

1. What are the attributes of your god?

Introduction: We live in the US in which peoples of many different religious backgrounds live together peacefully. However, most people of one religion do not know the other religions and the lack of knowledge of other religions can sometimes cause misunderstanding between people of different races and religions. InFocus is a good place to introduce your religion to others and also learn different religions from other InFocus friends. One way to understand the difference and similarity between different religions is to learn the attributes their gods.

D1: Do you believe god exists?

D2: If you believe god exists, what attributes do you think your god should have?

D3: Are the attributes of the god in your mind the same as the attributes of the god your religion believes?

D4: What do you know about the attributes of God in the Bible?

The attributes of God in the Bible:

1. The Creator of the Universe:

Genesis 1 (abbreviated): ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and **the Spirit of God** was hovering over the waters.

³ **And God said**, "Let there be light," and there was light —**the first day**.

⁶ And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." —**the second day**.

⁹ And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." ¹¹ Then God said, **"Then God said**, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds."—**the third day**.

¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." —**the fourth day**.

²⁰ **And God said**, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." —**the fifth day**.

²⁴ **And God said**, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." ²⁶ **Then God said**, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, ^[a] and over all the creatures that move along the ground." —**the sixth day**

Q1: The Bible verses are in the first page of the Bible written in about 3500 years ago, describing that God is the creator of the Universe and all the lives on the earth including human beings. What attributes of God can we find from the creation story?

Q2: The Bible verse 1:26 says that God made mankind in His image. What kind of relationship between the God in the Bible and mankind can you see from the verse?

Q3: What is the view of your religion for the origin of the Universe?

2. God is Holy:

Leviticus 19:2

"Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

1 Peter 1:15-16

but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

Revelation 4:8

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."

Q4: Does your god have the attribute of holiness?

Q5: What is Holy life? Can you be holy in all your behavior as the God in the Bible commanded us?

3. God is Righteous

If He is infinitely pure (Holy), then He must be opposed to all sin, and that opposition to sin must be demonstrated in His treatment of His creatures. When we read that God is righteous or just, we are being assured that His actions toward us are in perfect agreement with His holy nature. [A. W. Tozer].

Psalm 45:6: 6 Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom

Psalm 89:14: Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne; Loving kindness and truth go before Thee .

Matthew 6:33: But seek first His (God's) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Q6: Is "righteousness" one of your god's attributes? How does your god reveal his righteousness to the people?

Q7: We all agree that we commit sins in our lives. How do you think the god of Holiness and Righteousness deals with you for your sins?

4. God is Love

Psalm 86:15 *But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.*

Psalm 136:26 *Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.*

1 John 4:7-8 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

Q8: Is "love" one of your god's attributes? If then, how does your god reveal his love to the people?

Q9: How do you think the god of love deals with you for your sins?

Q10: How do you think the God in the Bible deals with you for your sins without violating his other attributes of holiness and righteousness?

5. God in the Bible

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."*

1 John 3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

2. Hell (A Christian's Perspective)

In previous INFOCUS meetings this year we discussed different views of the afterlife which included the idea of a place of eternal reward (heaven) as well as a place for eternal punishment (hell). We have also shared with each other what we believe God is like. The Christians in the group have described their God as a personal compassionate and loving God.

Q1: A natural question then is how could such a God judge people for their actions and send anyone to Hell? What do you think?

The concept of hell was once at the forefront of Christian thought and teaching but during the last fifty or so years this doctrine has been largely ignored in the U.S. in favor of the other more popular teachings such as God's love, kindness, mercy, and grace. This has occurred at the same time the U.S. culture began to embrace the hedonistic and existential beliefs that personal pleasure is the highest good and the proper aim for human life because everything is temporal, relative and uncertain. We are all products of our culture and when I was given this topic (thanks Huggy) I was tempted to change it and present something else but I realized that a basic understanding of this teaching is necessary if one really wants to understand from a Christian perspective the scope of God's love and His wonderful provision for those who trust him.

Q2: What are some of the other attributes of the Christian God? How can they all be reconciled to the same God?

We cannot really do this topic justice in a single meeting but let us consider the following points that are presented in various places in the Bible (many more than listed in this handout).

