

Diary Devotions

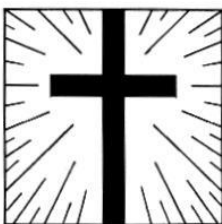
Year 9

Term 2

Studies on the character and nature of God

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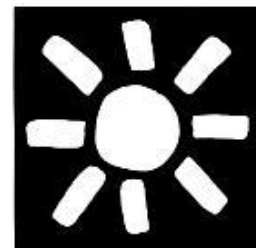
SAVIOUR

God so loved
the world...



PURE & HOLY

Whiter than snow
Psalm 51:7



CREATOR

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

God is our Saviour Week 1

The power of the cross

The greatest act of love in the history of the human race happened about two thousand years ago on a wooden cross. What were the implications of this act of love? How should we respond to such love shown by both Father and Son? What does the cross mean for us today?

Through the cross our relationship with the Father can be restored. God has spoken to us through his son (Hebrews 1:2) and of how Jesus' death on the cross is the perfect sacrifice, once and for all, that enables us to come into God's presence!

Hebrews 9:9 -10:22 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

1 Peter 2:24

He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right.

2 Corinthians 5:15

He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves, instead they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

Philippians 2:8-9

When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all names.

Romans 6:6-7

We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ, we were set free from the power of sin.

Questions and activities

1. What did people of the Old Testament have to do to their sins forgiven?
2. Read the account of the crucifixion and events leading up to it, from one of the four Gospels.

God is our Saviour Week 2

The power of the cross

Prophecies of the cross, the suffering and death of Jesus, were written in the Old Testament scriptures – written hundreds of years prior to it actually happening!

Isaiah 53:5-6

But 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. All of us like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.

Zechariah 12:10: This prophecy speaks of a future time when the people will look upon the one they have pierced. Zechariah 12:10 states, "Then I will pour out on the house of David and on the residents of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on Me, the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son."

Colossians 1:20 God made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

Romans 8:34 Who then will condemn us? No one – for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting at the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

Questions and activities

1. Why was Jesus described as "the perfect sacrifice"?
2. Give an example of an Old Testament reference to the death of Christ.
3. Read Exodus 12 - the Passover lamb. How does the Passover lamb symbolize Jesus' death?

God is our Saviour Week 3

The power of the cross

1 Peter 2:22-24 He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly. He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.

Philippians 2:8-11 Because of Jesus willingness to die for us, God has exalted him to a place of honor. "...he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father".

As followers of Jesus, we are called to walk the way of the cross:

Galatians. 2:20 Paul wrote "My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me."

Matthew 16:24-26 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

Hebrews 12:1b-2

Let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

I passed on to you what was most important and what has been also passed on to me: Christ died for our sins just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.

Galatians 2:20

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Questions and activities

1. What does it mean to be "crucified with Christ"? (Galatians 2:20)
2. What does it mean to 'walk the way of the cross'?

God is Pure and Holy Week 1

In the Old Testament the word “holy” means being set apart, sacred, separate. In the New Testament, to be holy means to be cleansed, purified, free from the guilt of sin, dedicated and consecrated, through Jesus Christ.

When God answers her prayers for a child, in 1 Samuel chapters 1 & 2, Hannah sang, “No one is holy like the Lord! There is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.”

Israel was told not to fear what the nations around them fear, but to ...

Isaiah 8:13 ... He is the one you should fear. He is the one who should make you tremble.

Who will not fear you, Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous deeds have been revealed.” (Rev.15:4)

Isaiah 6:3

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven’s Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!”

1 Samuel 2:2

No one is holy like the Lord! There is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

Isaiah 6: 2-3 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Revelation 4:8 Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.”

Questions and activities

1. What is the meaning of the word ‘holy’ a) in the Old Testament and b) in the New Testament
2. Read Samuel chapters 1 & 2. Why did Hannah give praise to the holy God?
3. Give one Old Testament example of Scripture stating the holiness of God.
4. What does it mean to ‘fear’ God?
5. Read John’s vision in Revelation 4:1-11.
6. What do the angels say about our God? (Revelation 4:8)
7. Read Isaiah 6:1-8. What is the similarity between Isaiah’s vision and John’s vision?

God is Pure and Holy Week 2

God is called the “Holy One” throughout the Bible (over 50 times): For example:

Psalms 71:22 I will praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, my God; I will sing praise to you with the lyre, Holy One of Israel.

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Isaiah 48:17 This is what the Lord says— your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:

“I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.

Exodus 3:5 Moses was told to take his sandals off, a token of respect and submission in Middle Eastern culture, because he was standing on holy ground in the presence of God.

In **Exodus 33:20** God said to Moses, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

After Moses received the Ten Commandments, because they were so special, they were carried around in a special box called the “Ark of the Covenant”. When the Israelites finally settled and build a temple (called a Tabernacle), a special inner court was built where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. This area was called “the holy of holies” and only the high priest could go there. They offered up blood sacrifices of sheep and goats, and ceremonial washings to atone for the sins of the people. But when Jesus came, he became the high priest and there was no need for these practices any more because Jesus covers the sins of all who call upon him.

Hebrews 9:2-5 There were two rooms in that Tabernacle. In the first room were a lampstand, a table, and sacred loaves of bread on the table. This room was called the Holy Place. Then there was a curtain, and behind the curtain was the second room[b] called the Most Holy Place. In that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides. Above the Ark were the cherubim of divine glory, whose wings stretched out over the Ark’s cover, the place of atonement.

Hebrews 9:11-12 So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come.[e] He has entered that greater, more perfect Tabernacle in heaven, which was not made by human hands and is not part of this created world. With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever.

