

Diary Devotions

Year 10

Term 3

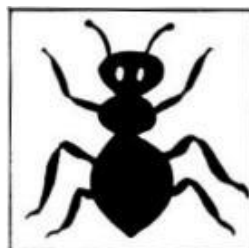
Studies on the character and nature of God

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CREATOR

From the rising of the sun, to its setting, His name is to be praised.



WISE

The wisdom of the ant: Proverbs 6



SERVANT

Servant animals in the creation

God is Creator Week 4

God is Joy

What is joy?

Most people define joy as a feeling of happiness when you are smiling and laughing a lot. Some think that happiness comes from “good happenings.” Good happenings mean everything is going your way, turning out right. Some think it’s when you have lots of money and are healthy and are very successful in work or school.

But what happens if things are not so good? Perhaps your family is stressed financially, or you may be struggling in work or school. Maybe your relationships are not going well, or someone close to you is very sick. Can you really have joy then?

In the Bible, joy is a deep inner gladness regardless of circumstances going on around you. That means whether you are rich or poor, sick or healthy, successful or struggling, you can still have a feeling of gladness or pleasure deep down inside. Now, you may not feel like smiling on the outside, but you can still smile on the inside. Have you ever felt that way? This kind of joy is supernatural. It is part of the character of God and comes to us only from a relationship with Him through knowing Jesus Christ.

Joy is expressed in the Creation.

The Bible also teaches that God finds great pleasure in His creation. At the end of each of the creation days, God said it was good. After day 6, He said it was very good.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

God wasn’t only giving His approval but was also revealing His pleasure. The Father God has joy in what His hands have made, especially His creatures. That includes you. You are one of His creatures.

God gives us joy.

Joy is something that God has. But, it’s also something that God gives. He is the source of joy. Jesus, who was God, had God’s joy in Him. And, He promised to give His joy to His disciples so that it would be in them, also. Jesus didn’t promise this to just those who knew Him when He was on earth. This joy is for us too.

The joy of the Lord is God’s joy. He has it, and when He gives it to His people, it makes them strong. God’s joy in us gives us the courage to face tough times. God’s joy finds great pleasure in His creation and His creatures, especially people who trust in Him. His joy in us makes us strong.

Questions and activities

1. Describe the joy that God gives.
2. Choose three living things from the Creation – plants or animals – that give you joy. Explain why they give you joy.

God is Creator Week 5

God is Joy

God is joyful when people return to him and find salvation.

In the story of the Prodigal Son, Jesus taught us that our Father God was like the father of the prodigal son when he returned home. The father acted with joy. He was happy to see his son, filled with love, running toward him, hugging and kissing him. He called for a great celebration. That's joy.

Read Luke 15:1-7. Who is rejoicing and when?

Read Luke 15:8-10. Who is rejoicing and when?

God has joy whenever anyone comes to Him to have his or her sins forgiven. The Bible describes lots of rejoicing in heaven at that time, (Luke 15:7 & 10).

God wants us to express joy in praising him. Read Psalm 95:1-5

Having God's joy in us, we should delight in the things that God delights in. We can ask ourselves: "what pleases God, what gives Him joy?"

When you have His joy, then you should take pleasure or delight in those same things. When you have the joy of the Lord, you rejoice in justice. You find pleasure in God and knowing Him, not in personal and selfish pleasures. You also find delight in studying His Word the Bible, in doing what pleases Him, and in praising God.

Living for God gives us joy.

Some people think that when you are a Christian, you give up anything that gives you pleasure. That is not what the Bible says. It is not wrong for a Christian to have pleasure or to seek pleasure; it is only wrong to seek pleasure in the things that are selfish or against God's values. We can have joy, even in difficult times when we trust in God.

Read Acts 16:23-26 Paul and Silas sang praises in jail. They were joyful in a difficult situation, because they trusted God.

Nehemiah 8:10 The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Gal. 5:22 The fruit of the spirit is love JOY and peace. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit.

Phil. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, rejoice!