☐ *God is perfectly righteous and pristinely holy. He alone is worthy of all our affection. He alone is capable of judging the hearts of others.*

Isaiah 6 3 And they [Angels] were calling to one another: Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Habakkuk 1 13 Your [God's] eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing...

☐ *God did not create evil but allowed it in part, I believe, to allow people to act as independent moral agents that have free wills. Humans have used this free will to rebel against God even though God has his people's best interests at heart.*

Numbers 14 18 'The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished;...'

☐ *God's Wrath has been described as God's personal divine revulsion to evil, God's refusal to condone evil, His hostility to it, and His judgement upon it. It is a righteous rejection of sin and his absolute opposition to ungodliness. He exercises this wrath at appropriate times to oppose evil.*

Romans 1 18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one

another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

□ *There are temporal and eternal consequences of not following God.*

Numbers 14 18 ‘The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished;...’

Galatians 6 7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

□ *Hell is described in the Bible many times as a place where God’s presence and calming influence is taken away from the people and other beings who fail to acknowledge their need for Him or desire His love and fellowship. It is a place of eternal punishment.*

2 Thessalonians 6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might 10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

Revelation 6 9 When he [Jesus] opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. 10 They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” 11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters,[a] were killed just as they had been.

□ *God is a holy being. Apart from Christ Jesus no one satisfies His standards no matter how good they think they are.*

Romans 3 10 As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. ... 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.”

Isaiah 64 6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

□ *Fortunately, God Himself provided a unique solution to this hopeless dilemma by sending Jesus into this world to pay the price for the sin for all who accept and believe in Him.*

Romans 6 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 9 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Hebrews 12 ...And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 5 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

3. How Much Good Work Do I Have To Do To Go To Heaven?

Different religions look at the afterlife in different ways. Most say if you live right on earth you will be rewarded in the next life. Christianity says part of that reward is living in Heaven. We have talked in previous meetings about heaven, what the dimensions are, materials it is constructed of and who will be there. So, it stands to reason, the works/deeds we do on earth translate into the rewards we receive in heaven.

Q1. What does your religion tell you will happen to you when you die?

Q2. Where do you go? What is it like? Is it somewhere you would like to go?

Q3. Are there different levels of reward? What is required to receive the best reward?

To evaluate where our understanding of the requirements to enter heaven Christians have a question they often ask, "If you were to die today and stand before God and He were to ask you, 'Why should I let you into heaven?', What would were answer be?"

James 2:14-19 Faith and Deeds

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

So it is evident that works/deeds and faith are related?

Q4. How much faith is required to enter heaven? How many good works does it take to enter heaven?

Titus 3:4-8 This is a trustworthy statement.

⁴ But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

Q5. Based on this verse, How many deeds are required to go to heaven?

Q6. How do we become heirs of eternal life, heaven? Through _____ our Savior, so that _____ by His _____ we would be made heirs...

Ephesians 2:1-10 Made Alive in Christ

² As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh^[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in

transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Q7. Why did God show us mercy?

Q8. How are we saved? Is it a reward or a gift?

Q9. Would you like to receive the free gift of God?

4. How Can One Man's Death (JESUS) Save All Men From Their Sins?

Last week we spoke about a gift. God's Free Gift.
This week we are going to look at who the gift giver is.

Before we do let's look at ourselves:

Do you believe in sin?

Do you believe you sin?

In your culture and/or beliefs do your prophets or gods or goddess forgive sin?

If so how does this happen, are there steps to take? Do you have to do something?

Christians believe that everyone sins, there is no sinless person except Jesus.

Let's look at Who Jesus is according to the Bible, God's Word.

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Q1: Who is the Word?

Q2: How long has the Word been with God?

John 1:4 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only who came from the father, full of grace and truth

Q3: Who became flesh?

Q4: Where did he make his dwelling?

Q5: What does he have in himself?

These passages point us or show us that Jesus has been here since the beginning that he dwells with us, and he is full of grace and truth.

Phillipians 2: 5-11: Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. Who being the in the very nature God did not consider the equality with God something to be grasped. But made himself nothing taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name above ever name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father.

Q6: What kind of attitude did Jesus have?

