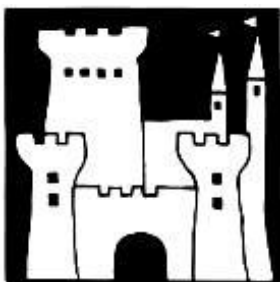


Bible Studies

Year 12

Term 4

God is...	Pages	Number of weeks	Number of studies
Protector	2 - 7	3	1
Truth	8 - 18	3	3
Lord and King	19 - 24	3	8



God is Protector

Ephesians 6:10-18 The armour of God

The Enemy

We are in a spiritual war. People ask, "If Satan has been defeated, why does he have so much power?"

Think about World War 2, June 6th 1944 – **D-Day**

The war was won and it was over. But on May 8th 1944, V-day was announced. It took time for the war to finish.

D-Day – can be thought of as the Cross.

V- Day can be thought of as the day when Jesus returns.

In our present world, the enemy has been weakened but he is not finally defeated.

1 Peter 5:8 The devil prowls about like a roaring lion.

Ephesians 6:10 – Be strong **in** the Lord. We can't win if we try and fight the battle ourselves.

The armour

We don't live in peace times. PUT IT ON!

Ephesians 2:5 We were once dead in sin.

1 Peter 2:9 He brought us out of the kingdom of darkness into His marvellous light.

Ephesians 6: 11-12 – Stand against the schemes of the devil. Our fight is not against flesh and blood, (but our fight is against who is behind the evil we see in the world.)

Our culture

Plays down Satan, or treats him as a joke. We see this in fairy tales and cartoons – the man with the pitchfork.

But Satan is a fallen angel - **Isaiah 14:12-14**

He is the accuser - **Revelation 12:10**

He is the deceiver – **Genesis 3**

He is an angel of light – **2 Corinthians 11:14**

Jesus has power over Satan

Matt 8:28 – There were two demon possessed men. Jesus said ‘go’ and had complete power over the demons.

Satan wants to see the kingdom of God fail.

Ephesians 4:27 – Give him no opportunity for this, by putting on the armour and standing firm. Don’t just know what the armour means. Put it on!

Recognise the war we are in.

Revelation 19 – We see Jesus leading an army. He brings the new kingdom by pushing out the old.

PRAY – Ephesians 6:18

Now let’s look at each piece individually—what Paul meant by it, where it connects to other Scripture, and how you can put it into everyday life.

The armour explained

The Belt of Truth

Ephesians 6:10-18 is an image of a Roman soldier whose belt secured his tunic and weapons. Spiritually, the belt of truth represents the foundational commitment to God’s truth—knowing, believing, and living by God’s Word and the truth of who you are in Christ. Truth holds everything together: identity, integrity, and coherence for action.

To put on the belt of truth, you practice honesty with God and others, deepen your understanding of Scripture, and reject lies. When lies of shame or fear pull you off balance, the belt keeps you steady. Spiritual discernment becomes essential when learning to recognize lies, temptation, and confusion that pull believers away from God’s truth.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate protects vital organs. The breastplate of righteousness stands for the righteousness that comes from God. This is both Christ’s righteousness given to you at Salvation, and the growing righteousness that you live out. It’s about moral integrity and a secure standing before God.

Putting on the breastplate means living in a manner consistent with being a Christian. You pursue justice, repent quickly, and let holiness shape your choices. You don’t earn salvation by wearing this breastplate; you wear it because salvation has been given.

Shoes of the Readiness of the Gospel of Peace

Soldiers needed sturdy footwear to march and fight. The shoes remind you that you are called to move—to carry the good news and to stand ready to act in peacemaking. The gospel gives you stability and purpose: it grounds you in peace with God and with others.

When you lace up these shoes you are getting ready for action. You learn the Gospel story so you can share it, practice the fruit of the Spirit, and live with humility that shows the world the peace Christ brings.

The Shield of Faith

Roman shields could be large and protective. The image of the shield emphasizes faith that extinguishes the flaming darts of the evil one. Faith is trusting God's promises so completely that attacks cannot defeat you.

You raise the shield of faith through repeated acts of trust: praying for the impossible, stepping into service, forgiving when it hurts. Faith is active trust—responding to God's Word with obedience even when outcomes are uncertain.

The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet protects the head. This is the place of identity and thought. The helmet of salvation reassures you of your secure standing in Christ and focuses your thoughts around hope. When you're tempted to despair or to believe lies about your future, the helmet protects your mind.

Wear this helmet by reminding yourself regularly of what salvation means: forgiveness, relationship with Jesus, and a living hope. Memorize promises from Scripture, and practice gratitude to guard your mind.