John 15:10-11 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Questions and Activities

1. In Luke 15:10-11. What does Jesus want for those who trust in Him?
2. In Nehemiah 8:10. What does God's joy do for us?
3. What is one thing that gives God great joy? See Luke 15:7

God is Wise Week 1

God is a Lawgiver. His laws are wise.

Isaiah 33:22 For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; it is he who will save us.

The three titles given here to God, (judge, lawgiver and king), describe the three roles of God's government.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

It is the responsibility of a government of a country to make wise laws. Not all governments make the wisest of laws, but God's laws are perfect. He has given them to us in the Bible.

Psalms 19:7-8 The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the Lord are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are clear, giving insight for living.

The Hebrew word for "lawgiver" means one who carves or engraves. Imagine a Hebrew scribe of the Old Testament with a mallet and chisel in hand carving words into stone or clay tablets. We read in at least 10 different places in the Bible that God himself inscribed the tablets handed to Moses on Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments:

Exodus 31:18 When the Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the covenant law, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God.

Jeremiah 31:33 God says "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

God gave us a new law, (a new covenant) in the New Testament:

Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Romans 13:10 Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Galatians 5:14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Questions and Activities

1. Explain God's role as a judge. Who and what does he judge?
2. How did God give the law to Moses?
3. What is the new covenant?

God is Wise Week 2

God is a Lawgiver. His laws are wise.

The laws given by God to Moses were specifically for the people of Israel but these laws also teach God's will and give principles that apply to all people. They also give us glimpses into the eternal nature of God, what he values, how he acts, what he knows to be right and wrong.

The Jewish "Torah" is the first five books of our Bible. Scripture makes clear that the Old Testament Law was something to be obeyed, revered and treasured

Psalms 1:2 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.

Psalms 119:18 & 72 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

Paul tells us that the law is holy, righteous and good

Romans 7:12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

While the Old Testament law was given by God and to be valued, it was never intended to be a way of salvation. The law actually shows that none of us could ever fully keep its requirements, and the only way to be right with God is through Jesus our Saviour.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Galatians 2:16 know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in[a] Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

Questions and Activities

1. How did people of the Old Testament receive salvation?
2. When Jesus came to earth, how did he change this?

God is Wise Week 3

God is a Lawgiver. His laws are wise.

The law was peoples' guardian until Christ came; it protected them until they could be made right with God through faith.

Galatians 3:24-25 And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian.

The Old Testament law and prophets pointed to Jesus:

Jeremiah 31:33-34 "But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day," says the Lord. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the Lord.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already," says the Lord. "And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins."

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you[a] a sign: The virgin[b] will conceive and give birth to a son, and[c] will call him Immanuel.[d]

Isaiah prophesies a future time when there will be no more war and people from many nations will stream to God's temple saying,

Isaiah 2:3 "Come, let us go ... to the house of Jacob's God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For the Lord's teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem

These prophecies are confirmed in the New Testament:

Luke 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

John 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Hebrews 10:1 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

Questions and activities

1. Describe the event of Moses receiving 10 Commandments for Moses.
2. Does our salvation through Christ mean that the 10 Commandments are no longer relevant? Explain.

God is Wise Week 4

God is a Lawgiver. His laws are wise.

Psalm 119:72 Your instructions are more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver.

Psalm 1:1-3 Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Galatians 3:11 Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because "the righteous will live by faith.

Acts 13:38-39 Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.

Psalm 119:11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Questions and activities

Write a response to "God is a Law Giver":

- a) What is the role of obedience?
- b) How do we know what displeases God?
- c) Why is it important to know what the Bible says? Psalm 119:11

God is a Servant Week 1

God Our Healer

God can heal the body, mind, will, emotions, spirit. His desire is to restore wholeness to His creation. This includes both man and the created world, (Romans 8:19-22).

There are many miracles of healing in the New Testament. For example,

The man born blind, (John 9)

The woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment, (Mark 5)

The man who was lowered through the roof to reach Jesus, (Mark 2)

The healing of the sick servant, (Luke 7)

Jesus was motivated by compassion as he healed, noticing those in need:

Matt.20:34 When two blind men follow calling out for healing ... Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

Matthew 14:14 Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Mark 1:40-42 A man with leprosy begged "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean," he said. Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!" Instantly the leprosy disappeared, and the man was healed. ()

Luke 13:12-13 When Jesus saw her [crippled woman], he called her over and said, "Dear woman, you are healed of your sickness!" Then he touched her, and instantly she could stand straight.