Q7: Is Jesus just a man?

Q8: What do you think it means for Jesus and God to be equal?

Q9: Is this the reason Jesus can forgive sin?

Let's look at some places in the bible where Jesus says your sins are forgiven.

Matthew 9:6 But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins...

Luke 7:48 And he said to her, your sins are forgiven.

Q10: How can Jesus do this?

Q11: What is going to happen in the end?

Food for thought...

Napoleon Bonapart wrote:

“Well then, I will tell you. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I myself have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions will die for Him. . . . I think I understand something of human nature; and I tell you, all these were men, and I am a man; none else is like Him: Jesus Christ was more than a man. . . . I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me . . . but to do this it was necessary that I should be visibly present with the electric influence of my looks, my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them, I lightened up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts. . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man toward the unseen, that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years, Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy; He asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him, experience that remarkable, supernatural love toward Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This is it, which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ.”

5. Is Jesus God?

The Bible

- ***Sixty-six** different booklets comprise the Bible.
- *They include law, history, poetry, prophecy, biographies, and formal letters.
- *About **40** different human **authors** contributed to the Bible.
- * **Three** different **languages** were used to write the Bible
- *It was written over a period of about **1500 years**.
- *The authors were kings, fishermen, priests, government officials, farmers, shepherds, and doctors.

From all this diversity comes an incredible unity, with common themes woven throughout the Bible

The writers of the Bible claim that the Bible is God's very Word. The apostle Paul writes that "**all Scripture is God-breathed**" ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)). That is to say, all the words recorded in the original writing of Scripture originated from the mouth of God before ever reaching the minds and pens of the biblical writers. The apostle Peter also writes that "**prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit**" ([2 Peter 1:21](#)).

Q1: What can you tell us about the sacred writings of the religions you are familiar with?

Q2: Who wrote them and when?

Jesus pulls together all the major themes of the OT into his life and message.

God's revelation of Himself in the ancient Jewish scriptures,
and his revelation of the Messiah,
and his revelation of the Last Day Judgment are all brought together in Jesus.

- * Jesus revealed more of who God is by taking on human form and living among the people, being perfectly holy and teaching perfect truth while here on earth.
- * Jesus fulfilled the suffering servant prophecies in the Old Testament when he came and died 2000 years ago.
- *Jesus promised he was coming back in glory some day and that will fulfill the promises of the Kingdom under his rule.
- *It is on his second coming that the end of the world as we know it will come. This is called **the Day of the Lord** in the Bible. It will be a terrible day of judgement and suffering for the wicked and the day of promotion to heaven for God's children.

Q3: Do other religions mention Jesus? How do they define his life and ministry?

According to **Christianity** Jesus is not just another great prophet--or great teacher- or imposter Messiah. He claimed to be the Son of God and he claimed to be part of God himself. He was killed for this very claim. What do we do with this incredible man who lived 2000 years ago? Do we believe and follow him or do we dismiss him as irrelevant? Our life on earth and eternal life depends on our response.

Trinity

The **Father** is God, the **Son** is God, and the **Holy Spirit** is God—but there is only one God. That is the biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

The doctrine of the Trinity has been difficult for many people to believe throughout the centuries since the Christ came 2000 years ago.

But the foundational truths about the Trinity are scattered throughout the Old Testament.

There is one God! This truth is repeated over and over again in the Jewish scriptures.

[Deuteronomy 6:4](#) **Hear, O Israel! The LORD (ELOHIM) is our God, the LORD is one!**

But notice! The Hebrew plural noun "**Elohim**" is used. This word is strictly a plural of Eloah, which is used as the name of God only in poetry, and it means power and strength.

In several other OT verses the plural pronoun for "**us**" is used.

[Genesis 1:26](#) Then God said, "Let **us** make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule...

[Genesis 3:22](#) And the LORD God said, "The man (ADAM) has now become like one of **us**, knowing good and evil.

[Genesis 11:6-8](#) The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let **us** go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

⁸ So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, (THE TOWER OF BABLE)

[Isaiah 6:8](#) Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for **us**?"

The word "Elohim" and the pronoun "us" are plural forms definitely referring in the Hebrew language to more than one.