The Sword of the Spirit — The Word of God

Roman weapons included the gladius (short sword). Paul names the Word of God as the key weapon. Scripture not only defends but also pierces and exposes falsehood. The Word equips you to respond to deception and to proclaim truth.

You use the sword by knowing Scripture well enough to apply it in the moment. Read, meditate, and memorize passages that address your fears and worries. Use Scripture in prayer and conversation to both fight error and bring healing.

Prayer — The Unseen Thread

Although not described as a piece of armour, Paul explicitly includes persistent prayer as integral to the whole strategy. Prayer is the communication and dependence that keeps every piece functioning. Consistent prayer and daily surrender are foundational habits for

believers who want to grow stronger in their walk with God and remain spiritually grounded. It's how you ask for strength, put on the armour, and maintain readiness.

Practice prayer consistently: personal, intercessory, and corporate prayer keep you connected to the One whose power makes the armour effective.

Why Ephesians 6:10-18 still matters today

This passage matters because the spiritual realities Paul addresses here haven't disappeared. Your world has different technology and cultural terms, but the challenges—fear, deceit, spiritual emptiness, moral confusion still persist. The Armour of God gives you an enduring framework for spiritual resilience.

Faith During Uncertainty

When your future feels shaky, the helmet of salvation and shield of faith give mental and spiritual steadiness. Faith gives you courage for the future.

Trusting God in Difficult Seasons

God's power works through your trust in Him. Trials are an opportunity for spiritual growth as you rely on God's provision.

Spiritual Growth

Putting on the armour isn't a one-time act; it's an ongoing formation process. Each piece helps you grow in holiness and maturity. Spiritual growth also deepens as believers learn to walk in step with the Holy Spirit rather than relying only on human strength or self-discipline.

Encouragement from Scripture

Ephesians 6:10–18 helps you remember and practice spiritual disciplines, such as Bible reading and prayer, when life is difficult. Use the armour of God for daily struggles such as fear, temptation, discouragement, confusion, and relational conflict. These are the very areas where believers are called to stand firm.

The armour is meant to shape how you respond in ordinary moments:

- Choosing truth instead of reacting emotionally
- Practicing righteousness in small daily decisions
- Choosing peace in conversations and relationships
- Holding onto faith during uncertainty
- Guarding your mind from discouraging thoughts
- Responding with Scripture when lies or temptation arise

Understanding this helps you see that spiritual growth is not only for “big battles,” but for daily living. The Armor of God becomes most powerful when it is consistently applied in small, ordinary moments.

How to Apply This Verse in Your Life

1. Reflect on God’s Word Daily

Make Scripture a daily habit. Even short readings can recalibrate your thoughts and strengthen your spiritual reflexes. As you read, ask what truth you need today and which piece of the armour is most relevant.

2. Pray for Wisdom and Guidance

Pray intentionally for the strength to put on each piece. Ask God to reveal lies you believe, to cultivate righteousness in your heart, and to deepen your faith. Prayer also aligns you with God’s will so you don’t try to fight in your own strength.

3. Trust God Even When Life Feels Uncertain

Faith is a muscle you build by exercising it. Step out in small acts of trust—speak kind truth to someone, give generously, forgive—and watch how your confidence in God grows. Those acts are the active raising of your shield.

Trust doesn’t remove trials, but it changes how you face them: with courage rooted in God, not in yourself.

4. Live Out Your Faith Through Action

Obedience is the visible result of wearing the armour. Help a neighbour, stand for fairness at work, choose honesty when it’s costly. These actions embody the breastplate of righteousness and the shoes of peace. Your life becomes a testimony to the Gospel’s power.

Actions aren’t a way to earn God’s favour; they’re the natural outworking of a heart transformed by grace.

Bible Verses Related to This Passage

Here are supporting Scriptures that connect to the imagery and themes of Ephesians 6:10–18 and help you deepen your understanding.

Proverbs 3:5–6 — These verses call you to trust the Lord with all your heart, which aligns with the shield of faith and the belt of truth, directing your paths by God’s wisdom rather than your own.

Romans 8:28 — This promise that God works all things for your good reflects the helmet of salvation which encourages you to stand firm in hope during suffering.

Hebrews 11:1 — Faith’s definition is assurance of things hoped for. The shield of faith helps us to stand against the enemy’s attacks.

Psalms 37:5 — Committing your way to the Lord links to the readiness of the gospel and living righteously, trusting God’s direction rather than trying to work out your own way of moving forward.

