
Foundations:

Basic Christian Teachings

Session 2: “God”

Review from Session 1

- What are the four parts of the Christian Story?
- Why is it important to know this story well?
- In what critical ways is the Christian story different from other worldview stories?

In the Beginning . . .

In this session we will talk about

- How the story begins
- The main character of the story
- Two competing stories of reality and how they are different from Christianity
- Science and faith and miracles
- How we learn about God
- The three-in-one nature of God

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”

(Genesis 1:1)

- The story starts with _____
- Everything belongs to God because _____
- God made _____ out of _____
- God is _____ from creation and outside of it.
- Reality consists of two very different kinds of things
 - _____
 - _____

This story is called _____, the worldview that there is a God who created and upholds all things.

Other Stories

There are two main alternate stories at work in our culture today.

Alternate Story 1: Naturalism

- Also called “Scientific Materialism”
- This view holds that the only things that exist are _____ governed by _____
- This is the story that _____ believe is true
- Implications of Naturalism
 - No _____

- No objective _____
- Death is the _____
- No _____ or _____
- No objective _____
- Nothing is _____ with the world
- No _____ for a better future
- Science and Naturalism
 - There are three important scientific developments in the last century years that present a problem for naturalism.
 - The universe had a _____
 - The universe is _____ for human life on earth
 - DNA is essentially _____, a language for transmitting information
 - Naturalism has no broadly accepted explanation for these things
- Are science and faith at odds?
 - Science requires _____ in unprovable assumptions.
 - Faith, rightly understood, is not at odds with science, but it is at odds with _____, the belief that only that which can be explained by science is true.
 - Christian faith is based on truth claims about _____ that can be investigated with the normal historical research tools.

Alternate Story 2: Pantheism

- What is pantheism?
 - All is _____
 - Also called _____
 - All that exists is the _____ of God
 - The universal mind (God) may be _____ or not
 - This is the story for Hinduism, Buddhism, other eastern religions, and western New Age thinking.

- Implications of Pantheism
 - You don't _____ as an individual
 - You are _____, but so is _____
 - Nothing is _____ with the universe
 - All is illusion
 - _____ and _____
 - _____ and _____

- The goal of life (lives) is to escape the _____ of individualism and so be absorbed into the universal mind.

- Puzzle pieces that fit this story:
 - _____
 - _____

Comparing Stories

- How do they answer these questions?
 - Where did we come from?
 - What is wrong with the world?
 - What is the solution?
 - Where are we going?
- The Christian story provides answers which fit with how we perceive the world and provide hope for the future.

Learning about God

What do we know about God and how do we come to know it?

Natural knowledge of God

- **Romans 1:19-20** *“Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 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.”*
- What can we know about God from nature?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- Can we learn from nature that God is good?

Revealed knowledge of God

- How else has God revealed Himself?
 - _____
 - _____
 - **Hebrews 1:1-2** *“In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son”*
 - _____
 - **2 Timothy 3:16-17** *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son*
 - **John 20:30-31** *“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”*
- In order to learn more about God than what nature can teach us, we need to turn to God’s Word.
- Who is the revealed God of the Bible?

The Holy Trinity

God Revealed

- There is _____ God who exists _____ persons.

Matthew 28:19 *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

Deuteronomy 6:4 *“Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”*

2 Corinthians 13:14 *“The grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit”*

- The Father is _____. The Son is _____ The Holy Spirit is _____.
- But there are not _____ gods, but only _____ God.

What this means:

- God is _____

- God is _____

1 John 4:8 *“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”*

- God is _____

- God is _____

- God has _____

FOR FURTHER GROWING

From “Luther’s Small Catechism”

- The Trinity, pp. 128-132
- The Father, pp. 133-163

SHARPENING MY SWORD

Genesis 1:1 *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*