

Bible Study

Christian Beliefs

Genesis 1 v 24 – 2 v. 25



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 discover the source of our identity and dignity as people made in the image of God.

The biblical study of human nature begins in **Genesis 1 – 3**. The rest of Scripture can only be understood in light of these chapters. Every other reference to humanity in the Scriptures merely reflects the truths recorded in Genesis. One theme normally included in the biblical study of humanity is the role of work. God made us and blessed us with the responsibility to care for the creation. There is no question in the study that explicitly addresses this topic.

Created on the sixth day, we humans are animals. If we deny this, we miss something true about our nature. We are also made in the image of God. He has made us vice regents over creation. We are responsible to God to care for and cultivate the world. Like God, who created the world, we have the ability to create and shape our environment. God shapes and moulds the world to meet the special needs of the human race. God is intimately involved in Adam's life, much like a parent with their child. God gives Adam a place to live, notices his need for companionship and gives him a great deal of freedom. Adam knew his own dignity because he was in contact with God. We too need to spend enough time in the presence of God that we know our own dignity.

Although Adam was made in the image of God, he was not God. He was subject to God. The tree would help Adam keep his responsibility to God in perspective. Adam would learn that God requires obedience. Most people think of restraints as infringements. In reality God's

restraints are reminders of what is true about us. Remember that our identity and dignity are bestowed by God. If we break away from him, we lose our dignity and identity.

Study 5 – Our Identity & Dignity

John Calvin, one of the early Reformers of the church, wrote in the opening pages of the **Institutes of the Christian Religion** that it wasn't clear which came first, a knowledge of ourselves or a knowledge of God our Creator. In any case, he wrote that our knowledge of self and God are important issues and inseparably intertwined.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Who are the people that have most shaped the way you perceive yourself? What makes you feel good about yourself?

According to Genesis, we are made in the image of God. In this study we will consider what that means.

Read Genesis 1 v. 24 – 2 v. 25

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

We humans were created on the sixth day, along with the land animals. We are similar to them yet very different. What special privileges did God bestow on humanity (**Genesis 1 v. 24 – 31**)?

Compare the two accounts of the creation of the human race (**Genesis 1 v. 26 – 30 and 2 v. 4 – 25**). What different emphasis is given in each account? Together what do they teach us about ourselves?

How would you describe God's relationship with Adam (**Genesis 2 v. 15 – 18**)?

Imagine Adam beginning life with just the animals around him and no contact with God. How would his life have been different?

Like Adam, we too need to be on personal terms with God. How does knowing God make a difference in the way you live and think about yourself?

Adam was given complete freedom in the Garden except for access to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (**Genesis 2 v. 15 – 17**). In what ways do you think placing that tree off – limits would have affected Adam?

What benefits have you received by the freedoms and restraints that God requires of you?

One of the special abilities that God gave Adam, and all humans, is the ability to name (**Genesis 2 v. 19**). How does this naming ability set Adam, and all humans, apart from the rest of creation?

As Adam is naming the animals, he discovers a need for companionship that isn't being met (**Genesis 1 v. 18 – 25**). How would you describe the intended relationship between Adam and Eve? In what ways would Eve fill a need for companionship and help that neither God nor the animals filled?

God says that it isn't good for a man to be alone (**Genesis 1 v. 18**). From your experience, what is wrong with being alone? How does feeling alone affect your sense of identity and self – worth?

Summarize the essentials of human identity that come from Genesis. How might this passage provide insight for you to grow in your sense of dignity and self – worth?

Something to Do Now

Ask God to provide you with the relationships, responsibilities and personal connection with him that are essential for your well – being.

Something to Do Later

Since we are made in the image of God, we are very valuable.

When we lose sight of this, we seek our values in what we own, what we do or the status others attribute to us.

In order to gain a glimpse of your value to God, why not give him all your false sources of value and ask him to affirm you as his creation and his child.

Picture yourself standing before him now with a box full of your trophies that stand for your efforts to achieve personal significance.

Give them over to him and invite him to affirm you.

After you have done this, make a note of how it affected you.

Now use the opportunity to Pray