen. 3:14-19 NET)

Reflect

1. What are the consequences of sin for the human race?

2. Reflect on how we experience those consequences day by day?

Pray

Give thanks for Jesus, who by his death on the cross has overcome sin and, if we believe in him, will ultimately take us to a new heavens and earth not affected by sin.