**“Put on all of God’s armor.
Then you can stand strong
when things are hard.”**



Activities

1. Make a chart 6 columns across. At the top of each column, write headings of the six pieces of armour, and also include a drawing. In each column write a summary of, a) what the piece of armour represents and b) how we can apply the piece of armour to our life as Christians.

God is Truth

Study 1: Is Jesus God?

Throughout scripture, various passages underscore the belief that Jesus is God. The Gospel of John opens with an explicit statement of Jesus' divine nature; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). This verse sets the framework for understanding Jesus as not only with God but as God himself.

Jesus stated, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9), indicating a profound unity between him and God. The use of "I AM" throughout the Gospels (e.g., John 8:58) parallels the divine self-revelation found in Exodus (3:14), connecting Jesus further to God's eternal nature.

Additionally, the Apostle Paul supports this doctrine, declaring in Colossians 2:9, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." Such affirmations contribute to the understanding that Jesus' earthly presence encompasses the fullness of God's nature, inviting believers into deeper faith.

<https://biblestudyforyou.com/reasons-jesus-is-god/>

A closer look at what the Bible says about the divine nature of Jesus:

John 1:14: *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

The Word, the logos, the all-sustaining principle, dwelt among us. This verse captures the idea of the Incarnation, meaning that Jesus came down to earth to live with us.

John 10:30: *"I and the Father are one."*

Jesus makes it clear. In fact, on multiple occasions, he faces near-death because of it. People attempt to stone him when he makes a deity claim. In fact, it's the very reason why he dies on a cross. The religious leaders knew exactly what he was claiming and they didn't like it.

Isaiah 9:6: *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

Isaiah prophecies about the coming Christ. Jesus fulfills this prophecy when he is born in Bethlehem. Jesus fulfills more than 300 Old Testament prophecies when he comes to earth. And only one being can deserve the title Mighty God and Everlasting Father. Isaiah makes it clear, and people in Jesus' time would've known this passage. Christ is God.

1 Corinthians 8:6: *"Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."*

Jesus isn't just a moral teacher. He claimed deity multiple times. As C.S. Lewis famously put it, this would either make him out to be a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. Because Jesus fulfilled what he promised to do, (resurrect from the dead and offer salvation), we know that he is then Lord.

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/god-is-jesus-11651878.html>

A closer look at John 1:1

How does John identify Jesus as the divine Son who became human? He does so by his use of "Word" and "God." John is the only biblical author to identify Christ by the title, "Word." To establish its meaning, we need to locate it within the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, "Word" is closely associated with the God who creates, reveals, and redeems—all by his Word (Gen 1:3–31, Genesis 3:8–19 Genesis 12:1; Psalm 33:6,9; Psalm 119:9, 25; Isaiah 55:11)

By the use of this title, John identifies Jesus, the Son, with God. Also, by John's use of "God," he not only closely identifies the Word with God, he also teaches that the Word is God, yet simultaneously distinct from God the Father.

The opening line of John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word" teaches that the Word is eternal. Therefore, Jesus as the Son is eternal.

The second line, "the Word was with God", affirms that although the Word is eternal, he is also distinct from God the Father. Therefore, Father and Son are eternal.

The last line, "the Word was God", affirms that the Word shares the full deity of God. Since there is only one God. This means that within God, there is a Father-Son relationship that shares the one divine nature.

The Trinity

Scripture also teaches that there are three persons who fully and equally share the one divine nature: Father, Son, and Spirit. These three persons are the one God, although they are distinguished by their eternal personal relations (Matt 28:18–20; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 4:4–6).

Thus, the Father is not the Son since the Son is from the Father (John 1:1; 5:26), while the Spirit is not the Father or the Son, but from the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 15:26).

To say that Jesus is God, the divine Son, then, is to affirm that he is the Second Person of the Trinity.

Incarnation

This means that Jesus was God in human form.

John teaches that the eternal Son became truly human: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (John 1:14)

As the divine Son, he remains in relation to the Father and the Holy Spirit, fully and equally sharing the divine nature (John 1:10). But while on earth, the Son took on a human nature so that we could be saved. In that human nature, the Son could live and experience a fully human life, yet without any change to his divine nature (John 1:14,18) and accomplishing his mission to save.

<https://www.logos.com/grow/is-jesus-god/>

Six reason that affirm Jesus is God

1. Jesus claimed to be God.

John 10:30 "I and the Father are one."

Read John 10:30 - 33

2. Jesus demonstrated that creation obeyed Him.

Read Mark 4:39-41 and Colossians 1:16-17

3. Jesus accepted worship.

Read John 20:28-29

4. The disciples acknowledged His divinity.

Read 1 John 2:22-23

5. Jesus is all-powerful.

Read Matthew 28:18

6. Jesus will judge.

Read John 5:22

So what does this mean for us?

