

CORE QUESTIONS





Core Questions

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CORE QUESTIONS

a devotional exploring the
foundations of our faith

An aerial photograph of a city street intersection. A crosswalk with white stripes is visible on the left side of the frame. Several pedestrians are walking across the street. The asphalt is dark and shows some wear and a crack. In the bottom right corner, there are large, overlapping abstract shapes in yellow and pink, with several thin black curved lines overlaid on them.

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WHAT ARE THE CORE QUESTIONS?

- x X X X The Core Questions allow individuals to explore foundational truths in the Bible and discover the truth and beauty of God's story. These questions were written by a diverse team of theologians and local church ministers — modeled after the great catechisms of Church history — to be a useful discipleship resource.

cat-e-chism:
a summary of
Christian beliefs
organized in the
form of questions
and answers



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IN ACTION



DISCUSSION QUESTION



VERSE



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Each question found in this book has a corresponding devotional thought, reflection question and Scripture reference to help you engage deeper into the topic. Be sure to take time and reflect on each page about what you're learning and consider memorizing the answers to the questions. That was the original intent of the Christian Catechism. You may find it helpful to go through this on your own, but consider getting your small group together or your church community and grow together in your faith journey.



01.

WHY AM I ALIVE?

I am alive to love God and serve his world by reflecting his goodness in my thoughts, attitudes and actions.



Did you know you were created to worship God? Your greatest purpose in life is to know God as your Father by becoming more like his Son through the work of the Holy Spirit in you.



What are some things that distract you from fully living out this purpose?



For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Ephesians 2:10



02.

HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?

I can know God through his resurrected Son, Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit.



Relationship with God through Jesus is deeply mysterious, but it's not complicated. Read Matthew 18:3 to see how Jesus compared having a relationship with him to becoming like a little child.



What does it mean to have faith like a child?



No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

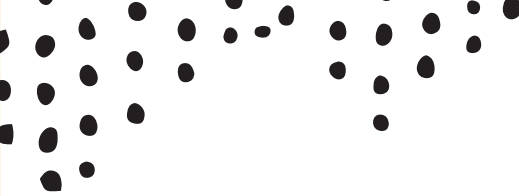
John 1:18

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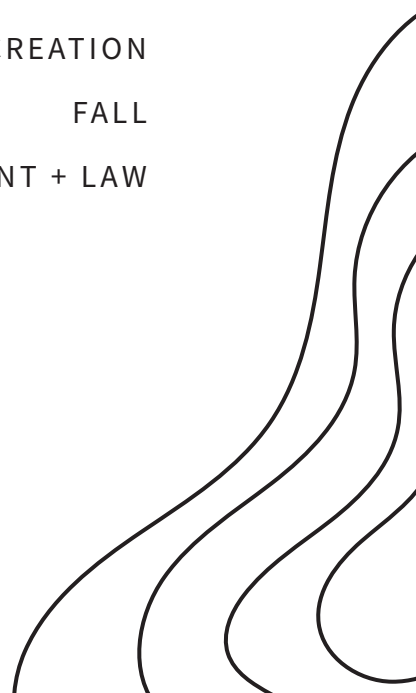
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01



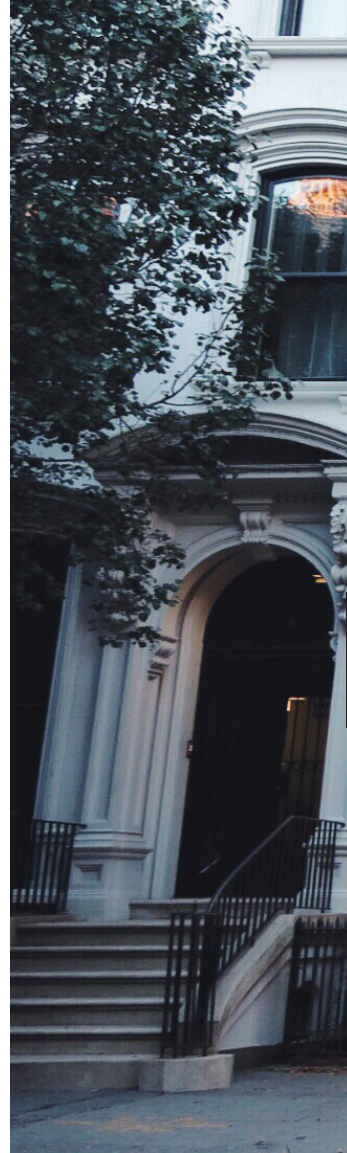


CREATION
FALL
COVENANT + LAW



The Bible is a story about God and his creation. According to the Bible, there is only one true God who has no equal. The Bible reveals to us that God has always existed as three persons who love one another in relationship: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This God is not a disinterested deity, he is a personal one who desires relationship with us as well.

The Bible is a story all about this God, but it is also a story about us — a people created in his image. Our purpose in this world, then, is to reflect God. That is why we learn about who God is and what he has done. We discover these things by studying the Bible, immersing ourselves in its pages and finding how our lives fit into it.





CREATION





03.

WHO IS GOD?

God is the loving Creator who sustains everything. He is eternal and unchanging in his goodness, wisdom and power.



When we call God our “Creator” we are not just saying that our lives begin because of him. Instead, we mean that every moment of our existence depends on him as the source of all life. He is the one who sustains us and keeps us alive every day.



In what ways have you experienced God sustaining your life?



He made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them. He keeps every promise forever.

Psalm 146:6



04.

ARE THERE MORE GODS THAN ONE?

There is only one living and true God. He alone is worthy of worship.



Our deepest beliefs are often revealed by what we do, rather than by what we say. So while we might say we believe in only one God, we might find that we are worshiping things that aren't God. We need to reflect on how we spend our time, what we love most and what captures our attention.



What do you love most? A good way to think about this is to ask yourself, what can you not live without? Is that thing more important than God for you?



This is what the Lord says—Israel's King and Redeemer, the Lord of Heaven's Armies: "I am the First and the Last; there is no other God."

Isaiah 44:6



05.

WHAT IS THE TRINITY?

There is one God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God, and they are equal in goodness, wisdom and power.



Love requires more than one person. The Trinity shows us that God's very nature is love. Love is not just part of who God is, it's who God is. The author of 1 John says "God is love," and everything God does is an expression of his love.



How does this impact your view of the relationship God desires with you?



May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

2 Corinthians 13:14



06.

WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD?

The Bible is the Word of God. It is true and trustworthy. The Bible guides our thoughts, attitudes and actions.



In 2 Timothy 3:16–17, the Apostle Paul said Scripture is both inspired by God and useful for equipping us in life. While the Bible is much more than just a manual for life, it does contain great wisdom for navigating the world.



When you think of the Bible, what comes to mind? How does 2 Timothy 3:16-17 challenge the way you see God's Word and apply it to your life?



All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our life. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17



07.

HOW DID GOD CREATE ALL THINGS?

God created all things by speaking them into existence.



I Timothy 4:4 tells us that everything God creates is good. That includes you!



