

God Chat

3- GOD IS LOVE

MATTHEW 28:19 - Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (NIV)

JOHN 14:16-17 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. (NIV)

6) WHY DOES GOD EXIST? WHY DOES LOVE EXIST? WHAT SHOULD LOVE BE BASED ON?

In 1 Corinthians 13 - Love never fails.

Love never fails so it should not depend on imperfect things or people. Many of us try to create reasons why God and others should love us. So what should love be based upon?

Matthew 5:43-48 - “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Genesis 1:26-27 - Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”(NIV)

John 10:10 - The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. (NLT)

Love loves without question and all of us crave it. When we experience pleasure we want to share it and as love continues and expresses itself it deepens. Love was flowing between the three: God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. The more they shared love the more pleasurable it was. This is when they decided that others need to experience this. God began to create free moral beings. Even though some people say that we were created to serve, to obey, because God needed company. But God was complete already and because love continues to grow God selflessly created us and all beings. Love is other centeredness, and we were created to experience and the pleasure of loving and being loved. This is what we were made for.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We trust the reality that God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is other-centered, not self-seeking. The full representation of the love of God came in human flesh through the person of Jesus Christ, who created all things in the universe by the word of His mouth, lived a life of service to humanity and saved us from our sins, our rebellion, our own desire to live without Him. By His death and resurrection we have assurance of a future without pain, hurt and selfishness.

We also trust the ancient scriptures hold the evidence for the story of this passionate God, how He intended the world to be, what happened to get the world in the mess that it is in and if this mess is ever going to end.

Throughout these Friday nights we will present glimpses of evidence that can give us assurance God loves us deeply, has won the hearts of most of the universe, except for this little planet, but His light is shining on the heart of humanity brighter and brighter each day. As restored followers of Christ, we will also show outwardly how to live a life of other-centered love, helping others in physical, material, emotional and spiritual need.

INTRO

From week one of our studies we have talked about the character of God, and the opposing sides in a war that started due to the questioning God’s government. We have tried to look at the big picture of the beginning of this war and also what really went wrong. As we continue to search for answers about God’s character and the suffering this world goes through it is our hope that all of us can experience a personal encounter with the creator that risked everything for our existence and for true freedom.

THE LAW OF LIBERTY:

When most of us try to define law we think of a set of rules established and enforced by a government. But there is another definition for law. Law can also be defined as a principle upon which things work. For example the principle of gravity, which exists and continues to exist impacting our everyday lives whether we choose to believe it or not. Just like gravity the Law of Liberty is a principle, and it is founded upon love. If we chose to ignore the existence of gravity by jumping off a building we most likely would die. But if we decided to jump from a fence or the curb the consequence would be a sprained ankle or broken leg. The difference here is the degree or variable that predicts the damage. The Law of Liberty works in this way also. So what are the possible consequences of the violation of The Law of Liberty?

- 1) Love is damaged and eventually ruined
- 2) A desire to rebel and get away
- 3) When you voluntarily accept this violation there is a loss of individuality and autonomy

Have you ever experienced these consequences in your life and relationships? What are good examples of situations that might result in these?

1) HOW DO YOU SEE GOD?

GEN 3:1-4 - The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?” “Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’” “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman.

There is no better way to begin to know the God of the bible then to study the bible. The book of Genesis is a great introduction to the journey we embark to understanding his character.

We have just read that in the beginning of human history there was a change of the way God's character was viewed and a false description of it. The bible calls this the fall of sin, or the beginning of sin.

God said: if you eat of this fruit you will die, and the serpent said: you will not die. The bible also affirms that God created the serpent. Here we see then two of God's creatures debating the trustworthiness of these Divine statements.

Religion today pays attention to Adam and Eve's behavior, but their behavior simply comes as a byproduct of the way they understood God. The same thing happens to people today. Our reaction to another person's word will probably be met by a feeling of deceit, distrust, non acceptance. If we don't know them we don't trust them. To accept someone or a concept you need to know it and understand it, and our knowledge will lead us to trust or disbelief. Your perception of God is related with the knowledge you have of Him. And this is why it is important to know him more.