In essence, it means that since Jesus is God, we should honour Him as God. Our lives should be lived in joyful obedience and submission to Him. Our greatest delight should be to honour His name. Our greatest joy, hope, and satisfaction should be found in Him.

We should also find great comfort in this truth. Our all-powerful, all-knowing, Savior promises to remain with us always. He is guiding and guarding our lives and will hold us securely in His presence for all eternity.

John Stange, 2025

<https://www.biblestudyheadquarters.com/blog/why-do-christians-believe-jesus-is-god>

Activities

1. Find the parallel mention in paragraph 1 between the “I AM” in the Old Testament and in the Gospel of John. Explain the parallel. (John 8:58 and Exodus 3:14).
2. Famous author C.S. Lewis said that because Jesus claimed deity (to be God), multiple times, this would either make him out to be a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. Explain what C.S. Lewis meant by this. Why couldn’t Jesus have been a liar or a lunatic and why was He definitely Lord?
3. Write out John 1:1 and explain what the three parts of this versed mean.
4. How would you explain the Trinity?
5. Some people say that Jesus was not God while on earth – only human. Give reason as to why this could not be so.
6. Write the 6 reasons that affirm Jesus is God as headings. Under the heading for each reason, put into your own words how the listed Bible verse (or verses) support the reason.

Study 2: Ten Key Biblical Truths

1. The Creation week was a period of six ordinary 24-hour days. (If Genesis is not true, then why is the rest of the Bible true?)
2. Man was made in the image of God. Man is not just the products of random chemical reactions over millions of years. Therefore, man is not just an animal; human life has value.
3. God created a perfect world where there was no death. Man’s sin brought death and corrupted this perfect world. The Fall of mankind explains death and suffering in the world and the need for a Saviour. Satan is a true spiritual force of evil now present in the world.
4. The Great Flood accounts for most of the rock layers that contain fossils. The Great Flood shows that God judges sin, but Gd also gives us a means of Salvation. God is a righteous judge but also merciful.
5. The Tower of Babel helps us understand why we speak different languages and why we all look different, even though we are one race, all sinners and all in need of a Saviour.
6. Moses was given the law, (the Ten Commandments), but Jesus came to fulfil the law.

7. God is one God who is triune, (three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and not three separate gods.
8. Christ's death on the cross paid the penalty for our sin and offers the free gift of salvation to those who believe in Jesus Christ and the Resurrection. Those who don't believe will be separated from God after their physical death in a place called Hell.
9. Christianity is founded on the Bible, the true word of God and not the words of fallible humans.
10. Christ will return one day. There will be a new heaven and earth, to fulfill what God has promised. Christians look forward to this time when there will be no more death and suffering.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

About the Apostles' Creed

1. A statement of Christian belief that is used by both Catholic and Protestant.

The creed, attributed to the earliest missionary followers of Jesus, is a basic outline of what it means to be a Christian.

The creed is a confession in the truest sense of the word: Christians confess with the creed that these are things they must believe to be saved.

2. Proclamation of the Gospel

The creed is a narrative and tells the gospel story!

Beginning with the one true God—who is self-sufficient and needful of nothing—creating the universe.

It then goes on to detail the incarnation of God in flesh, giving us the historical detail of Christ's birth and life and death.

Then it moves on to the next plot point in the grand tale of redemption: the resurrection; then the ascension.

And this is why the Holy Spirit, who is the third person of the triune Godhead, doesn't appear until the latter portion of the creed. Confession of the Spirit coincides narratively with the sending of the Spirit at Pentecost after the ascension of Christ. The Spirit empowers the gospel of Christ then to build the church, unite the saints in their spirits, and save the lost.

Finally, the creed ends with the new beginning when the dead in Christ are raised incorruptible and the Lord's return ushers in the eternal joy of the new heavens and the new earth. This is what "the life everlasting" corresponds to – Jesus' renewing all things, not simply our receiving a ticket to heaven when we die.

3. God the Father Meaning

"I believe," the Creed says, not in *some* gods (or multiple gods) or in *a* god (as if God is some vague, unknowable higher power we hope exists). "I believe in God." God is the one true God.

We are not "the maker of heaven and earth." God is. Heaven and earth didn't just appear in a magical moment all by itself. Heaven and earth didn't always exist; they didn't just develop by chance. They were made by God. That's part of what makes him God – He's the maker of everything.

God is a Person, but he's not a mortal or created person. God is spirit, so he is a perfect, eternal, spiritual Person. He is personal; he has a personality. God is not a "life force" or some impersonal mystical vibe floating around outer space. He thinks things and says things.