Do you think it's a good thing that you exist? What thoughts do you have when you think about God calling you good? When you're struggling with this belief, how can you remind yourself of this truth?



*The Lord merely spoke, and the heavens were created.
He breathed the word, and all the stars were born...
For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command.*

Psalm 33:6, 9



08.

HOW DID GOD CREATE HUMANITY?

God created humanity as male and female in his own image.



The Bible is clear that God created only two genders. Men and women each uniquely reflect God's image and glory, and they complement one another.



What does Genesis 1:27 tell us about how we should view gender as part of God's purpose for us?



So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27



09.

WHY DID GOD CREATE HUMANS?

God created humans to know and worship him. We do this by reflecting his image to the world around us.



The highest purpose of humanity is to worship God and to enjoy him forever. Our lives are most fulfilled when we find joy in worshiping the God who made us.



What is your favorite way to worship God?

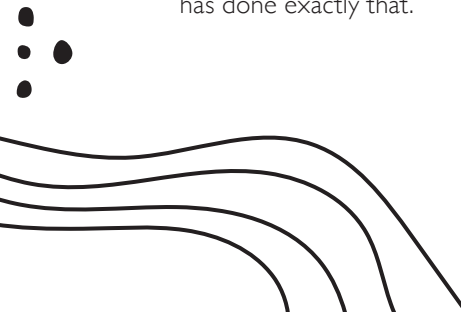
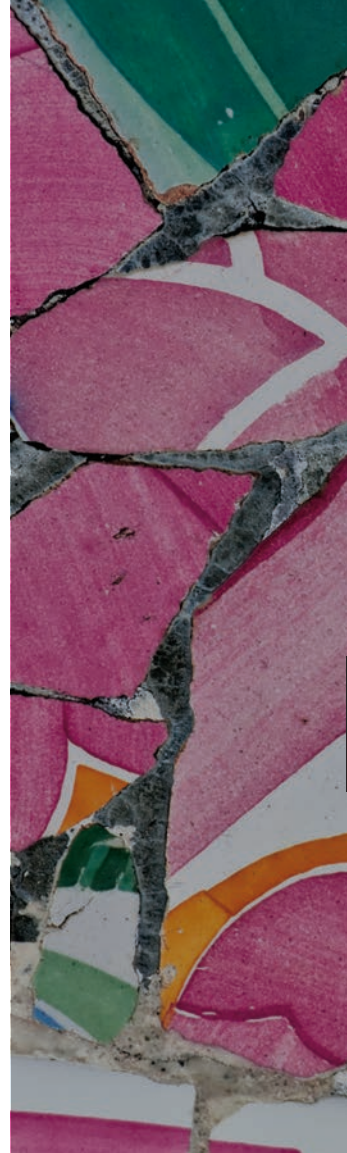


Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

Genesis 1:28

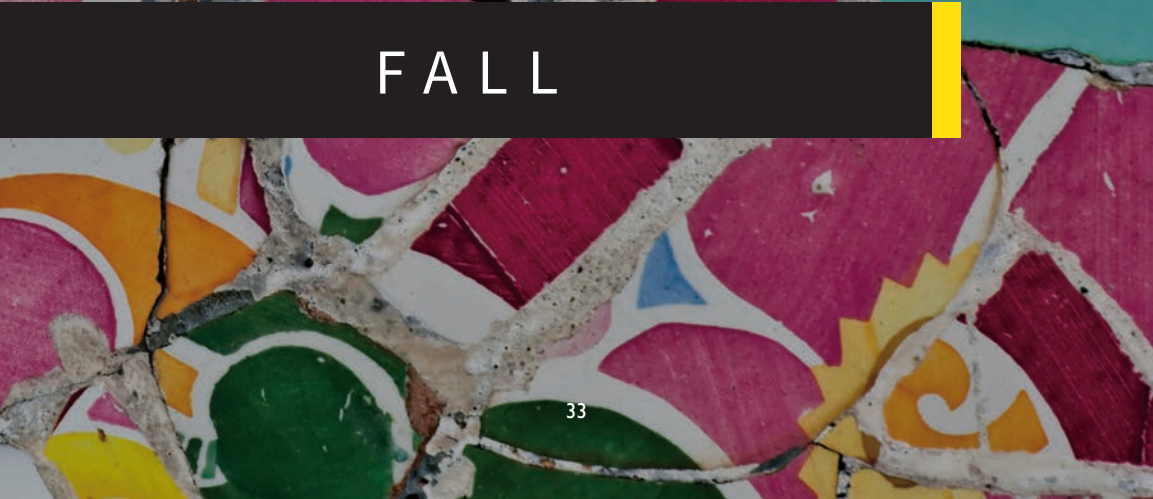
It's obvious that the world isn't the way it's supposed to be. Our world feels broken. We can hardly look around without seeing tragedy. We hear about war, corruption, hunger, poverty, sickness, death, child abuse and sex trafficking on a regular basis. The cold, harsh truth is that things are really messed up.

The Christian word for the major problem in the world is sin. The trouble is that we don't often see sin in ourselves. We are like an addict; sin is so much a part of our lives that we can't begin to imagine ourselves without it, if we even see it at all. If we truly want to seek justice for the world around us, we first need to recognize the brokenness in us and see our need for restoration. The trouble is that we can't fix it on our own. Only God can fix our problem, and the good news of the Bible is that he has done exactly that.





FALL





10.

DID THE FIRST HUMANS WORSHIP GOD LIKE THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO?

No, they failed to worship God like they were supposed to. The first humans, Adam and Eve, decided that instead of being like God they wanted to be God. This is the root of all sin.



Sin isn't just a disobedience problem, it's a worship problem. Every sin is an act of worship, but it's a choice to worship something that isn't God.



What do you see being worshiped today in culture?



Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused.

Romans 1:21



11.

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin is loving anything more than God. It's thinking, speaking or acting in ways that are against what God wants for us.



Love begins with desire. Because of sin, our desires can become twisted. When this happens, we desire things that ultimately cannot satisfy our deepest longings instead of God.



What do you long for most in the world? How can God satisfy those longings?



Everyone who sins is breaking God's law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God.

1 John 3:4



12.

HOW ARE WE AFFECTED BY SIN?

Sin brings guilt, shame and death into our lives.



God is holy, which means that he is whole and perfect. We were created for wholeness, and wholeness is only found in a perfect relationship with God. Sin fractures, separates, ruptures and destroys.



What are some consequences of sin that you have seen in your life? How can God come in and redeem those broken places?



When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

Romans 5:12



13.

WHAT ARE THE LASTING CONSEQUENCES OF SIN?

Sin separates us from the God who loves us and wants to be with us.



Sin separates us from God, but God's love causes him to seek us out when we are separated from him. And he won't stop until he finds us.



What are some things that have separated you from God?

