**Sojourn Church – Basics of the Faith**

Week 2: Who is God?

Instructor: Ben Hein

Ben.hein@sojournfairfax.com

703-473-9272

*God controls all things--or nothing.*

*He must either rule--or be ruled.*

*He must either sway--or be swayed.*

*He must either accomplish His will--or be thwarted by His creatures.*

* Milburn Cockrell

*God is the sum of all patience and the essence of kindly good will. We please Him most, not by frantically trying to make ourselves good, but by throwing ourselves into His arms with all our imperfections and believing that He understands everything and loves us still.* – AW Tozer

1. Introduction
	1. Why do we all have thoughts about God?
	2. What does it mean to be an image bearer?

 *So God created man in his own image,*

*in the image of God he created him;*

*male and female he created them.* (Genesis 1:27)

* 1. God is the supreme creator and ruler over creation, including his people.
		1. “*In the beginning, God…”* (Genesis 1:1a)
	2. What are some terms that you would use to describe God? How do you know if they are accurate?
1. Three attributes of God
	1. What does it mean to say God is holy?

*In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.* ***2****Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.* ***3****And one called to another and said:*

 *“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;*

*the whole earth is full of his glory!”* (Isaiah 6:1-3)

* 1. How should we define God’s love?

***4****Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant* ***5****or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;* ***6****it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.* ***7****Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

*Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.* (1 John 4:8)

* 1. God’s attributes are inseparable.

*The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.* ***6****The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,* ***7****keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”* (Exodus 34:5-7)

* 1. How do we know and share in common morality and ethics?

“This is what Christianity believes. We believe that God is the source of all morality and ethical influence in this life, and because we are all his image bearers, as a collective human race we have understandings of common morality and ethics.”

* 1. How does God’s sense of justice reveal to us the gospel? Do you deserve justice or grace?
	2. How does loving God change the way we live?

*“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.* ***38****This is the great and first commandment.* ***39****And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* ***40****On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”* (Matthew 22:37-40)

1. Application: Where are you today? Do you need to allow the reality of who God is to transform how you live your life today? What impact would it have on your life to admit that there is a God who is holy, loving and just all at the same time?

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.* ***8****Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.* ***9****In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.* ***10****In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* ***11****Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.* (1 John 4:7-11)

*As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,* ***15****but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,* ***16****since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”* (1 Peter 1:14-16)

**Appendix 1 – Other Resources**

**Books about God**

* The Doctrine of God – John Frame
* Knowing God – JI Packer
* The Knowledge of the Holy – AW Tozer
* Desiring God – John Piper
* The Holiness of God – RC Sproul

**Books about Christianity**

* Basic Christianity – John Stott
* Who is Jesus? – Greg Gilbert
* The Explicit Gospel – Matt Chandler
* Mere Christianity – C.S. Lewis

**Apologetic (proofs/explanations) Books About Christianity**

* The Reason for God – Tim Keller
* The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable? – F.F. Bruce
* Can We Still Believe the Bible? – Craig L. Blomberg
* The Canon of Scripture – F.F. Bruce
* The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict – Josh McDowell
* The Language of God – Francis S. Collins
* Always Ready – Greg Bahnsen
* What’s Your Worldview? – James Anderson