He relates to his creation. He takes joy, he is jealous, he is love, he is just, he has anger and wrath, he has grace and mercy.

The Creed gives us tremendous insight into the personal way our God relates to us. We believe in God, the Father. When Jesus began teaching his disciples how to relate to God, he referred to God with the word “abba,” or “father.” More literally, “abba” is like our words “dad” or “daddy.” The concept of God as Father wasn’t new to the people of Jesus’ day, but it certainly wasn’t the main way people referred to God. But Jesus came to show us what the one true God is like: a loving father to dependent children.

God as Father shows us that He consists of fatherly love, mercy, and patience. But the Creed reminds us that this God while being Father, is still God. He is “the Father Almighty.”

Biblical Attributes of God outlined in the Apostles’ Creed

1. Omnipotence. God is all-powerful. God is eternal, and there is nothing impossible for him. (Jeremiah 32:17)

2. Omnipresence. God is all-present. Because God is sovereign and spirit, he literally sees everything at once and is everywhere at once. (Jeremiah 23:23, 1 Kings 1:27, and Psalm 139:1)

3. Omniscience. Because God is all-powerful and all-present, he is all-knowing. (Psalm 147:5, Proverbs 15:3, and Hebrews 4:13)

4. Sovereignty. God is truly all-mighty, and therefore he is in control. God cannot be defeated by anyone or anything, because he is God. (Proverbs 16:9, Exodus 4:11, Psalm 115:3)

5. Holiness. God is utterly perfect, and utterly just. (Revelation 4:8)

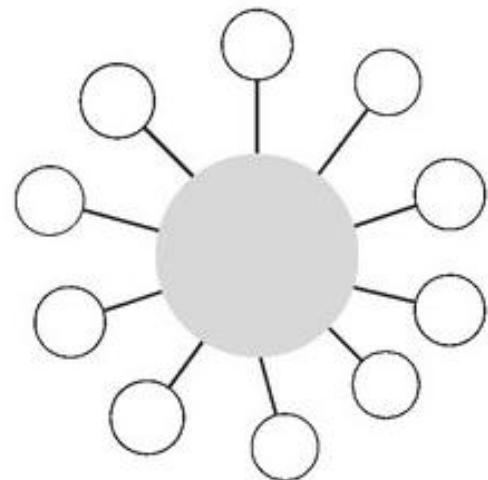
<https://www.christianity.com/church/the-apostles-creed-part-one-introduction.html#origin>

Activities

1. On a large sheet of paper, create a mind map. In the centre, write: 10 Key Biblical Truths

In each of the 10 arms, write a Biblical truth shown on the previous page, but summarized in ‘nutshell’, meaning, summarized in less than 5 words.

2. Compare the 10 key Biblical Truths with the Apostles Creed. Make a list, (or a table) to show the truths common to both.



Study 3: Cults and false religions

What is a cult?

There are many varied views on what a cult really is from the world's perspective, and then there is what is truly a cult in the eyes of a Holy God according to the Scriptures.

A cult is a closed group of people in total submission to an authoritarian leader who supposedly is the exclusive source of secret spiritual knowledge. The leader is accountable to no one. Fear is used to maintain control and exact physical and/or monetary advantage from the followers.

Most cults believe their way is the only way to heaven. Others do not even believe in heaven. Some do not believe in hell, Satan, or the Bible. Some do not believe people sin. Some proclaim that everyone is a god, while others trust that man-made idols are gods. Some adhere to reincarnation, others to annihilation. Many teach you can earn your way into heaven. The list goes on and on.

Many cults use the Bible and Bible terminology. On the surface they may sound very biblical to those not well-grounded in the Scriptures or not well-informed of the cult's doctrine. They skilfully combine biblical truth mixed with error and falsehood, leading many astray. People often get involved in these not realizing their true doctrine.

Biblically, a cult may be defined as those that have added to, changed, or eliminated those things that are considered the fundamentals of Bible doctrine. This would include those that follow another God, another Jesus, another Gospel, or another way of salvation. This could include those that do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, or do not believe there is ONE GOD.) The ONE GOD is manifested in three, eternally existing Persons: God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, (see Mt 28:19; 1 Jn 5:7.)

1 Corinthians 8:6 Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

Ephesians 4:6 ... one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The bigger a cult is, the more credibility it seems to have in this sinful world.

2. What is the biblical definition of a cult?

Biblically a cult may be defined as those that have changed, left out, or added to the fundamentals of Bible doctrine.

Those that do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh are not of God.