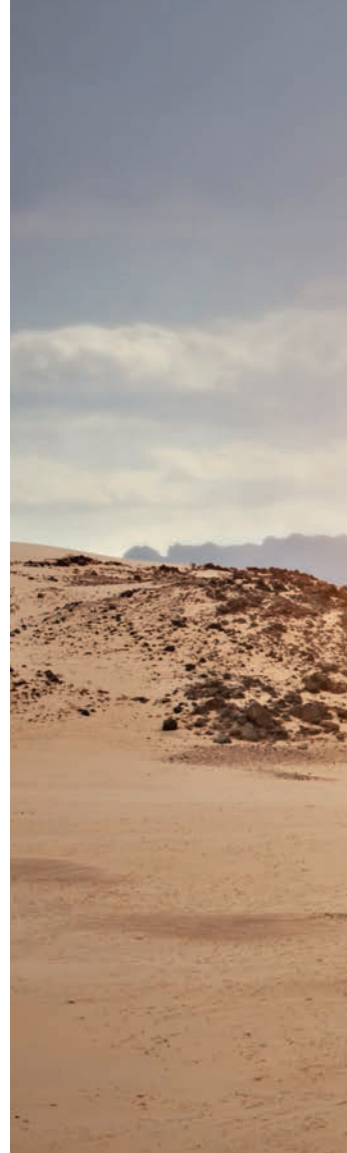


“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’ In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!”

Luke 15:4-7

Most of the Old Testament is about God's promise to set the world right again after the fall of humanity. God establishes a relationship, or a covenant, with Abraham and his children. He does this by calling Abraham's family (Israel) to be his people so that they can be a blessing to the world. Abraham's family ends up in Egypt where they become slaves. God rescues Israel from slavery and leads them out of Egypt into the wilderness where they receive a set of rules to help them live — his law.

Israel moves into the land God promised Abraham and they establish a kingdom. With famous kings like David and Solomon, Israel enters a golden age. However, the people of Israel, including the kings themselves, continue to disobey God's law. As a result, God allows his people to be exiled. This creates great tension in the Biblical story: Israel is in need of salvation just like the rest of the world. God still promises to bring salvation to the world. God himself is going to come in power and make things right when he establishes an everlasting kingdom, and he will do all of this through one figure: the Messiah.





COVENANT + LAW



14.

WHAT DID GOD PROMISE AFTER SIN ENTERED THE WORLD?

God promised to rescue his creation from sin and death by sending a savior.



Sin created a problem that we cannot fix. It left us broken and searching for wholeness in the middle of a decaying world. But God promised he would restore us and save us from our sin.



What does it say about God's character that he did for us what we cannot do for ourselves?



And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord. You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace.

Luke 1:76-79



15.

HOW DID GOD BEGIN TO FULFILL HIS PROMISE?

God began to fulfill his promise by calling Abraham. God promised to bless the world through Abraham and his descendants.



God always fulfills his promises, but often not in the way we think he will or in the time frame we expect him to. God's way of doing things is always perfect.



Has God ever fulfilled a promise for you or someone you know in a completely unexpected way? How?



The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

Genesis 12:1-3



16.

WHO WERE ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS?

Abraham's descendants were the Israelites, God's chosen people. Through them, God's promised Savior would come.



God is not far off or distant. He chose to bless humanity and reveal himself in a personal way. Like he did with Abraham, he still uses his people to accomplish his purpose and provide a way for us to know him.



How do you see God reflected in other people? Who is in your life that helps you know or understand God more?



He is the Lord our God. His justice is seen throughout the land. He always stands by his covenant—the commitment he made to a thousand generations. This is the covenant he made with Abraham and the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, and to the people of Israel as a never-ending covenant:

Psalm 105:7-10



17.

HOW DID GOD SHOW HIS LOVE TO THE ISRAELITES?

God showed his love by rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and making an unbreakable promise to bless them and be their God forever.



God did not promise his people that everything would be perfect or easy but he promised that he'd be with them. He led them step-by-step along the way, through both challenges and triumphs.



What are some ways you have seen God walk with you throughout your life?



The Lord did not set his heart on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! Rather, it was simply that the Lord loves you, and he was keeping the oath he had sworn to your ancestors. That is why the Lord rescued you with such a strong hand from your slavery and from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8



18.

WHY DID GOD GIVE ISRAEL THE LAW?

God gave Israel the law to teach them how to live and show the world what he is like.



The law should be treated as a good gift from God. Sin leads to death, but keeping God's law always leads to life and allows us to flourish.



How are you showing others what God is like through your daily actions?



Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

Psalm 1:1-3



19.

WHAT ARE THE GREATEST COMMANDMENTS?

The greatest commandments are “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” and “love your neighbor as yourself.”



God is whole, and he desires for his people to be that way too. A whole person filled with the love of God is called to love others with the same love they have received from God.



Identify people that you have never thought about as your neighbor. How can you extend love to them today as well?



Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these."

Mark 12:29-31



20.

DID ISRAEL KEEP THE LAW OF GOD?

No, the Israelites did not keep God's law. Like Adam and Eve, they failed to worship God in the way they were supposed to.



God called Israel to be the people he would use to make the world right. However, Israel was infected with sin just like the rest of the world. As a result, they were unable to fulfill their calling.



We often let our circumstances dictate how we think and feel about God. Our failures can't disrupt the plan of God. How can you trust in God even when it looks like everything is falling apart?



I thought to myself, 'I would love to treat you as my own children!' I wanted nothing more than to give you this beautiful land—the finest possession in the world. I looked forward to your calling me 'Father,' and I wanted you never to turn from me. But you have been unfaithful to me, you people of Israel! You have been like a faithless wife who leaves her husband. I, the Lord, have spoken.

Jeremiah 3:19-20



21.

WHAT HAPPENED TO ISRAEL WHEN THEY FAILED TO KEEP GOD'S LAW?

God sent Israel out of the promised land and into exile, far removed from his presence.



Some in Israel believed God would never exile them because he would not let the temple, where his presence lived, be destroyed. But God cared more about the condition of their hearts than the construction of their buildings.



Is there an area in your life where God is working on you? How is God wanting to develop your heart to better reflect his character?



I will scatter you among the nations and purge you of your wickedness.

Ezekiel 22:15



22.

DID GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM FAIL BECAUSE ISRAEL DISOBEYED GOD?

No. God is always faithful. Through his prophets, he promised to rescue his people, forgive their sins and restore his world by sending the promised Savior, the Messiah.



Jesus was the only person without sin to have ever lived. He fulfilled God's law perfectly. The reason we are called to be like Jesus is because when we're like him, we are being fully human by obeying God and worshiping him.



Why does it matter to us that God's promise to Israel didn't fail?




Remember that Christ came as a servant to the Jews to show that God is true to the promises he made to their ancestors. He also came so that the Gentiles might give glory to God for his mercies to them. That is what the psalmist meant when he wrote: "For this, I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing praises to your name."