Matthew 15:30 A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn't speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all.

Luke 4:18-19 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come. (from Isaiah 61:1-2)

Questions and Activities

1. Choose one of Jesus' healing miracles from the New Testament. Who was healed? What condition was the person healed from? Did Jesus speak to the person? If so, what did he say? What miracle took place? How did this happen?
2. Give an example of a miracle that shows that Jesus had compassion on the person that he healed. What does compassion mean?

God is a Servant Week 2

God Our Healer

Pain, sickness and death are a consequence of the fall.

Read about the Fall in Genesis 2:16-17 and Genesis 3:16-19.

These were never a part of God's original plan, but because of sin, the original perfect creation is no longer perfect.

Rom 8:20 "all creation was subjected to God's curse".

But to counter the consequences of our sin, God carried out a plan to save us. This plan was to send his son to live on earth, to die, but be raised to life again. His righteous sacrifice broke the power of the curse and made a way to restore God's purposes:

Isaiah 53:5 "he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed".

God wants us to be in good health. He declares his intent:

Exodus 23:25-26 "I will take away sickness from among you, and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span".

Exodus 15:26 "I am the LORD who heals you".

Psalms 103:3-4 It is God who "forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies".

Jesus's sacrifice on the cross makes all of this possible. Because of him all people who at one time lived alienated from God can look forward to healing in the present and a future.

Revelation 7:17 "God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever"

Revelation 21:3-4 Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

God's ministry of healing is physical, spiritual, emotional, mental, relational, social. It is seen wherever the consequences of sin – both personal and corporate – are overcome and God's original intent is restored. God not only wants to heal individuals, but also "to heal the nations" (Rev 22:2).

Questions and Activities

1. Why is there sin and suffering in the world?
2. What was God's plan to overcome death?
3. What does Revelation tell us about the end to all pain and sickness?

God is a Servant Week 3

God Our Healer

Forgiveness of sin is linked with healing:

Mark 2:1-12 When the paralytic was lowered through the roof in front of him Jesus looked at the whole man. He saw his need for forgiveness and addressed this before healing him physically.

John 5:2-14 At the pool of Bethesda Jesus healed a man who had been a paralytic for 38 years. Later Jesus says to him: ““Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you”.

These words of Jesus show us that forgiveness and sin are tied together.

James 5:16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

Proverbs 3:7-8 Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.

There are many testimonies of people being healed physically after they confess and repent of sin. For example, bitterness causes stress in the body, releasing toxins that can lead to illness, physical healing has happened when people choose to forgive.

Solomon, writer of Proverbs, knew there was a link between the heart and physical well-being:

Prov 14:30 A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.

Prov 16:24 Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.

Prov 17:22 A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.

Questions and Activities

1. Jesus died for our sins upon the cross. What is the other great gift he has given us through the cross? (Psalm 103:3-4 and Isaiah 53:5).
2. In the case of the paralyzed man who came to Jesus through the roof, what two things did Jesus do for the man? (Mark 2:1-12)
3. Quote a verse from the Bible that shows us that sickness can be a result of a problem in our spirit.

God is a Servant Week 4

God Our Healer

It is clear in the Gospels that not only did Jesus heal, he told his followers to go and heal the sick in his name.

Matthew 10:1 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

Luke 9:2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

John 14:12 I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.

Peter and John were imprisoned for healing a crippled man in Jesus' name. After they were released, they and other believers prayed:

Acts 4:30 -31 ... "Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus." After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed. (; also Acts 5:16, 14:9, 28:8)

Acts 8:7 For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed.

Acts 5:16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

Jesus can still heal today:

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

John 14:12 I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.

Psalms 103:2

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

Questions and Activities

1. Give an example of a healing that took place when the disciples prayed in Jesus' name.
2. Who performed this miracle? ... the disciples themselves, or Jesus working through them?
3. Quote a Bible verse that shows that God's healing is not just for Bible times, but also for today.