

Believe Small Group Video Teaching Notes (Fill in the Blanks) & Discussion Questions

Chapter 1 – God

- A.W. Tozer wrote, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” Why? Because this mindset---or absence of it---will drive all we _____ and all we _____.
- **Key Question: Who is _____?**
- “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are _____” (Romans 1:20).
- *****Key Idea: I believe the God of the Bible is the one _____--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**
- God is three persons who _____ a being.
- “The God said, _____make mankind in our image, in our likeness...so God Created mankind in His image, in the image of God He created them; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:26-27)
- One of the biggest failures for humanity, beginning with the fall of Adam and Eve, is when we try to take over the role of _____ in our lives.
- Key Application: Because God is God...I am _____. He is in _____ and in control...I want to know and follow His _____ for my life.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) When was the last time you were Just in awe of something beautiful? Nature? Art? Something else?
- 2) Why do you think God repeatedly proved Himself to be the One True God in the Bible and why do you think we might struggle with the same issues as those who struggled in the Bible?
- 3) Why might discussing God as Creator be a better place to start when talking about who He is (instead of just talking immediately about our sinfulness and His Holiness)? How did Paul use this approach in Acts 17 (“In Him we live and move and have our being”)?
- 4) If God is the Trinity, if God is defined by relationship and love, then what does this say about how He created us to live (since we are made in His image)? How does Jesus help redeem this often missing element of our lives (John 17:20-26)?
- 5) How do some of the oversimplifications of the Trinity (sometimes called heresies) misunderstand who God is? Which ones do you sometimes accidentally slip into?
- 6) What specific ideas and trends in our culture make it difficult to believe in a single God and what parts of our culture make it difficult for us to live in the kind of healthy community that God created us for?
- 7) How can you live out the truth of Joshua’s statement in Joshua 24: “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord?”

Chapter 2 – PERSONAL GOD

- **Key Question: Does God _____ about me?**
- “The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He _____ me lie down in green pastures, he _____ me beside quiet waters, he _____ my soul. He _____ me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are _____ me. You _____ a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You _____ my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever” (Psalm 23).
- *****Key Idea: I believe God is _____ in and _____ about my daily life.**
- Key Application: Be _____: God’s ways are higher than my ways.
- Key Application: Don’t _____: God, who controls nature and history cares about me.
- Key Application: BE _____: God is working out His good plan for my life.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Kenny Chesney sings a song, “Good Stuff.” Listen to it and discuss which things you might add to your own personal list of “good stuff.”
- 2) What moments in your life did you struggle with the question: “Is God good?”
- 3) How does the lack of an involved Creator God make the universe a horrible and depressing place to live (fatalism and deism)?
- 4) How have you experienced God being near to you? When was this experience?
- 5) How is Psalm 23 a “life song” and not a funeral or death song?” What images stick out most to you? What is the big idea from this psalm?
- 6) What habits could you pick up to be more aware of God’s presence in your daily life? Who could you ask to keep you accountable to this new habit?

Chapter 3 – SALVATION

- **Key Question: How do I have a _____ with God?**
- _____ is found in Jesus.
- Jesus made the way possible for us to be _____ of our sins and come into a relationship with God. What is our part? How do we take hold of this _____ offer?
- Key Verse: “For it is by _____ you have been saved, through _____--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God---not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- In order for the sacrifice of Christ to be applied to us individually we must reach out and _____ it by faith.
- This is the only way to _____ Adam’s decision and restore a right relationship with God.
- *****Key Idea: I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ.**
- Key Application: No matter what _____ I face in this life, they pale in comparison to my salvation for eternity.
- Key Application: I need to walk in _____ and _____ grace to others.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) When was the most shocking or exciting time where you got something totally for free? What was it like?
- 2) Do you struggle getting something you didn’t earn? Are you the kind of person who struggles to receive gifts and always have a need to practice reciprocity (like Sheldon from “The Big Bang Theory”)?
- 3) Who has given you grace in a situation where you really didn’t deserve it? How did it feel? Have you ever had to give grace to someone who didn’t deserve it? Was it challenging? Was it worth it? How does Ephesians 2:8-10 help us understand grace?
- 4) Read Mark 10:17-22. What was the young man trusting in when he came to Jesus?
- 5) Read John 3:1-17 and Romans 10:9-10. What is the manner in which we receive the gift of eternal life and salvation?
- 6) What are the different ways the bible warns us about how we might misunderstand salvation (earning our salvation by works or legalism in Acts 15:11; many different ways to God or relativism in John 14:6; we have to have the gift of faith to be saved, not just universalism in Revelation 20:11-15)?