Romans 15:8-9

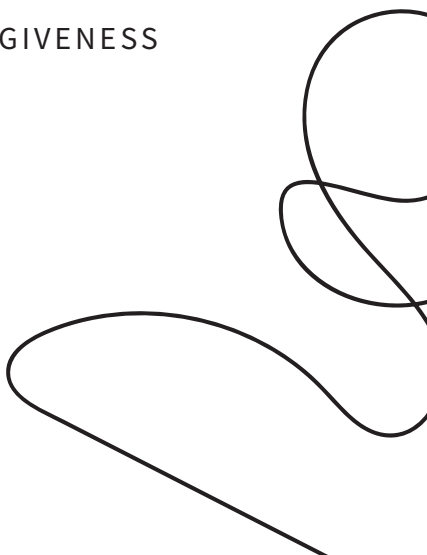



PART

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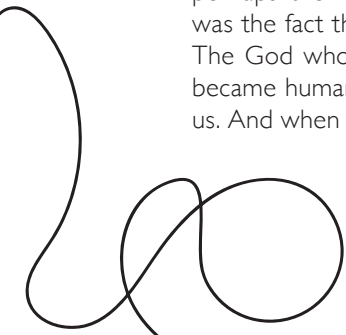
INCARNATION
REDEMPTION
GRACE + FORGIVENESS



The announcement of good news is always about an event. Something wonderful has happened, and because of that, the world will never be the same. This news could be good for just one person —“I’m getting married!” — or it could be good for an entire country — “The war is over!”

The word gospel means good news in exactly this way. Something incredible has happened, and now the world will never be the same again. The thing that has happened is that God’s Messiah, the promised Savior of Israel and the world, came at last, and his name is Jesus. He was born in humble circumstances. He performed miracles, healed the sick and demonstrated his power over evil. He also claimed the authority to be able to forgive sins, something only God can do.

Jesus was the Messiah no one expected, but perhaps the most unexpected thing about him was the fact that he was fully God and fully man. The God who made the world came to us and became human, but without sin, in order to save us. And when he came, we didn’t recognize him.





INCARNATION



23.

HOW DID GOD FULFILL HIS PROMISES TO ISRAEL AND THE WORLD?

God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue Israel and the world from the power of sin and death.



At last, God fulfills the promises he made to Adam and Eve, Abraham, Moses and David! He comes to save his people and the world, but he does it in such an unexpected way — by being born to a poor family in a small town surrounded by animals and shepherds.



If you knew that God was finally going to fulfill his promise to save the world and turn the course of human history forever, what would you expect him to do? When you see what God actually did, what does that teach you about him?



And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21



24.

WHO IS JESUS?

Jesus is God's eternal Son and Israel's Messiah, the promised Savior. Through Jesus, we can know God.



Scripture teaches all that God is — his fullness — is found in Jesus. Jesus taught his disciples that anyone who has seen him has also seen the Father. To see these passages in the Bible, read Colossians 2:9 and John 14:9.



What does the life and ministry of Jesus teach us about the character of God?



And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. And now we live in fellowship with the true God because we live in fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the only true God, and he is eternal life.

1 John 5:20



25.

WHY IS JESUS ABLE TO SHOW US WHAT GOD IS LIKE?

Jesus is both fully God and fully human, having two distinct natures in his one person.



Incarnation is the belief that in Jesus, God became fully human while still being fully God. This is a mystery that we will never completely understand, but when we contemplate it, we learn about who God is and who we are supposed to be.



Spend a few moments thinking about what it means for Jesus to be fully God and human. How does this change the way you think about who Jesus is?



For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.
Colossians 2:9



26.

WHY DOES IT MATTER THAT JESUS WAS FULLY HUMAN?

Jesus had to become fully human so that he could restore the image of God in our humanity.



What God does to Jesus, he intends to do with all believers. Jesus dies and is raised by God to new life. In the same way, we can die to our old selves and receive new life from God when we trust in Jesus.



When you think of what it means to be human, do you think of something negative or positive? How does Jesus' humanity change how we view ourselves?



Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested.

Hebrews 2:17-18



27.

WHY DOES IT MATTER THAT JESUS WAS FULLY GOD?

God is the only one who can rescue humanity from the power of sin and restore his creation.



Because he is God, Jesus is the one who can perfectly show us what God is like. When we see Jesus, we trust that we are seeing who God is and how he loves us.



A good way to think about God is to picture a human face with a crown of thorns. Why is thinking of God in this way important?



In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

John 1:1-5



28.

WHAT WAS THE GOSPEL THAT JESUS PROCLAIMED?

The gospel is that, through Jesus, the kingdom of God is arriving on earth as in heaven. Everyone who believes and follows him can be forgiven of their sins and enjoy eternal life.



The word gospel means “good news”. When we think about the gospel today, some of us treat it more like good advice for a better life. But that is not how the Bible talks about it. The story of Jesus is good news because something has happened to make the world a different place.



Do you think of the gospel as good news or good advice? How does seeing the gospel as good news change the way you talk about it?



It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you ... I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.

1 Corinthians 15:2-4



29.

HOW DOES JESUS CALL US TO RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL?

Jesus calls us to turn away from our sin, follow and trust him as our Savior through love and obedience.



The Gospel is the good news we have received as a pure gift. In response to that gift, we give our lives to God and follow him where he leads.



Saying yes to Jesus isn't a one time event. Instead, it's a daily decision to say yes to his will over our own. How can you continually respond to the Gospel in repentance and obey?



"The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"

Mark 1:15



30.

HOW DOES JESUS CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE?

As our Prophet, Jesus proclaims the Word of God to us.
As our Priest, he prays to the Father on our behalf. As our King, he rules over the world, making all things new.



After saving us through his death and resurrection, Jesus continues to care for us as our teacher, advocate and authority. In every season of life, we can trust him to watch over and provide for us.



Jesus' work didn't end on the cross. How does this impact the way you view his continual love and care for you?

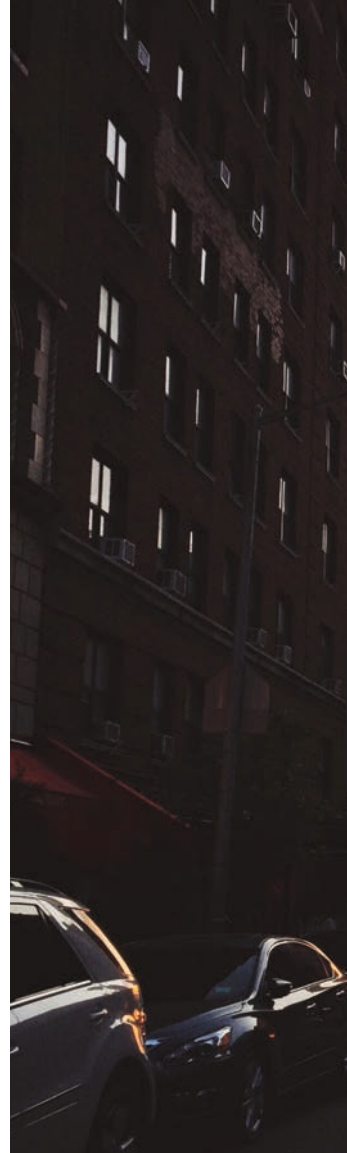
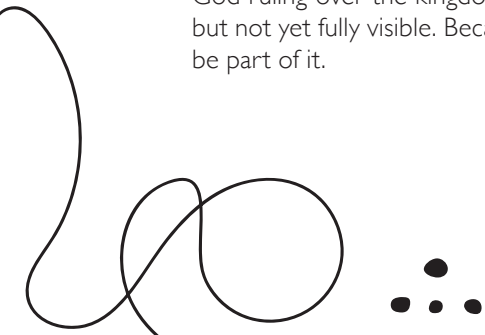


