

Bible Study

Christian Beliefs

Psalm 19 v. 1 – 14



Introduction

In our Bible Studies we will be using a booklet from 'A Life Builder Bible Study' series. Our overall theme for these studies is: CHRISTIAN BELIEFS. The studies were originally written by Stephen Eyre, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for both home study and Church study.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us.

If you are unable to be with us in church and have decided that you will be doing the studies from home, it is suggested that you do the study on a Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible, pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.

We do hope that you enjoy the studies that have been produced!

Context

Knowing what we believe is foundational to a healthy relationship with God and others. These studies on Christian Beliefs explore what Christians need to understand about some vital topics:

God, Christ, The Holy Spirit, God's Word, human nature, salvation, the church and the 'last things'.

Having a good grasp of these beliefs will equip us to make sense of the world we live in, strengthen our assurance of our own identity in Christ and direct us to a life of integrity.

Some Thoughts To Help You While You Study

The purpose of the study is:

To heighten our awareness of the ways God is revealing himself to us.

God reveals himself in creation and in Scripture. God's revelation in creation is called **general revelation**. God's revelation through the Scriptures is called **special revelation**. **Psalm 19** describes both types of revelation: **verses 1 – 6** is about general revelation, while **verses 7 – 14** are about special revelation.

In **Romans 1 v. 18 – 20** the apostle Paul says that God's power and divine nature are clearly seen through creation. The fact that religion is a worldwide phenomenon demonstrates that there is an inner awareness of a Creator to whom we owe worship and devotion. Creation declares God's glory, but it does not declare his name. Through creation we can know that he exists, but his personal character and offer of salvation through Jesus can only be known through a special act of revelation. (**2 Timothy 3 v. 15 – 17**).

Without the light and warmth of the sun there is no life. So it is without God. As the sun's light penetrates everywhere, so there is nowhere that God is not present in his universe. The theological term for this is **omnipresence**.

We tend to think of laws as restraints and burdens, but there is a striking contrast with David.

Here is the crux in knowing God. Because God is holy, we can't get close to him without sensing our moral responsibility and our sin. Only those who are willing to face their sin and their need to do something about it can approach God.

An important question as we begin these studies on Christian Beliefs

is; if we are going to study God and what Christians believe, then there must be a willingness to **ACT** on it. As James in his letter reminds us: 'Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says'. (**James 1 v. 22**)

Study 1 – God In The World & In The Word

‘I don’t believe in God’! That was the reaction of the author of these studies when he was a confused and angry teenager. He goes on to say: ‘However, I found my unbelief hard to maintain. My adolescent hungers weren’t satisfied in the ‘normal’ places like music, friends or school. But during my first year of college, God began to reveal himself to me in ways that I couldn’t deny. After a year of his constant calling, I yielded’.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: C. S. Lewis writes: ‘Avoiding [God], in many times and places, has proved so difficult that a very large part of the human race has failed to achieve it’. What influences and events have led you to faith in God?

Both head and heart are required for a healthy relationship with God. Sit quietly for a moment and then consider the following: What do I feel toward God right now?

General revelation refers to the way that God makes his existence known in the world. **Special revelation** is the term for how God makes his will known to his people. **Psalm 19 v. 1 – 14** is a meditative reflection by the Psalmist on both special and general revelation.

Read Psalm 19 v. 1– 14

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

How does the Psalmist help us perceive the presence of the invisible God?

The Psalmist views the world as we might view a work of art (**Psalm 19 v. 1**). How does seeing the world in this way help us to appreciate God's glory?

The Psalmist says the creation speaks in every language and in every corner of the world (**Psalm 19 v. 2**). What can anyone in the world know about God through creation?

What are some things about God that can't be known through creation?

The sun gets special mention (**Psalm 19 v. 4 – 6**). How is God's glory particularly revealed in the sun?

Which aspects of creation have helped you learn the most about God and his glory?

In **Psalm 19 v. 7 – 14** the Psalmist shifts his focus from the way God makes himself known in creation to the way he reveals himself in his law. What words does the Psalmist use to describe God's law?

According to the Psalmist, what are the benefits of knowing God's law? What benefits have you received from God's law?

Why would reflecting on God's creation and his law cause David to think about his own responsibility before God (**Psalm 19 v. 11 – 13**)?

How do both nature and God's law bring up the idea of sin and our need for forgiveness?

God is a person who is making an effort to be known. What should you be willing to do to know him better?

Something to Do Now

Tell God that you want to know him better. Ask him to open your eyes to a sense of his presence and your mind to the understanding of his character.

Something to Do Later

The sense of God's presence is all around us, but for many reasons we are dull in our spiritual perception. Keep a record this coming week of every time that God comes to mind. At the end of the week review your notes and see if there are special actions or places that are a special means of God's presence in your life.

Now use the opportunity to Pray