



LifeHouse Community Church

**G2 "Give the Gospel"**

**Week 1 - GOD**

Love God - Love People - Make Disciples

## God

The Gospel begins with God. It is God's message. It is first and foremost about who God is and what God has done. The Gospel cannot be understood until we deal with certain truths about God. While we will never understand God fully, there are a few things we need to wrestle with in order to understand why the Gospel is good news.

### **God Is The Creator Of All Things**

That's very important because it establishes God's right to dictate the terms of our existence as his creatures. God made everything - that includes you - therefore God has the right to set limits on your life and behaviour and to demand from you certain acts of obedience and worship. When I was a teenager my father used to say: "My house my rules. If you want to make the rules, get a job and buy your own house". That made sense to me even though it bothered me. The same principle applies for human beings as a whole. This is God's world. He made it, he makes the rules. If you want to be God then make your own universe and establish your moral code. Until then, you answer to him.

### **God Is Holy**

God is who he is, and he designed the universe and everything in it to harmonize with his essential character. *"For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy."* Leviticus 11:44. God is holy and he requires everything within his creation to get on

board with that. Holiness basically means "God-ness". It just refers to who God is. To say "Be holy as I am holy" is for God to say "Be like me". Everything in the universe is supposed to reflect the character of God.

## **God Is Sovereign**

God didn't just create the world and then go away to do something else, he rules over that which he created. While he gave to his human creatures real moral will and responsibility, He is nevertheless ultimately sovereign over everything that happens. *"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand."* Deuteronomy 32:39. God is sovereign over all things and no exercise of our own moral responsibility can ultimately impede or overturn God's sovereign will.

## **God Is Loving**

That's perhaps the greatest mystery of all. Why does God love us? Why does he care? It's because it's who he is! God is love even within himself! The God of the Bible is Father, Son and Holy Spirit - even with him himself he is love! Creation is therefore the overflow of an eternal love - God didn't make humans because He was lonely, He made humans because He loves! It is the nature of his love to overflow and to create and to include.

That's who God is, and the Gospel doesn't make sense until you understand that **God is who he is in everything he does**. God is not sometimes loving and then sometimes holy. God is who he is in everything

he does, and if you don't understand that then you'll never understand the Gospel.

### **Group Discussion:**

The gospel begins with God. The Gospel is the Good news of what God has done in Christ to secure our salvation. A wise old Christian one said that we read the Bible to learn who God is, who we are and how God has saved us in Jesus Christ. Many of us tend to skip parts 1 & 2, and jump right into part 3. We try to understand Jesus without first trying to understand who God is and who we are; that's a mistake. Jesus is the answer to the great dilemma in Scripture: How can a holy God live with sinful people? If you don't know the problem then you can't appreciate the solution. One of the reasons that there is so much confusion about Jesus in the world today is that there is so little thinking about God.

### **Notes:**

## True or False

1. The universe is eternal and self-existent. It has the power of life within itself.
2. God is eternal and self-existent. He has the power of life within himself.
3. God created the world for people, but then he pretty much leaves people up to their own devices within his creation. He's curious to see what we will do but he is not very demanding upon its creatures.
4. God is the biggest thing in the universe. Like your own solar system, the world only works when the biggest thing is in the center.
5. God created people to love, serve and obey him.
6. God is more gracious than he is holy. Therefore when Adam and Eve sinned, he forgave them and life in the universe went on pretty much unchanged.
7. God responded to the sin of Adam and Eve by punishing them with exile and by encouraging them with the promise that he would one day come and restore them.
8. God cannot and does not tolerate sin. God has a settled antagonism toward sin.
9. God hates sin but loves the sinner.
10. God loves people but he hates sin. People are and become what they do. Therefore the great dilemma in the Bible is how a holy God will live with sinful people.
11. God saves in commands. Saved people are supposed to obey God as a gesture of love and gratitude.
12. God used to be super concerned about sin, but in the New Testament he seems far more relaxed. You could almost say that God has become a Christian.

## Scriptures

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:15-17)

"The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:14-19)

"And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:1-3)

"The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." (Exodus 34:6-7)

"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand." (Deuteronomy 32:39)

"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb." (Psalms 139:13)

"Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." (Jeremiah 1:4-5)

"Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name." (Malachi 3:16)

"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring." (Acts 17:25-28)

"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:33-36)

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." (James 1:17)