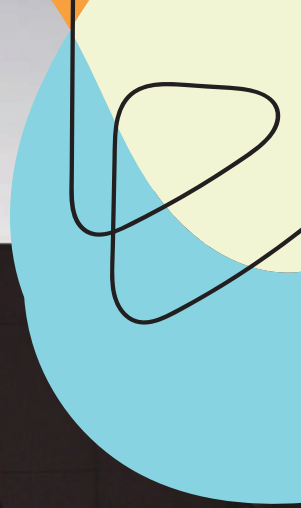
But because Jesus lives forever, his priesthood lasts forever. Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf. He is the kind of high priest we need because he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin. He has been set apart from sinners and has been given the highest place of honor in heaven.

Hebrews 7:24-26

The kingdom of God — where is it? Or better yet, what is it? It's a place where God reigns and rules over the people of his world. It's not a far-off concept, or abstract idea, but rather one that Jesus said he was making true here and now.

Through Jesus, God was becoming King over a different sort of kingdom. In God's kingdom, those who are humble are lifted up. The poor can celebrate, the sick can find healing, the lost can be found and sinners can find grace and forgiveness. Unlike other kings who set up their kingdom through violence and the abuse of power, the gospels tell us that Jesus became King by dying. He took on the consequence of our sins, and he was raised from death three days later. Today, Jesus is highly praised, and he is sitting at the right hand of God ruling over the kingdom that is already here but not yet fully visible. Because of him, we can all be part of it.





REDEMPTION





31.

HOW DID JESUS SAVE HUMANITY?

Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins, resurrected from the grave to give us new life and ascended to heaven to reign as our King.



Jesus could have come to earth as a powerful king, but instead, he set aside his glory to become a servant and gave up his life to be a sacrifice. Read and reflect on this in Philippians 2:3-11.



What does it look like for us to imitate the humility of Jesus in our own lives?



For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past.

Romans 3:23-25



32.

HOW DID JESUS DIE?

Jesus was handed over to the Romans by his own people to be crucified.



Jesus died a violent and unjust death. No one took his life — he gave it voluntarily for our salvation. To the witnesses, it appeared to be a tragic defeat, but it was in fact a cosmic victory.



How does knowing that a perfect God loves you enough to give his life in this way for yours change the way you see him?



But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him.

Acts 2:23



33.

WHAT DOES THE DEATH OF JESUS MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

Jesus' death defeated sin and made it possible for everyone who believes to be forgiven and reconciled to God.



The Bible tells us the penalty of sin is death. Our sins separate us from a perfect God, requiring a perfect sacrifice as payment. Jesus was the only perfect one. By taking on our sin as his own, we are able to be seen without sin in God's eyes. Your sins are forgiven!



Take a moment to reflect on the fact that Jesus stood in your place and received the death your sins deserved. Why was this important? How should you respond to this?



You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:13-14



34.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER JESUS DIED?

After three days, Jesus rose from the dead, leaving an empty tomb behind him.



The apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 that if Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then our faith is useless. The resurrection of Jesus is central to the Christian faith.



Why is the resurrection of Jesus the foundational belief on which our faith stands or falls?



But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.

Acts 2:24



35.

WHAT DOES THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

Jesus' resurrection proves that God's kingdom has come just as he said. Through faith in him, anyone can be set free from the power of sin and death.



The early Church believed that God would soon do for the world what he had already done for Jesus in his resurrection. They proclaimed the Good News about the coming reign of God's kingdom.



How has your faith in Jesus given you new life and hope?



Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57



36.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD?

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples. He taught them about the kingdom of God and then ascended into heaven.



In the days after his resurrection, Jesus visited many of his disciples in order to encourage, teach and restore them. He then sent them out to make disciples in all nations.



Who is discipling you? Is there someone in your life you could disciple?



“So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!”

Acts 2:36



37.

WHAT DOES THE ASCENSION OF JESUS MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

Jesus is seated in power at the Father's right hand, where he intercedes for his people and reigns as Lord over all.



Jesus' ascension is not about him leaving us to go away into a far place. It's about Jesus becoming Lord over God's kingdom now. Jesus is already Lord of heaven and earth, and one day everyone will bow before him.



What does it mean for Jesus to reign as Lord not just over your life but over the whole world? How does this impact the way you view your life?

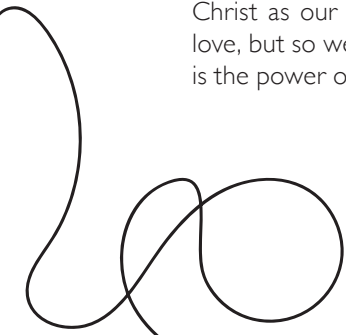


Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

Romans 8:34

The gift of God is greater than any other gift we could ever receive. It comes to us in the most surprising way, and it brings with it knowledge that the Lord of the universe loves us like a perfect Father who cares for his own children. The word the Bible uses to describe this gift is grace. Grace is God's undeserved favor towards us. It's undeserved because we can't do anything to earn it. God sees us, he knows our sins and yet he still loves us unconditionally. We don't deserve his love, yet he looks at us and loves us.

This grace of salvation and relationship with God comes to us freely. We do not need to do anything in order to earn it. All God asks is for us to trust in his love and the salvation made available to us through Jesus. And when we receive this gift, our lives change forever. We begin to want to obey Christ as our Lord, not so that we can earn his love, but so we can show him love in return. That is the power of God's grace.





GRACE +
FORGIVENESS



38.

HOW CAN WE BE SAVED?

We can be saved when we confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead.



Belief, faith and trust are all part of the same root word in the New Testament. To believe in Christ is to trust him alone for your salvation.



Do you have a hard time believing that the gift of salvation really is free? If so, why?



If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9



39.

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Repentance is turning our hearts and minds away from sin and towards the God who can forgive us and make us new.



Asking for forgiveness is the starting point of repentance, but it doesn't end there. Repentance should actively move us toward real change and make us more like Jesus.



What are the areas in your life where you have struggled to turn away from sin? Ask God to meet you in those places and give you the strength to pursue him.



Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.

Acts 3:19



40.

WHAT IS FAITH IN JESUS?

Faith is trusting in Jesus alone and what he has done for our salvation.



Sometimes, it feels easier to trust what we can see or experience rather than a God who doesn't feel tangible. Trusting in God comes from a place where we know that he loves us and has our best in mind. Though we can't touch or see him, we know he is trustworthy.



What are some areas in your life where God is asking you to trust him?



God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

Ephesians 2:8-9



41.

WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION?

Justification is an act of God where he says we are righteous because of Jesus.