2) WHY WAS JESUS CONDEMNED TO DEATH?

JOHN 16:13 - But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. (NIV)

Because they didn't know the Father, consequently they did not understand the son, Jesus Christ.

JOHN 8:38-44 - I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father."Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

The main reason for Jesus to come to this earth was to reveal to the world God's true character, who He is.

JOHN 3:8 - The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

God's son came to destroy the words, the lies of the enemy but: What words? What enemy?

The same enemy from Genesis 3, the one who took the form of a serpent: Things are not the way God tells you, God is not who you think He is.

3) WHAT'S THE ESSENCE OF WHO GOD IS?

JOHN 14:9 - Jesus replied: Philip, I have been with you for a long time. Don't you know who I am? If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. How can you ask me to show you the Father? (CEV)

- The best way to know God is through Jesus

John 8:32 - And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."(NLT)

- Knowing the truth about God makes us free.

II CORINTHIANS 4:6 - The Scriptures say, "God commanded light to shine in the dark." Now God is shining in our hearts to let you know that his glory is seen in Jesus Christ.

- God's glory, his Divinity, can be seen through Jesus Christ. Our comprehension about God has been distorted just like Adam's and Eve's. The Jews for example would say that theirs was the religion of the true God of Moses and Abraham, condemned Jesus.

I John 4:8 - God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him. (CEV)

- God's true identity was lost. Humanity chose to believe a lie about what Love is, who God is. What God do you know? What Love? But what is Love? This is the wrong question. We always think that love is something, when in reality love is someone. Love only exists when there is someone else. In this case there is no love at first sight, but with many sights, many encounters, dialogues, and a day to day way of living. This is exactly what the being that created you is trying to achieve. He wants to rescue you and gain your trust.

When we decide to know Jesus, we will feel loved; this is why the Bible says: John 4:8 those that do not love don't know God. We are all longing to be accepted as we are, to be loved, and with the same passion love back. This is why we invite you to continue this journey with us, learning about Jesus, knowing who he is more and more. We all will be surprised by the practical results this will bring in our lives.

As we go through the motions of life we seem to always strive for better things. Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do some people have so much and others so little? In giving us freedom God gave us choice and so He will not take that right away. Whether we are rich or poor, young or old, weak, strong, wise, foolish, all wish for more.

ECCLESIASTES 9:11 - I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all. (NIV)

4) WHEN YOU LOOK AROUND WHAT PLACES OR THINGS MAKE YOU THINK THAT THERE IS SOMETHING MORE?

Throughout history every generation has cried out for more. Most recently: U2 "I still haven't found what I'm looking for", Switchfoot: "We were meant to live for so much more", John Mayer: "Something is missing, and I don't know what it is." In the bible a man named David that became the king of a great nation wrote this:

PSALM 63:1 - O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. (NIV)

Most of the time it comes down to three basic necessities: power, money, and sex. So why would David, which we understand from history to have been a powerful and successful king, seek for more?

A very wise literary persona of the English "If I discover within myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world" (C.S. Lewis)

Why does nothing in this earth satisfy us?

PSALM 145:15-16 - The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. (NIV)

We are looking but we don't know exactly what it is, or what we need. The bible tells us that God wants to give us all of our desires. Yes, all of our desires, He can give us everything we are looking for. He satisfies our desires.

5) CAN HE FULFILL ALL OF OUR DESIRES?

ISAIAH 6:8 - Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"(NIV)

God speaks here in singular and plural form: Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? If we believe that God is love and we understand that true love is being other centered and being selfless then how can God be love if he is one? From the beginning of our history there has been recognition and need for someone other than yourself for love.

GENESIS 2:18 - Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is right for him."

What are some things that for you to experience you need more than one person? Try tickling yourself. Now try tickling your neighbor.

Love, can you experience it by yourself? Biblically Love is described as other centeredness this requires at least two people. So love should begin, come from me, and end or be shared with you.

Look again at Isaiah 6:8. Here we see that God is plural, for God to be love there needs to be more than one. We find evidence of this at Jesus' Baptism and later on when Jesus says farewell to the disciples. We will study this in more detail at a later time.