

# Who are we?

## STUDY QUESTIONS

### June 2023 (2-29 July)



Our theme this month 'Who are we?' is all about identity. As humans we try to understand what our purpose and meaning is all about, especially since we never asked to be born. Often we feel like strangers in time seeking direction. We project various personas, but do we ever find within ourselves the real person?

The Bible suggests we start by looking beyond ourselves and the creation. Seeking God is the first step to knowing ourselves, for we are made in the image of God. By doing so we discover the designer is in search of us.

We are going to take our daily readings from Paul's letter to the Ephesians. In this letter Paul suggests that the Church, the community of believers, are in fact God's chosen way of helping humanity discover their true identity. Paul reflects upon four key issues. Firstly, the nature and character of God. Secondly, the key principles that make up the message believers should be sharing. Thirdly, how this message is have an impact on their lives, and finally what is the wider vision for the creation and the world in which we live.

# Who are we?

## STUDY QUESTIONS

*A note from Albert Bogle:*

In May 1989 just a few weeks after my father's death I attended a conference at St Ninian's Crieff which has had a profound effect on my ministry. It was led by Tom Smail. Tom had been instrumental in the growth of the Charismatic Movement in the early 70s. His morning Bible readings were based around the book of Ephesians. His profound and practical teaching on the book of Ephesians has never left me. During that week he explored the book of Ephesians suggesting that Paul was answering four basic questions about the church.

1. What kind of God do we serve?
2. What kind of Gospel do we proclaim?
3. What kind of people have we to become?
4. What kind of world are we being called to live in?

During the four weeks of June I would like us to return to the book of Ephesians and together with our writers take one of these question each week and seek to find answers to them in the text of Ephesians.

**SEEDS TO SOW:** Open-ended prompts to inspire creative responses to the themes. Perhaps a song, some drawing, or creative writing! They are short and sweet, simply a starting off place for you and your imagination. Expand, tailor and develop as suits you. Often they take the form of a question, to encourage reflection.

*These discussion questions adapt our monthly themes for small Connect Groups or personal Bible study (look up [Who are we? Resource Pack](#) for more information on this month's theme). The questions are divided into 4 parts to correspond with the 4 weeks of the Daily Worship theme. They are offered as a guideline and there is no need to go through all the given questions in a single session, or in the following sequence. Feel free to pick and choose, or adapt to what interests you or your group.*

# Who are we?

## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Part 1: What kind of God do we serve?

Answer: A God who delights in his children. A God who is holy and approachable. A God whose power is based on love.

During week 1 we have drawn out attributes of God's character that allow us to encounter his nature and see it reflected in the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Knowing the God we serve allows us to be confident that we can have a relationship with our creator and redeemer. Calvin in the opening paragraph of his Institutes suggests to know ourselves we must first have knowledge of God. In our studies this week we are suggesting — when we realise the nature of God we may be surprised at the power we have to be agents of change all around the world.

**SEEDS TO SOW: IF THE SEAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS A PHYSICAL SEAL, WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE? (See Ephesians 1: 13)**

---

**Read Ephesians 1: 3-9**

**God's Pleasure.** God's pleasure and delight is all encompassing. The concept of the Trinity is built around the pleasure of God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all delight in one another.

Discuss: Seeing as we are made in the image of God — what would it mean to delight more in each other?

---

**Read Ephesians 1: 4**

**God's Holiness.** What is the connection between God's glory and our lives of holiness? Check out: 1 Peter 1: 16.

Discuss among friends or reflect upon this yourself.

---

**Read Ephesians 1: 17-23**

**God's power is based on Love.** It was the power of love — God's love — that raised Jesus from the dead. Take time to read these verses over a few times. Discuss the reason why Paul prays for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to be given to the church at Ephesus and by implication all Christians.

# Who are we?

## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Part 2: What kind of Gospel do we proclaim?

If we begin to recognise the height and depth of God's being we are brought to the place where we ask, what kind of Gospel are we called to share with the world around us? During this section we will share seven aspects of the Gospel that transform the world around us.

**SEEDS TO SOW: WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO BE A PEACEMAKER? WHAT ARE THE COSTS INVOLVED?**

---

**Read Ephesians 2: 8-10**

**A Gospel of Grace.** Why does grace change the way we live? Discuss as a group or reflect on your own.

---

**Read Ephesians 2: 19-22**

**A Gospel of Unity.** Why does unity trump doctrine? The Gospel of peace leads to a people of unity striving to know the mind of God. Discuss.

---

**Read Ephesians 2: 6-7**

**Gospel of Revelation.** These verses seem to suggest our grace filled lives have an eternal purpose. Consider in your group, or on your own, what that might be?

# Who are we?

## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Part 3: What kind of people are we becoming?

When we begin to understand the transformational content of the gospel message it leads us to consider the kind of people this gospel creates. What's kind of people are we becoming?

SEEDS TO SOW: WHAT DOES THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST MEAN IN OUR LIVES?

---

**Read Ephesians 3: 14-21**

**A people of love.** Discuss with others or reflect upon the idea that the Christian understanding of love is more than a feeling. What does it mean to say that love generates the power of God?

---

**Read Ephesians 3: 20**

**A people of expectation.** *Albert writes: My sister sent my father a birthday card once which said "Blessed is he who expecteth nothing for he shall never be disappointed."* Could that be said of our expectations of God?

---

**Read Ephesians 3: 21**

**A people reflecting glory.** Take a moment to pause and reflect on your life. You are God's workmanship. Read Ephesians 2: 8-10 . Are you aware of the things God is unfolding before you to complete? Collectively we are the reflected glory of God. How do you feel about that?

# Who are we?

## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Part 4: What kind of world are we being called to live in?

We have moved from asking: 'What kind of God do we serve?', to 'What kind of gospel do we proclaim? Then we asked 'What kind of people are we becoming?' Finally, we ask what kind of world do we live in? We ask this question because we need to be aware that there is a Spiritual dimension to life. There is another dimension beyond the physical. The scripture teaches us that there is struggle going on in our lives between the forces of good and evil. Paul in the last chapter of Ephesians invites us to be aware of the struggle and to put on God's spiritual clothes of protection.

#### SEEDS TO SOW: ARE WE WEARING THE RIGHT SPIRITUAL CLOTHES FOR THE RIGHT WEATHER?

---

##### Read Ephesians 6: 14

**Belt of Truth.** Truth is like a belt that holds our integrity together. Once truth has gone there is no true understanding of reality.

Take time to have a discussion or reflect upon the place of truth in our fast moving world of communication, social media and political unrest. How do we discern the truth? Could it be linked into Love? Perhaps read 1 Corinthians 13.

---

##### Read Ephesians 6: 15

**Shoes of Peace.** If peace-shoes enable the difficult pathways to be overcome — why is it that peacemakers don't always feel blessed? (Matthew 5: 9 ).

---

##### Read Ephesians 6: 16

**Shield of Faith.** Faith allows us to say 'I believe' and the evil cannot stay in the same room as faith. Discuss.