

2. God Triune: Father, Son and Spirit

"No one may see me and live," the Lord said to Moses. "No one has ever seen God," says John's gospel. "Whom no one has seen or can see," says Paul. Yet how can we relate to an invisible God? We cannot see him or touch him. Is he listening? Is he even there? At times we feel as though we are talking to ourselves! God's invisibility can sometimes be a problem for us.

At the last supper, Jesus told his disciples that he was returning to his Father. Then he made a startling claim: the invisible God has become visible: the one who has seen Jesus has seen God the Father! We can see him if we know where (and how) to look.

Discussion Starter:

What are some of the difficulties you experience in relating to an invisible God?

Read John 13:31-14:11

1. In this passage, how does Jesus help his disciples (and us!) relate to his invisible Father?
2. God is glorified when his character is revealed. How will Jesus glorify God, and how will God glorify Jesus?

The Character of God: Study 2

3. Both Thomas and Philip have failed to grasp something about Jesus. What have they failed to grasp? (14:4–5, 8).
4. How is it that we can truly know the invisible God in Jesus?
5. [optional] How does Hebrews 1:1–3 expand upon your answer to the previous question?

Read John 15:26-16:15

6. The word 'counsellor' (15:26) means one who is called (or sent) to help and encourage us. In this passage identify the various ways the Spirit helps us.
7. In the past, how have you experienced the Spirit's ministry to you?
8. [optional] What is the Spirit's relationship to the Father and the Son (15:26)?
9. Because Jesus is going away, the disciples are filled with grief (16:6). Why is this 'bad' news actually good for the disciples?
10. What is the role of the Spirit in relation to the world? In your own words, explain how he does this.

One God, Three Persons

11. [optional] So far we have considered our relationship with each of the three persons of the Godhead. But how is it that we have only one God, not three? Look up the following verses, and see what kind of a picture of God's triune nature your group can assemble:
Deut 6:4–5; Jas 2:19
Gen 1:2, 26; Isa 6:8; 42:1
Matt 28:19–20; John 1:1–3; 14–18.
Phil 2:1–7; Acts 5:3–4
12. 'Prayer is the most Trinitarian activity that we engage in as human beings' Discuss this statement in relation to the following verses: Eph 2:18; Rom 8:26–27; Gal 4:6; Heb 4:14–16.
13. How might this discussion shape the way that you pray to God?
14. [optional: one to ponder] How might God's essential nature (three persons mutually glorifying the other in a common unity) shape our own relationships?