Questions and activities

1. Why do you think that God would not allow anyone to see his face? (Exodus 33:20)
2. Explain the difference between how the Hebrews in Old Testament times had sins forgiven, and how believers in Christ have sins forgiven.

God is Pure and Holy Week 3

God's people are to be holy ... a different people:

Israel was called to be a holy people, different from the nations around - For you are a holy people, who belong to the Lord your God. Of all the people on earth, the Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure.

Deuteronomy.7:6 For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

1 Peter 2:9 For you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession.

1 Peter 1:15,16 But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy."

Colossians 3:12-13

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

The Sabbath day was a separate, different day –

Genesis.2:3 And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

Questions and activities

1. "You must be holy because I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15,16. How can we be holy?
2. How does God want his holy people to act, according to Colossians 3:12-13

God is Pure and Holy Week 4

Part of being holy is hating sin as God does.

The Israelites were warned not to follow the ways of the nations around them, who worshiped false gods:

Deuteronomy 12:31 You must not worship the Lord your God in their way, because in worshiping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the Lord hates. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices to their gods.

Proverbs 6:16-19 There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

Proverbs 9:10 Fear of the Lord is the foundation of wisdom. Knowledge of the Holy One results in good judgment.

Colossians 3:12 We are made holy by Jesus' blood and also become holy as we make right choices. Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Revelation 15:4 Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.

1 Peter 1:14-16 So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy."

Questions and activities

1. We must hate sin but love the sinner. Give an example of how this could be done.
2. Make a table with two columns: list of the things God hates, and the things that please God. (Compare Proverbs 6:16-19 with Colossians 3:12. (You could also add others, e.g. from Galatians 5:22-23).

God is Creator Week 1

The first thing God chooses to tell us about himself is that he is a creator. The Bible begins,

Gen 1:1 “In the beginning God created...”.

Right from the start God wanted us to understand that he is a masterful artist, and a brilliant, original designer.

His great and powerful creativity sustains the universe. “Let every created thing give praise to the LORD, for he issued his command, and they came into being”. (Psalm 148:5)

He is the totally incomparable Creator, always was, always will be, the only God, uncreated, nothing like the ‘gods’ that others make and worship.

To create is to bring something into existence.

Our God is infinitely creative, THE inventor! His imagination and ingenuity are displayed all around us in the incredible variety, complexity, and beauty of the things He has created.

Genesis 1:9-13 God created dry land and vegetation out of nothing. He spoke and it was done.

Psalms 90:2 Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God.

Psalms 95:4-6 He holds in his hands the depths of the earth and the mightiest mountains. The sea belongs to him, for he made it. His hands formed the dry land, too. Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

Psalms 104:24-25 O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures. Here is the ocean, vast and wide, teeming with life of every kind, both large and small.

Jeremiah 32:17-19 O Sovereign Lord! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you! You show unfailing love to thousands, but you also bring the consequences of one generation’s sin upon the next. You are the great and powerful God, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies. You have all wisdom and do great and mighty miracles. You see the conduct of all people, and you give them what they deserve.

Questions and activities

1. What does ‘create’ mean?
2. What is the difference between the God of the Bible and gods of other faiths?
3. Read Genesis chapter 1 and list the days of creation in order.

God is Creator Week 2

In Matthew 14:13-21 we see that Jesus, the son of God, has the same power as His Father to make something out of nothing. He fed 5,000, then 4,000 people with very small supplies of food.

The Old Testament describes the power of God as a creator:

Jeremiah 10:12 But God made the earth by his power, and he preserves it by his wisdom. With his own understanding he stretched out the heavens.

Jeremiah 27:5 With my great strength and powerful arm, I made the earth and all its people and every animal. I can give these things of mine to anyone I choose.

He is a powerful Creator, but as our Maker He understands us and listens to us.

Isaiah 40:26, 28b-29 Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Because of his great power and incomparable strength, not a single one is missing. ...The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.

Psalms 65:6 You formed the mountains by your power and armed yourself with mighty strength.

God created the earth and all that is on it with great wisdom, every part fitting together.

Psalms 104: 24-25 O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures. Here is the ocean, vast and wide, teeming with life of every kind, both large and small.

Psalms 139:13-14 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well.

Because we are created in His image, we too are designed to be creative, resourceful, imaginative, and inventive.

Questions and activities

- 1 Describe two creative miracles performed by Jesus in the New Testament.
2. Read Psalm 29:1-9. What aspect of God's power in creation is described here?
3. What is Isaiah telling us about the stars in chapter 40?
4. What does Psalm 139 tell us about human creation? How does this affect our attitude to human life?

God is Creator Week 3

Prov. 3:19 By wisdom the Lord founded the earth; by understanding he created the heavens.

Psalms 104 and 147 give a picture of our creative God totally able to provide for and take care of His people and all He has made.

Psalm 147: 12-18

Extol the Lord, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion.

He strengthens the bars of your gates and blesses your people within you.

He grants peace to your borders and satisfies you with the finest of wheat.

He sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly.

He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes.

He hurls down his hail like pebbles. Who can withstand his icy blast?

He sends his word and melts them; he stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.

Jeremiah 32:17 O Sovereign Lord! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you!

Psalm 24:1-2 The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. For he laid the earth's foundation on the seas and built it on the ocean depths.

Colossians 1:15-16 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.

Romans 1:20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

Questions and activities

1. What evidence is there in Colossians 1:15 for Jesus existing before the Creation?
2. Read Psalm 104:24 – 25. List some living things God made, in two categories: examples of things that are very small and things that are very large.
3. Find and write a verse from Psalm 104 that shows how God will provide for us through his creation.
4. Write a Bible verse that speaks of God's power.
5. Some people think that God needed millions of years to create the universe. Considering that God is truly great and mighty, and able to perform miracles, then how long did he actually take to create the universe? (Genesis 1)