All sins separate us from God, but God says that if we confess our sins he will remember them no more. Because our sins are forgiven, we stand before God without guilt or shame. Check out Psalms 103:12 to see how God treats our sins.



Even though all of us continue to struggle with sin, God sees us as righteous because of Jesus. How does this give you confidence in your salvation?



Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law.

Galatians 2:16



42.

WHAT IS ADOPTION?

Adoption is when God makes us his children through faith in Jesus Christ.



At the time of the New Testament, a child who was adopted became a full member of their new family with all the same privileges as biological sons and daughters.



Did you know that you are a child of God? Read the passage below and ask God to give you the confidence that you are his. How does this passage of Scripture change the way you see God?



So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

Romans 8:15-17



43.

WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?

Sanctification is the lifelong process where God works with us to make us more like Jesus in our thoughts, attitudes and actions.



Sanctification is a daily decision to renew our minds and choose to follow Jesus in every area of our lives. Here are some verses to help you become more like Christ in your daily life: Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:2 and Psalm 51:10.



What are some things in your life that need to be adjusted to help you become more like Jesus?



... throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

Ephesians 4:22-24



44.

WHAT IS THE RESULT OF TRUE FAITH?

True faith transforms us to become more like Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.



Jesus' brother James tells us that a faith that doesn't produce good works in us is a dead faith. When God gives us faith, he gives us a living faith, one that changes us from the inside out.



How is your faith changing you to become more like Jesus?



What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

James 2:14-17

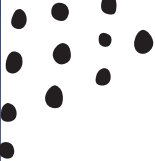
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PART

03





THE HOLY SPIRIT
THE CHURCH
NEW CREATION



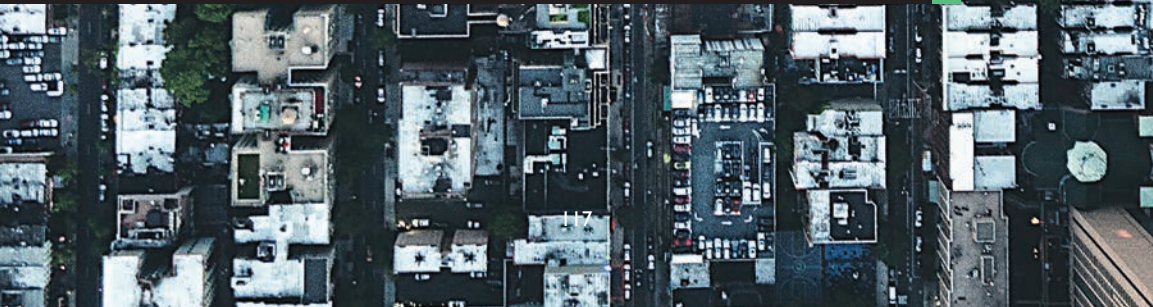
The Holy Spirit is the personal and empowering presence of God. If we belong to Jesus, the Holy Spirit makes his home in us. He teaches us how to understand the truth in the Bible. He comforts us when we fail. He helps us when we don't know how to pray. And he leads us so that we can live free from sin.

Lots of Christians have questions about the Holy Spirit. The important thing to remember is that he is not just a power that God gives to grant us special spiritual abilities, he is God. When God gives us the gift of his Spirit, he is giving us himself. That is why Paul says in Romans 5:5 that God pours out his love into our hearts when he gives us the Spirit. All of our life—from creation to redemption—is from God. The Father sent the Son and the Spirit. The Son gave his life for us and defeated sin and death. The Spirit gives us new life so that we become like Jesus.





THE HOLY SPIRIT





45.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son.



The Bible shows us that the Holy Spirit is fully God. When God gives us the Holy Spirit, he gives us himself.



Why is it significant that Paul says in Romans 5 that when we receive the Holy Spirit, we are filled with God's love?



And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

Romans 5:5



46.

WHY DID THE FATHER AND SON SEND THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit was sent into the world to fulfill God's promise to give life to his people and dwell with them forever.



When teaching his disciples about the coming of the Spirit, Jesus promised them in John 14:18, “ I will not abandon you as orphans.”



The way Jesus comes to us is through the Holy Spirit. When was the last time you recognized that Jesus was present with you? How can you see his presence in your life today?



“If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.”

John 14:15-18



47.

HOW DO WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT?

We receive the Holy Spirit by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.



In Luke 11, Jesus tells his disciples that God is a loving Father who enjoys giving good gifts to his children. God especially loves giving the gift of his Holy Spirit. All we have to do is trust him and ask. When we do that, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us.



Take a moment to think about your body as a home for the Holy Spirit. What does it mean to think of yourself as a sacred space for God's presence?



Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20



48.

HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT HELP US?

As our Teacher, the Holy Spirit reveals God's truth to us in the Bible. As our Helper, the Holy Spirit empowers us to live like Jesus. As our Comforter, the Holy Spirit supports us when we are suffering.



All of our Christian life, from learning about the Bible to overcoming sin and persevering through pain, requires the help of God's Spirit. We cannot do these things on our own, but God has given us the greatest Helper he can, himself.



How have you experienced the help of the Holy Spirit in your life recently? How can you pray for God to continue to help you in your areas of greatest need?



But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

Romans 8:9-11



49.

HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?

The Holy Spirit guides us to a better understanding of the Bible and inspires us to apply its truth to our lives.



After Jesus' ascension to Heaven, the Book of Acts shows us how the presence of the Holy Spirit allowed the disciples to understand what Jesus had taught them, including the ways he fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah given in the Old Testament.



Have you ever asked the Holy Spirit to guide your understanding when studying the Scriptures? If so, how have you seen this happen?



When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me.

John 16:13-14



50.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

Being filled with the Spirit is an experience of God's power and life-giving love that moves us to worship and obedience.



Worship is more than just singing songs on Sunday; it's a lifestyle of praise and acting in obedience to Jesus.



How can the Holy Spirit help you to worship God in a new way this week?



After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:31



51.

WHAT IS THE RESULT OF BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are transformed to be more like Jesus, producing the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.



The Holy Spirit is working in each of us to make us more like Jesus. As we become more like him, we begin to naturally produce good fruit in our daily lives.



Becoming more like Jesus is a continual process. Looking back, how are you more like him today than you were last year? If there are areas in your life where you aren't producing good fruit, how can you seek God's help to change for the better?



But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Galatians 5:22-23



52.

WHAT ARE THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the good things that the Spirit continues to give to all his people so that they can serve, strengthen and unify the Church.



God gives a variety of gifts to his Church, and we need each other to be all God created us to be. Our gifts are meant to build up one another in love — check them out in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.



What are the gifts you feel like God has given you? How have you witnessed those gifts building up your Church?