1 John 4:2-3 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not

acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

2 John 1:7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

All true, born-again Christians that have understanding should agree that a biblical definition of a cult is any movement, philosophy, group, church, or denomination that does not believe the following:

1. that all 66 books of the Bible are the inspired Word of God, and is for today, (see 2 Tim 3:16; Mt 4:4; 2 Pe 1:21), or does not believe
2. that God is from everlasting to everlasting, (see Ps 90:2), or does not believe in
3. the Trinity. There is ONE GOD, who is manifested in three, eternally existing Persons: God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit
4. that by Jesus Christ were all things created, and He is before all things, (see Col 1:16,17), or does not believe in
5. the deity of Jesus Christ, (that He is God)
6. and that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, or does not believe in
7. the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, or
8. the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,
9. and that He now sits on the right hand of God the Father, or
10. does not teach that we are saved only by faith in Jesus Christ, or
11. any that teach that a person is saved by works or works and faith, certainly is a cult, and
12. any that do not believe that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (see Ro 3:23), and

4. Typical characteristics of a cult

A cult is a closed group of people in total submission to an authoritarian leader who supposedly is the exclusive source of secret spiritual knowledge. The leader is accountable to no one. Fear is used to maintain control and often use the followers for monetary advantage.

Cults that are a corrupted form of Christianity claim that only *their* members will make it to heaven. They believe they are the only ones with the truth and all other expressions of Christianity are wrong.

Followers are spiritually bound to the cult and find it difficult to leave. There are often severe consequences if they do leave.

What they teach could be 90% true and 10% lies.

3. The cults and deceivers appear to be teachers of God

There is an abundance of Scripture regarding false teachers, false prophets, cults, etc. The Scriptures show clearly how skilful these can be.

Matt 7:15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

Those that follow their false teachings *are not aware of them*. Those that follow these false teachers are deceived and don't know it.

2 Cor 11:13-15 For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

Cult leaders are false apostles, deceitful workers. they even go so far as to transform themselves into the apostles of Christ. but this should be no surprise.

Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. The cults, the false teachers, prophets, and religions look like the real thing. They appear to be ministers of righteousness. They may seem very loving and knowledgeable in the Bible or "another Gospel." They may give large sums of money to the poor and do wonderful works. Yet they are still ministers of confusion and deceit.

Beware of false teachers

Luke 6:39 Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch? If the unsaved (the blind) lead the unsaved (the blind), both shall fall into the ditch (or perish).

The Bible is very clear that a born-again Christian is not to partake of and be involved in cults or with blind leaders of the blind.

Once again, we are instructed and warned:

2 John 1:9-11 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or

Satan is called the father of lies, the inventor of cult doctrines, and his role is trying to deceive people to think God's Word does not mean what it, (see Gen 3:1-7, John 8:44).

Many of the Pharisees, Sadducees, lawyers, and scribes in the days of Jesus were deceived teachers.

2 Tim 3:5 speaks of a type of cult that appears godly but is not:

... having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

Test the spirits

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try (or test) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

https://bibledesk.com/Documents/Church_Desk/Cults.htm#2

How to find the Truth

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Truth:

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

The Bible also tells us that if we want to find truth we must search for it with all our heart.

Key Verses on Seeking Truth

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." This verse encourages reliance on God for guidance in our search for truth.

John 8:32: "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." This passage highlights the liberating power of truth in our lives.

John 8:32: "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Matthew 7:7-8 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Activities

1. What is a cult? (Summarize in one paragraph.)
2. In dot points, make a list of biblical truths that cults DO NOT adhere to.
3. What are some characteristics of false teachers?
4. How does Satan manage to deceive people so successfully?
5. What are some typical characteristics of a cult?

God is Lord and King

Studies on the birth of Christ

Study 1: Luke 1:1-25 – Zechariah and Elizabeth

In this gospel, Luke explains the life and ministry of Jesus to “Theophilus”, a name that means “lover of God” or “beloved by God”.

1. Read Luke 1:1-4 – What are Luke’s purposes in writing this gospel?
2. 1:5 – At what time in history does the gospel open? How specific is Luke about this? Are these fictional characters or real characters?
3. 1:6-7 – What was the problem for Zechariah and Elizabeth? Was it their fault? What does this tell us about some of our own life problems?
4. 1:8-12 – How did God answer their prayers?
5. 1:13-17 – What would John the Baptist be like? How was he going to be very different from other people?

Also see Matthew 11:7-19 for what Jesus says about John the Baptist.

6. Do you believe that God sets some people aside from birth for special ministry purposes? How was John the Baptist filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother’s womb?
7. 1:16-17 – What was the life mission of John the Baptist?
8. 1:18-22 – What happened to Zechariah and why did it happen?
9. 1:23-25 – What happened to Elizabeth and what was her reaction?