Chapter 4 – THE BIBLE

- **Key Question:** How does God _____ himself and his truth to us?
- *****Key Idea:** I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God that guides my beliefs and actions.
- Key Verse: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for _____, _____, _____ and _____ in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (1 Timothy 3:16).
- The Psalmist writes: “Your word is a _____ for my feet, a _____ on my path” (Psalm 119:105).
- Key Application: I am motivated to study the Bible to _____ God’s will for my life.
- Key Application: The principles in the Bible must _____ my life even when I don’t fully understand or like what it teaches.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) If you were forced to enter a battle and you could only take one weapon with you, what would you take?
- 2) Read Hebrews 4:12 & Ephesians 6:17. Scripture often talks about how God’s Word is like a sword. It both cuts our enemies as sword and performs surgery on our hearts as a scalpel. Have you ever experienced scripture as a sword or a scalpel?
- 3) Read Proverbs 3:5-6. When have you been tempted to trust in something other than God to get you through a tough time? When have you leaned on God when everything else you tried to trust in let you down?
- 4) What’s your favorite part of the Bible? Do you have a favorite book, passage or chapter that you find yourself constantly returning to?
- 5) What is one tool that you could learn that might improve your bible study this week? Consider things like the bible app and its reading plans and devotionals, purchasing a study bible that has notes and explanations at the bottom, a journal bible that has more room in the margins to write notes, a devotional book or book of prayers, or bible software (like Logos, Accordance, Bible Works, or Blue Letter Bible – Accordance and Blue Letter Bible have free versions).

Chapter 5 – IDENTITY IN CHRIST

- **One of the most important indicators of your happiness and quality of life will come from the answer to this Key Question: _____?**
- Jesus offers us a new _____ when we come to faith in Him.
- Key Verse: “Yet, to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become _____ of God” (John 1:12).
- *****Key Idea: I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.**
- Key Application: I am free from _____.
- Key Application: My worth comes from my position in Christ, not my _____.
- Key Application: I live to _____ who I am in Christ, not to _____ who I am.
- Key Application: I can focus on _____ others up, not _____ them down.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Watching the royal wedding was very exciting and interesting for many around the world. What would you do different in your life if you knew you were royalty?
- 2) Read Romans 8:17. What does this mean for your life? How does being an heir to God and co-heir with Christ change your view of yourself?
- 3) When did you feel like you needed to prove yourself? When was a time when you really felt like you had to perform well and felt like you would be judged or a failure if you didn't accomplish a certain goal or task?
- 4) The yellow companion guide talks about the “Chariots of Fire” movie. The hero of the movie, Liddell, literally runs in his freedom in Christ. He does not feel the need to prove himself. What would life look like if we were freed from the need to perform, to be impressive?

Chapter 6 – CHURCH

- **Key Question: How will God _____ His plan?**
- *****Key Idea: I believe the church is God’s _____ way to accomplish His _____ on earth today.**
- “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit come on you; and you will be my _____ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).
- Key Verse: “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature _____ of Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each _____ does its work” (Ephesians 4:15-16).
- Key Application: You belong to the body of Christ; don’t go looking for _____ in all the wrong places.
- Key Application: God will use the church to _____ His purposes in your life.
- Key Application: God will use _____ to accomplish His purposes in the lives of others and even the world.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Describe a place where you really felt like you belonged—a place like “Cheers,” a place “where everybody knows your name.” Was it a social club, a team, a church, at school or work? How has church either given or failed to give you a sense of belonging?
- 2) Read Acts 8 and see how the church expands from a small band of Jesus’ Jewish followers into a universal church. How might God be expanding your understanding of the church and who He wants to bring into it?
- 3) Read Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. What does it mean to be a part of the body of Christ? What do you think your role in the body is (maybe ask others to help affirm or guide you towards this role)?
- 4) Read Philippians 4:8-9. After that long list of “whatevers,” what have you seen modeled and practiced well in the church? What do you need help putting into practice? How might God bring peace through seeking these virtues?
- 5) Read Genesis 12:1-3. Like Abraham, we have been blessed in order to be a blessing. How can you, your household, and your church become more of a blessing to your community?

Chapter 7 – HUMANITY

- **Key Question:** How does God _____ people?
- *****Key Idea:** I believe _____ people are loved by God and _____ Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- “We all, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own _____.” (Isaiah 53:6).
- Key verse: “For God so loved the world that he _____ his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not _____ but have eternal life” (Romans 5:8).
- “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still _____, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).
- Key Application: I value _____ human life.
- Key Application: I see and treat all people the way _____ sees and treats them.
- Key Application: I am compelled to tell all people about _____.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) How might we discuss another person’s need for Jesus without being accusatory? In other words, how do we not sound like the Southern cliché, “You NEED Jesus!?” How might our own vulnerability and confession bridge the gap?
- 2) How might God be working on your heart to learn to love ALL people, not just the ones that are easy to love? What do you think God is telling you about loving difficult people?
- 3) How is Jesus’s statement in John 14:6 (“I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”) a comfort and not something that excludes us (think about how comforting it is to know that your GPS knows where you are going better than you do)?
- 4) Read Galatians 3:26-29. I love the story in the yellow book about “Choctaw” Bill and his willingness to share Jesus with both settlers and Native Americans. He showed no favoritism. Where is God calling you to reach out to someone you normally don’t notice or associate with?
- 5) Read Romans 10:14-15. Do you feel comfortable telling your testimony (your story about how God has rescued and saved you)? How can learning to tell your story help you be ready for God to send you into other people’s lives?