While this is not an explicit argument for the Trinity, it does denote the aspect of plurality in God.

In the New Testament, Jesus speaks to the Father about sending a Helper, the **Holy Spirit**.

[John 14:16-17](#) I will ask the Father to send you another **Helper, the Spirit of truth**, who will remain constantly with you. ¹⁷ The world does not recognize the **Spirit of truth**, because it does not know the Spirit and is unable to receive Him. But you do know **the Spirit** because He lives with you, and He will dwell in you.

In addition to the numerous times Jesus alluded to himself as the son of God and being one in essence with God himself, we see many passages that also explain this claim. Here is one example:

[Colossians 1:15-17](#); The Son (JESUS) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

? What are your thoughts about Jesus really being God? Why is it such a hard concept to believe?

6. If you commit sins, does your religion allow you to go to heaven?

IB 1. If you commit sins, does your religion allow you to go to heaven?

Luke 15:11-32: The Parable of the Prodigal Son

¹¹And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them.

¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to ^[b]one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’”

²⁰And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ^[c]²²But the father said to his servants, ^[d]‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵“Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, ²⁹but he answered his father, ‘Listen! All these years I’ve worked like a slave for you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

Discussion

Luke 15:11-12: ¹¹And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them.

Q1. Property inheritance happens after the owner dies. What does it mean that the younger son requested his share of his father's property?

Q2. If you were the father, what would be your response to the younger son’s request?

Luke 15:13-19: ¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’”

Q3. After the younger son spent everything he had in a foreign country, he reached the situation of longing to be fed enough with pigs' food. What options did he have in the situation?

Q4. Do you think the younger son was sure that his father would accept him when he returned home?

Q5. If you were the younger son in the same situation, would you decide to go back to the father? Why? Why not?

Q6. If you were his father, would you accept the son when he came back?

Luke 15:20-24: ²⁰ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³ And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴ For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

Q7. What did the younger son do to receive the father's forgiveness and father's lavish welcome?

Luke 15:25-32: ²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, ²⁹ but he answered his father, 'Listen! All these years I've worked like a slave for you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' ³¹ And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

Q8. Why was the older son angry and refused his father's invitation to the feast? Was his behavior reasonable?

Q9. After the younger son's return to the father's home, how do you think the two sons' attitudes were different toward their father?

Q10. The father in this parable represents the God in the Bible. If you commit sins, what do you think the God in the Bible will do to you for your sins?

Q11. Does it mean God in the Bible condones sins? What is the ground that God forgives sins?

1 John 1: ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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

7. The Resurrection

Luke 24:1-20 ¹But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” ⁸ And they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

On the Road to Emmaus

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles^[a] from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” ¹⁹ And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

8. The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1-22

9 But Saul, ^bstill ^cbreathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to ^dthe high priest 2 and asked him for letters ^eto the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to ^fthe Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 ^gNow as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. 4 And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting ^hme?” 5 And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, ^hwhom you are persecuting. 6 But ⁱrise and enter the city, and you will be told ^jwhat you are to do.” 7 ^kThe men who were traveling with him stood speechless, ^lhearing the voice but seeing no one. 8 Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, ^mhe saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named ⁿAnanias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, ^o“Here I am, Lord.” 11 And the Lord said to him, “Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man ^pof Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying. 12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and ^qlay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” 13 But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, ^rhow much evil he has done to ^syour ^tsaints at Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from ^uthe chief priests to bind all who ^vcall on your name.” 15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for ^whe is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name ^xbefore the Gentiles and ^ykings and the children of Israel. 16 For ^zI will show him how much ^ahe must suffer ^bfor the sake of my name.” 17 So ^cAnanias departed and entered the house. And ^dlaying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and ^ebe filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and ^fhe regained his sight. Then ^ghe rose and was baptized; 19 and ^htaking food, he was strengthened.

Saul Proclaims Jesus in Synagogues

For ⁱsome days he was with the disciples at Damascus. 20 And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ^j“He is the Son of God.” 21 And all who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who ^kmade havoc ^lin Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?” 22 But Saul ^mincreased all the more in strength, and ⁿconfounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving ^othat Jesus was the Christ.