Study 2: Luke 1:26-56 – The angel comes to Mary

Luke gives a detailed account of the Virgin Birth. Luke was said to be quite close to Mary (along with John) and this account has quite a few details (e.g. her time with Elizabeth her older cousin).

1. 1:26-27 – Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel. What are some of the roles of angels in Scripture that you can remember? How were they involved with the birth of Samson?
2. 1:27-28 – Of what lineage was Joseph? Do you think that Joseph knew that the Messiah would be one of his relatives?

3. 1:28-33 – What was the term that Gabriel used to describe Mary? What form was God's divine favour going to take in her life?
4. 1:34-38 – What was Mary's question and what was Gabriel's response? How does this illumine our understanding of the gospel?
5. 1:37 – Why is nothing impossible with God?
6. 1:39-45 – What was Elizabeth's reaction? How is this significant for us?
7. 1:46-55 – Mary's praise song is now known as the Magnificat from the words "my soul magnifies the Lord.." what are some of the themes and characteristics of this praise anthem? Does it sound like anything we would sing in church today?
8. 1:57 – How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth? Probably until John the Baptist was born. Why do you think Luke includes this point?
9. Submission and obedience to the Lord's sovereign will is an important theme here. How does it apply to us in the 21st century?

Study 3: Luke 1:57-80 - Birth of John the Baptist

John the Baptist is an incredibly important figure as the prophet who was the precursor to the Messiah. See also Malachi 3:1-3, 4:5-6 and Matthew 11:7-14

1. 1:57-58 – What happens to Elizabeth? How is she regarded by her neighbours as a result?
2. 1:59-64 – What happened during the eight-day circumcision and naming ceremony?
3. 1:65-66 – What reaction did these signs and portents create in the hill country of Judea?
4. 1:67 – Here we find Zacharias prophesying, even though he did not have the office of "prophet". See also Numbers 11:25-26, 1 Samuel 10:10-11. What is the difference between one-time prophesying and the office of prophet?
5. 1:68-70 – Why is Zacharias praising God? What is his view of Scripture and of God?
6. 1:71-73 – What is the oath sworn to Abraham? (Genesis 22:15-18) Why was it important to the Jews? How does it now apply to us? (Galatians 3:14-16, 29)
7. 1:74-75 – What is the Christian life supposed to be like? How are we to serve God?
8. 1:76-77 – What was the earthly mission of John the Baptist? See Luke 3:1-5
9. 1:78-79 – What was the mission of Jesus? See Isaiah 9:1-7, Matthew 4:13-17
10. 1:80 – What was the lifestyle of John the Baptist? Matthew 3:1-4

Study 4: Luke 2:1-20 - Birth of Jesus; The Shepherds

How important is it that this event had witnesses? Why is historicity important?

1. 2:1-3 – What year was this approximately? How does Luke give the timing?
2. 2:4 – How can even the acts of government officials ensure that prophecy is quietly fulfilled? (see Micah 5:2)
3. 2:5-7 – Couldn't God have arranged better accommodation for the Messiah? Then why didn't He? Why do the ways of the Lord sometimes seem very strange to us? (Isaiah 55:8-9)
4. 2:8-12 – What was the sign that the angels told the shepherds about?
5. 2:10-14 – Summarize the good news that the angels brought. Why is it still good news today?
6. 2:15 – Where did the angels go? Why is this important? What does it tell us about the relationship between Heaven and earth?
7. 2:16-20 – What did the shepherds do? How did people react to what the shepherds told them? How were they "good witnesses"?
8. 2:19 – How did Mary react? How can we treasure up spiritual moments in our heart? What happens when we just let them slide away?
9. How can ordinary people get involved in God's supernatural ways?

Study 5: Luke 2:21-40 - The Circumcision of Jesus; Jesus as a baby In the Temple

In this section of Luke, we see Jesus fulfilling the Law and the Prophets even at the age of eight days. Bethlehem was about 7 miles from the Temple, or an easy morning's walk.

1. 2:21 – What routinely happened on the eighth day (Genesis 17:12, Leviticus 12:3) ? Why was He called Jesus (Matthew 1:21) What does this say about the piety and obedience of the Holy Family?
2. 2:22 – First read Leviticus 12:2-6. What are the "days of her purification"? What is the minimum time they would have stayed in Bethlehem?
3. 2:23-24 – According to Leviticus they were to bring: a) a lamb, b) two turtledoves or pigeons. Where is the Lamb?
4. 2:25 – Simeon the Just – may have been a well-known Jewish figure "the last of the great men of the synagogue". Some have him as one of the seventy translators of the Septuagint (Greek Bible), or even as the son of Hillel and the father of Gamaliel. He was devout and the

Holy Spirit was on him – which means he had a holy life. What was the purpose of Simeon's life? How does it contrast with the purposes of many other lives?