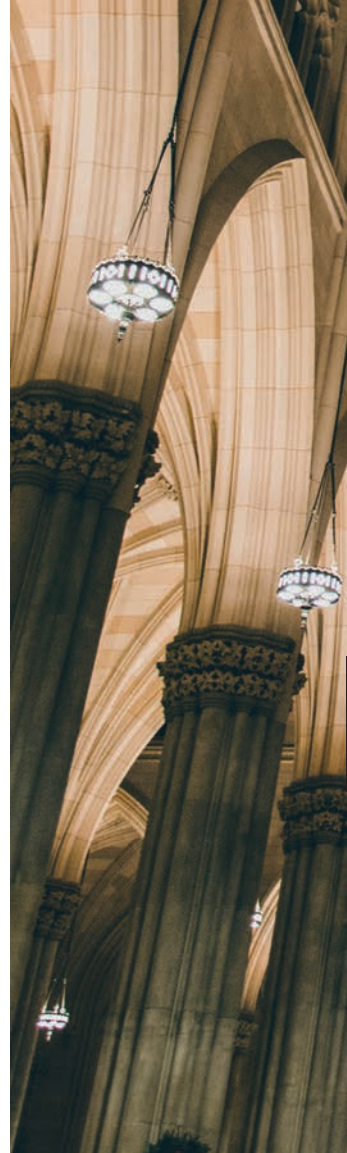


There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

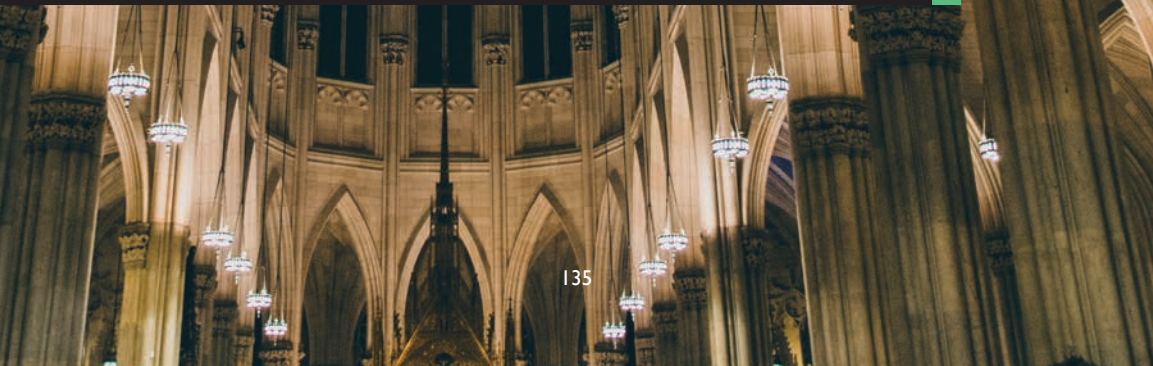
In the late 1930s, Nazi Germany was becoming more and more hostile to members of the Confessing Christian Church, a group of Christians who opposed Nazi ideology. One of the great teachers and leaders of the Confessing Church in Germany was the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer was eventually arrested and sent to a concentration camp, where he was executed on April 9, 1945, only two weeks before American troops liberated the camp.

Bonhoeffer wrote an important book about the Church called *Life Together*. While suffering persecution and the threat of imprisonment under Nazism, Bonhoeffer emphasized the fact that the Church is the place where believers need to gather together in love for God and for one another. The Church is the place where we do life together. Bonhoeffer knew that Jesus did not only make a way for us to love God; he also made a way for us to love one another, to truly be the united and holy community God commands us to be in the New Testament.





THE CHURCH





53.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The Church is the family of believers who are united in Christ and expressed in many different local congregations.



Many times when we think about Church, we imagine a particular building or experience. In actuality, the Church is a people who worship God, love others and encourage one another to fully pursue God.



Do you think going to Church regularly is important? Why or why not? How can you take Church outside the four walls of a Sunday morning this week?



So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.

Ephesians 2:19-21



54.

HOW IS THE CHURCH UNITED?

The Church is united by the Holy Spirit into one body under one head, Jesus Christ, having peace with God and one another.



Did you know that when the body of Christ comes together as one, we display who Jesus is to the world? Check out John 17:23 to see how God lives in us.



What are some ways you've seen the Church come together for a common good?



For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.

Ephesians 4:4-6



55.

HOW SHOULD WE LIVE TOGETHER AS THE CHURCH?

Christ commands us to gather together regularly, loving and serving one another, and strengthening one another in the faith by exercising the gifts of the Spirit.



Have you ever felt down and had someone come alongside you to encourage you, changing your perspective and giving you hope? Hebrews 10:25 shows us the significance of gathering together to build one another up.



How do Church gatherings encourage you?



So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.

John 13:34-35



56.

WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH?

The Church's mission is to go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all the things that Jesus commanded.



Jesus commands us to go and make disciples, but what does that mean? A disciple of Jesus is one who follows him — who learns from him. Jesus created us to be his disciples, and he asks us as his Church to create more disciples.



The Great Commission is the mission of the Church, and all Christians are meant to be a part of that mission. How is God calling you to participate in the success of the Great Commission?



Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20



57.

HOW DOES THE CHURCH WORSHIP GOD?

The Church worships God by studying the Bible and observing the sacraments as Jesus commanded.



All churches believe in the importance of worshipping God, and there are many different expressions of what faithful worship looks like.



What are some of the ways your church worships God?



(Jesus said,) “Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”

John 14:21



58.

WHAT ARE THE SACRAMENTS?

The sacraments are baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are signs of God's grace that we experience together in worship.



A sacrament is an important practice of the Church. It's something set apart to give us the opportunity to reflect and celebrate the work God has done in our lives. We worship by practicing the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.



Why do you think it's important to participate in the sacraments?



For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26-28



59.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is the washing of water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Through baptism, believers signify their union with Jesus in his death, burial and resurrection.



Baptism is an outward expression of an inward faith. The believer is symbolically buried with Jesus beneath the water then raised in the power of his resurrection.



Have you made the public confession of your faith through baptism? If so, reflect back on your experience. What made you want to be baptized? If this is a step you haven't taken yet, consider taking some time this week to pray about it.



For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.

Romans 6:4



60.

WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The Lord's Supper is the bread and the cup. When we participate in the Lord's Supper together, we remember his death on the cross and look forward to his coming again.



The Lord's Supper, or communion, is a time when we remember his death and resurrection. The bread represents Jesus' body that was broken, and the drink is a symbol of the blood that was shed for us. We recognize that through this sacrifice we can truly be free.



Why is it important to reflect on the death and resurrection of Jesus when we participate in communion?



As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it, for this is my body." And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And he said to them, "This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many.

Mark 14:22-24



61.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is talking to God. When we pray, we come to the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit. Prayer helps us to grow in our relationship with God.



Prayer is simply talking with God. Few things are as personally intimate in our walk with God as prayer. We can pray anywhere at any time because God is always with us.



Prayer isn't a one-way conversation. How can you create space in your day to not just talk, but listen to God throughout your day?



The Lord is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.

Psalms 145:18



62.

HOW DID JESUS TEACH US TO PRAY?

Jesus taught us to pray in this way: “Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.”



Have you ever struggled to talk to God? Have you been at a loss on what to say? The Bible is full of examples that can be used as guides as we pray to God. Here's a few suggestions to get you started: Matthew 6:9-13, Psalm 51, 100 and 139.