Chapter 8 – COMPASSION

- **Key Question: What about the poor and _____?**
- *****Key Idea: I Believe God calls all Christians to show _____ to people in need.**
- Key Verse: “_____ the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. _____ the weak and needy; _____ them from the hand of the wicked” (Psalm 82:3-4).
- “Religion that God our Father _____ as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress” (James 1:17).
- The right question is not “Who is my neighbor?” but “Who _____ to be a neighbor?”
- As a Christian, the plight of the poor, oppressed, abandoned, and needy is a _____ problem.
- Key Application: I will do unto others, as I would have _____ do unto me.
- Key Application: People do not _____ how much I know, until they know how much I care.
- When people cry out, “Where is God when it comes to the poor and injustice on the earth?” the answer should be, “Look at God’s people. They are right in the _____ of it.”

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read James 2:15-16. I love the story of Rev. Swanson. He saw a need and God led him to find ways to meet the needs of those he served in South Korea. His ministry grew exponentially and became one of the greatest single orphan ministries in the world. How is God showing you someone who has a simple and small need? How might you be able to meet that need or rally people around you to meet that need?
- 2) How might simply trying to “fix” a problem or struggle of someone not always be the correct solution? When in your own life have you found it problematic to simply try to fix a problem? How might compassion be a better place to start?
- 3) Read Matthew 15:32. How does Jesus compassion move Him to action? How can our compassion move us to action as well?
- 4) I would like to challenge everyone to consider going with us on a service day to Metro Relief. We will be traveling in a school bus converted into a food truck for the homeless to share socks, soup and the love of Jesus. Let Jesus rock your world and join us on this awesome mission!

Chapter 9 – STEWARDSHIP

- **Key Question: What is God's _____ on my life?**
- *****Key Idea: I believe everything I am and everything I own _____ to God.**
- Key Verse: "The earth is the Lord's, and _____ in it, and the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters" (Psalm 24:1-2).
- Everything belongs to and is owned by the Lord, the maker and creator of everything. He has patent, the intellectual property rights and the deed to _____.
- Christians recognize they are not _____ who make contributions to God, but rather managers of everything we are and own.
- Key Application: I move from owner to _____.
- Key Application: What does God want me to _____ with what he has given me?
- Being a manager is so much more _____ than being an owner.
- I _____ over the deed of my house and life to God.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read Psalm 24:1-2, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 1:13-14. What kind of claim each member of the Trinity have on you? How should we respond?
- 2) What part of the above passages makes you squirm in your everyday life? What part of your resources, time, or talent do you struggle to be generous with? Do you struggle with hospitality and welcoming others into your home because you are too busy (lack of time) or because you are too private (lack of generosity with the resource of your home) or some other reason? What do you think God can help you do to grow in this struggle?
- 3) How do we grow in being better stewards? What practical things can we do to have more available time and resources to serve others? How can we better budget our time and money? How can we share some of our hobbies and passions with those around us instead of doing them by ourselves?
- 4) Challenge! Make a budget for both your time (like on google calendar) and your finances (Dave Ramsey's "Quickie Budget" is a great place to start). How can you grow in giving in both of these areas?

Chapter 10 – ETERNITY

- **Key Question: What happens _____?**
- *****Key Idea: I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus will return to judge all people and to establish His _____ Kingdom.**
- “When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to _____ in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal” (2 Kings 2:1).
- When our body exhales its final breath, our spirit exits the body and goes to one of two places-- _____ or _____.
- Key Verses: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a _____ for you?” (John 14:1-2).
- Key Application: Live with _____ every day, regardless of the circumstances around us. Life can get better here, but even if it doesn’t His home awaits us.
- Key Application: Love people with freedom and boldness, because our future is _____ in Him.
- Key Application: Lead more people in to a relationship with Christ because we want to _____ this great hope with others.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What parts of eternity and heaven do you think are misrepresented? What do you think the new heavens and new earth will really be like?
- 2) What do you most look forward to seeing in the new heavens and new earth? What do you most look forward to being absent from this eternal time with God?
- 3) What moments in your life have been so sobering and serious that you were forced to face your own mortality? How does the uncertainty of death cause fear or pain to you?
- 4) Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-28; 35-58. How does the resurrection become one of the most important and central tenets of our faith? Why does everything about Christianity fall apart if the resurrection isn’t real? How does this assurance change how you feel about your life and how you live your life?