5. 2:26-27 – How did the Holy Spirit guide Simeon?

6. 2:28-33 – How did Simeon know this Child was the messiah? What did he say about Jesus?

7. 2:34-35 – What would be the downside to being the mother of this extraordinary Child?

8. 2:36-37 – Anna is the same name as Hannah and means the grace of God. Phanuel means "the face of God". She was a prophetess and may have been well over 100 years old. What was Anna's lifestyle?

9. 2:38 – What was Anna's spiritual reaction to Jesus? Note the reaction to Jesus of: John the Baptist, Elizabeth, Simeon reaction and Anna. How do Spirit-filled people see life differently?

Study 6: Matthew 2:1-8 The Magi visit the Messiah

Where was Jesus born?

Why is it specified as "of Judea"?

Where is "Judea" (Matthew 2:1)?

How large was this town?

Why was the town where Jesus will be born named as such?

Who were the "wise men from the east" (Matthew 2:1)?

Who is "Herod the king" (Matthew 2:3)?

Who is "the prophet" (Matthew 2:5)?

Who were the "wise men"?

Were there three wise men?

Didn't the wise men present three "gifts" (Matthew 2:11)?

Why did Herod call the wise men "secretly"?

Did the wise men believe Herod's words at face value?

What should the wise men have realised?

How wise were these men?

Then why are they called "wise men"?

Study 7: Matthew 2:9-12 - The star

Had the star been leading them toward Bethlehem for two years?

What exactly was this star that “came and stood over where the young child was” (Matthew 2:10)?

What other evidence is there that this “star” wasn’t a typical star?

How can the Creator of the universe make what appears to be a star move across the sky from north to south and use such a star to tell the wise men that the King of the Jews had been born?

What gifts did the wise men present to Jesus?

Gold is a precious metal, but what are the other two?

Why did they bring these three as gifts to Jesus?

How long after Jesus’ birth did the wise men visit Him?

Who was “Herod”?

Did the Jews accept Herod as their king?

Study 8: Matthew 2:13-21 – Escape to Egypt

When did Joseph, Mary and Jesus “flee to Egypt” (Matthew 2:13)?

Why did they leave in such haste?

Who is the “prophet” (Matthew 2:15)?

Why were boys “two years old and under” (Matthew 2:16) slaughtered?

How many innocent boys did Herod slaughter?

Who was “Rachel” (Matthew 2:18)?

Where is “Ramah” (Matthew 2:18)?

How was the prophecy of Jeremiah fulfilled?

How did Joseph, Mary and Jesus manage in Egypt?

In what year did Joseph, Mary and Jesus return to Israel?

Who was “Archelaus” (Matthew 2:22)?

Why was Joseph “afraid to go” where “Archelaus was reigning” (Matthew 2:22)?

Which province does Joseph appear to have considered their home?

Study 9: Luke 2:41-52 – The boy Jesus

This study covers the childhood of Jesus and His first visit to the Temple at the time of His Bar-Mitzvah when Jesus becomes a “son of the Law” and is expected to obey the Torah on His own. It was at twelve years old that Jewish boys came personally under the obligations of the law of Moses. Up to that age they had been treated as children, taught by their parents at home, but not yet expected to obey the harder precepts, such as fasting, or attending at Jerusalem at the three great feasts of the year. But at twelve years old they were called "Sons of the Law" or "Sons of the Precept;" and this signified that they now entered upon the second stage of life, and were no longer mere children. Henceforth they were old enough to have knowledge of their own, and to obey for themselves.

1. Read Luke 2:41-42 – What does this tell us about the lifestyle and customs of Joseph and Mary?

2. Luke 2:43-45 – Why did Jesus’ parents lose track of Him?

3. Luke 2:46-47 – What was Jesus doing? Why were people astonished? What did this indicate?

4. How does God give supernatural levels of Wisdom to those who walk closely with Him?

See Isaiah 11:2, 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, James 1:5-8, 3:17,18 and 1 John 2:20,27

5. Luke 2: 48-50 How did Jesus’ parents respond? What was Jesus’ reply? What was the real meaning of His reply?

6. Luke 2:51-52 – Where did they go back to? Often with God’s heroes as soon as they show promise they are just “sent back” to resume normal living as if nothing had happened. Why do you think God does this?

7. Why didn’t Jesus start teaching right away since He was obviously smarter than the scholars?

8. Luke 2:52 – How does this verse summarize the various aspects of our process of maturity?