Have you ever struggled to talk to God? Have you been at a loss on what to say?

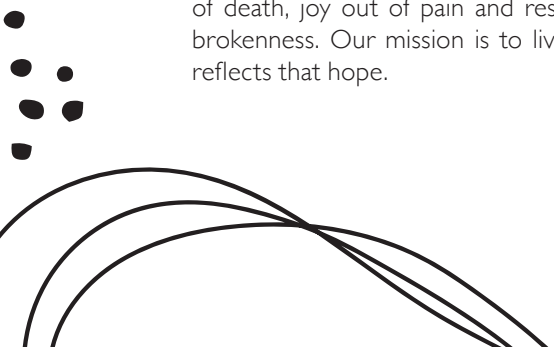
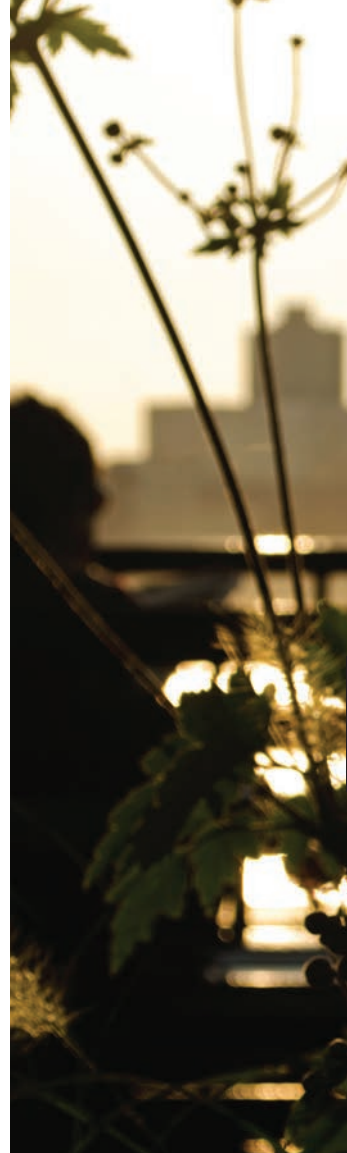


The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.

Psalm 34:17-18

One of the lies our culture has fed us, again and again, is that the greatest thing we can do is control our own future. The idea is that our destiny is up to us, and we have the capacity to create the best life for ourselves. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Bible is not about God blessing your destiny, future, hopes and dreams. It's about God inviting you to join his future. The God who made the world and everything in it is not going to abandon his creation to ruin. Instead, he has promised to remake the world that was broken and fill it with his loving presence. Everyone lives in light of their hopes for the future. The Bible challenges us to shape our hopes to match the plan of God to make the world new again, to bring life out of death, joy out of pain and restoration out of brokenness. Our mission is to live in a way that reflects that hope.





NEW CREATION



63.

WHAT IS THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH?

The hope of the Church is that God will make all things right when Jesus returns to defeat evil and resurrect his people in the new heaven and new earth.



When the authors of the Bible use the word “hope,” they aren’t referring to a naive optimism about the future. The hope we see in the Bible is a confidence based on a concrete reality. In this case, our hope for the future is based on what God has already done for the world by raising Jesus from the dead, and we believe that one day he will do the same thing for us and all of creation.



How does this definition of hope change the way we practice it in the midst of fear or suffering?



For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. We were given this hope when we were saved.

Romans 8:22-24a



64.

HOW WILL JESUS RETURN?

Jesus will return in person, visibly in power; the same way that he ascended into heaven.



The Bible tells us the return of Jesus could happen at any time. We call the time between Jesus' ascension and his return the Last Days.



How do your beliefs about the future impact the way you live your life now? If you really believed that Jesus is coming back, how would that change the way you live today?



"Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"

Acts 1:11



65.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN JESUS RETURNS?

When Jesus returns, he will raise everyone from the dead, judge us all perfectly and restore God's creation.



The ultimate Christian hope for our own lives is not that we will go on to live eternally as spirit beings with God in heaven. Our hope is that God will raise our bodies from the dead just like he did for Jesus. The same body that dies will be given new life, and Jesus will give it back to us when he returns so that we can live with God forever.



What does the hope of resurrection teach us about how God cares about our bodies?



For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17



66.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO UNBELIEVERS AT THE FINAL JUDGMENT?

Unbelievers will be openly judged by Jesus according to their works and cast into hell, where they will be eternally separated from God.



The Gospel shows us that God loves everyone. But God loves us enough to give us the freedom to say “no” to his love, and some choose this response. The people who are separated from God aren’t separated from him because he wants it, but because they choose to be.



C. S. Lewis is well known for saying that hell is a place that is locked from the inside. What do you think he meant by this? What does it say about God’s love that he gives us the freedom to reject him?



I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:12-15



67.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BELIEVERS AT THE FINAL JUDGMENT?

Believers will be openly judged by Jesus according to their works to determine the rewards they will receive as they enter into his kingdom in the new heaven and new earth.



In one of Jesus' parables he compares the final judgment to those who had mercy on the least in society, and those who did not. When we minister to them, we are ministering to Jesus himself. Read the story in Matthew 25:31-46.



How can you serve Jesus by serving those who have less than you?



So don't make judgments about anyone ahead of time—before the Lord returns. For he will bring our darkest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. Then God will give to each one whatever praise is due.

1 Corinthians 4:5



68.

WILL THERE BE ANY SIN OR DEATH IN THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH?

No. In the new heaven and new earth there will be no more sin or death. God will wipe away every tear from our eyes and make his home with us forever.



Suffering is a symptom of sin. And sin is a universal part of the human experience. One day there will be no more sin — no more decay, sorrow or suffering.



Consider ways in which you have experienced sorrow or suffering. Does it help to know that Jesus experienced similar kinds of pain? Imagine a world without sin. What does it look like?



Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

Revelation 21:1-4



69.

HOW SHOULD WE PREPARE FOR JESUS' RETURN?

We should prepare for Jesus' return by loving God and our neighbors through the power of the Spirit, sharing the gospel of Jesus at every opportunity.



Though we long for eternity, we now live in a world driven by time. The time given to us in this life is a gift, and we have the choice to use it for ourselves or for others by showing the love of God and sharing the good news about Jesus with people in our lives.



When was the last time you shared the Gospel with someone? Who is someone in your life that needs to hear the Good News about Jesus? How can you develop a plan to share your faith with that person?



Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

70.

HOW CAN OUR FAITH BE SUMMARIZED?

Our faith can be summarized in the Apostle's Creed:

*We believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy *catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

**universal*



Creeds are memorable statements that Christians throughout the centuries have believed and memorized. They are core statements that capture the most important truths of our Christian faith.



Now that you've walked through all 70 questions, is there an element of your faith that you want to know more about? What questions do you still have? Where can you go to find answers?



Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people.

Jude 1:3



x
x
x
x



Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:2

A  **neHope** INITIATIVE
God's Word. Every Child.