

Know Why You Believe Part 4 – Creation – Bible Study

Leader begins with prayer.

Each person should choose one of the following questions to answer as you begin.

- Tell about a time you felt overwhelmed by awe or wonder in creation.
- What is it about the world or the universe we live in that most impresses you?
- What is it that most suggests God's handiwork to you?

Wrestling with the Word

Read Genesis 1: 1-3 (and 4-27 if you want a longer study!)

Read Psalm 19: 1-4.

What do we know about God just from what God created? Consider two different situations:

1. You are on a beautiful mountaintop, surrounded by tranquil nature at sunrise.
2. Tsunamis in Asia kill 300,000 people.

The Apostles' Creed, which the Christian church has confessed for around 1700 years as a summary of Christian belief, starts off by declaring:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator (or maker) of heaven and earth.

Martin Luther, in his *Small Catechism*, wrote the following paragraph in explanation of the First Article of the Creed.

*I believe that God has created me
and all that exists.*

*He has given me and still preserves
my body and soul with all their powers.*

*He provides me with food and clothing,
home and family, daily work,
and all I need from day to day.*

*God also protects me in time of danger
and guards me from every evil.*

*All this he does
out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy,
though I do not deserve it.*

*Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise,
serve and obey him.*

This is most certainly true.

- As you read the first article of the Creed and its explanation, what stands out to you?
- Who is God? What does he do? Who are we in relationship to him?

Wrestling with the World

[If possible, open up the internet and include a viewing of the website “Powers of 10” which can be accessed at <http://www.wordwizz.com/pwrsof10.htm>

Click on the ‘one meter square’ icon on the home page. Then click DOWN through the powers of ten by clicking successively on the ‘-1’ button. Then click UP through the powers of ten by clicking successively on the ‘+1’ button. After viewing this site, discuss the following questions.

Which level of the ‘powers of ten’ site fills you with wonder?]

What evidences of God as Creator do you find most compelling? Which fields of human knowledge inspire you with awe at the Creator’s creativity?

What do you find difficult to believe or understand in relation to God as Creator?

What aspects of creation most trouble you? What does God’s *other* book – the book of Scripture – have to say about these troubling aspects of Creation?

Thinking it Through

Read **Romans 1:18-22**.

In what ways do people ‘suppress the knowledge of God’? In what ways does our culture make idols of created things rather than rightly worshiping the creator? How can we as Christians live counterculturally in such a context?

Read **Psalms 139**.

In this Psalm Creation gets ‘personal.’ The Creator is infinitely concerned with his creatures, loves each one of them – loves *you!* God the Father is intimately interested and involved in your life.

What parts of this Psalm stand out most to you? What is good news for you?

Read **John 1:1-5, 10-14**.

Is the natural knowledge of God enough? What is the Creator's intention for you? And for the world? How does God act on that intention? Where do we most fully see the presence of God?

How is that good news for you?

Spend some time praying for each other.

Please take the time to fill in the following feedback form, (anonymously if you wish) so that future Bible Studies can be improved.

Name and contact details(Optional)

1. What is your intention with regard to Bible studies in the LSF community? (circle all that apply)

- a.) I'd like to keep on going once a week, if a Bible study group was available.
- b.) I'd like to be in a Bible study group that met once a fortnight
- c.) It would be good to be in a group that met for short series, like this one, and then took a break.
- d.) I'm going to take a break for a while, but I'm interested in being involved in the future.
- e.) I'm not interested in such bible studies.
- f.) I'd like to investigate the possibility of leading a group (please leave name and contact)
- g.) I'd like to see a group started closer to my geographical area.(please leave contact)

2. I found the content of the bible studies to be (circle all that apply)

Boring Irrelevant Difficult Thought-Provoking Stimulating Faith-building

3. I found the social setting of the bible study group to be (circle all that apply)

Hard work Good fun A good chance to meet new people Exclusive and cliquy
Open and welcoming

4. My small group leader's leadership (circle all that apply)

Was excellent Very Good Fair Poor Confusing Needs more preparation
Dominated the group Worked well to include and draw people out

5. The length of the Bible studies was

Just right Too Short Too long Couldn't get through all the material

6. The sermons at SNAS were (circle all that apply)

Engaging Interesting Boring Confusing Too Long Too Short
Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Weighing us down with law

7. Do you think the concept of linked sermon and bible studies is a useful one? Explain. Would you like to see such a thing happen again?

8. Do you have any additional comments?