



OUR FAITH

An introduction to what Christians believe

WORKBOOK



FELLOWSHIP
Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

The Training Center

The Training Center is a ministry of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. The Training Center is the tangible expression of one of the three guiding metaphors that best describe the vision and mission of Fellowship; namely, that Fellowship is a “greenhouse,” a “training center,” and a “launching pad.” The necessary link between the greenhouse and launching pad is The Training Center where people are prepared and equipped for leadership in life and ministry.



CORE TRAINING

Core Training is a training track of ten training experiences for everyone at Fellowship. These ten trainings are meant to provide a starting point for engaging life at Fellowship and growing into a prepared and equipped spiritual leader. Whether you are new to Fellowship or have been around for decades, The Training Center is the place to start growing and developing.

BIBLE AND THEOLOGY

Panorama of the Bible
We Believe or Our Faith
Personal Bible Study

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Perspectives/GO Primer
Leadership Lab
Great Commission: Evangelism & Discipleship

LIFE AND GROWTH

Align Your Finances with the Heart of God
Re|Frame Family: Marriage and Parenting
Great Commandment: Worship, Prayer, and Spiritual Growth (coming soon)

DISCOVER

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AN INTRODUCTION to what Christians believe

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All Our Faith resources, including teaching audio, curriculum,
and small group questions, can be found at
ourfaith.fellowshipnwa.org.

Doctrines Covered in Each Session

- 1. How can I know God?**
 - A. Revelation
 - B. Scripture
- 2. Who is God?**
 - A. Trinity
 - B. Father
 - C. Son
 - D. Spirit
- 3. What is God like?**
 - A. Nature
 - B. Attributes
- 4. What is wrong with the world and me?**
 - A. Intro to the Story of Redemption
 - B. Creation
 - C. Mankind
 - D. Sin
- 5. What did God do about the problem?**
 - A. The Gospel
 - B. Incarnation
 - C. Life of Christ
 - D. Atonement
- 6. How can I be saved?**
 - A. Our response
 - B. God's work
- 7. How do I live the Christian life?**
 - A. The Walk by the Spirit
 - B. The Community of the Spirit
- 8. How will God finish His rescue plan?**
 - A. Personal eschatology
 - B. All things new

Approach to Each Session

- 1. Framing Question**
- 2. Survey of Key Passages**
- 3. Summary of Biblical Truth**
- 4. Passage to Memorize**
- 5. Difficult Questions and Objections**
- 6. Application**
 - A. In worship
 - B. In discipleship
 - C. On mission

Introduction

Question—Why should we study theology?

1. Because true worship requires knowing the true God.

For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. —Romans 10:2-3

2. Because true discipleship requires us to pass on *all* that Jesus taught.

"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, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." —Matthew 28:19-20

3. Because true mission requires proclamation of the true message of Jesus.

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse! —Galatians 1:6-9

Question—What are some pitfalls in doing theology?

1. Pride

But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. —1 Corinthians 8:1b

2. Loss of mystery or denial of truth

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law. —Deuteronomy 29:29

3. Commitment to a man-made system

“You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.” —Mark 7:8

Question—How do I do theology well?

1. In worship, in discipleship, and on mission

2. In tension

When the Scriptures clearly teach two truths (A and B) that appear to contradict each other, we do not choose one over the other or water down both. Rather we often stand between the two, affirming each and living with the tension that creates.

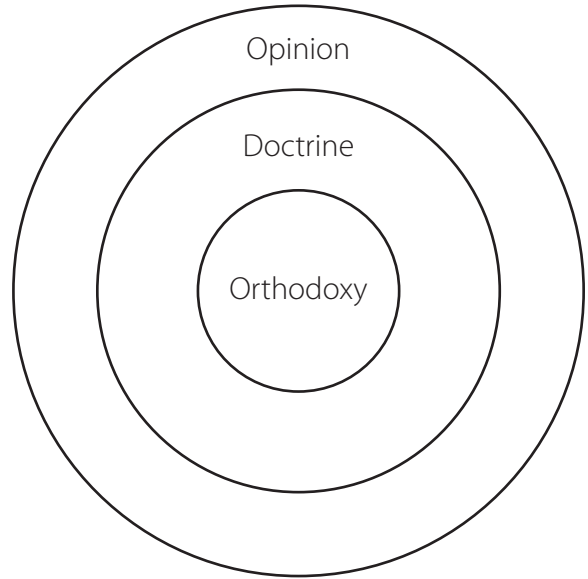
A

B

- 3. In the essentials.....unity
- In the non-essentials.....charity
- In all things.....love

Not all doctrines are the same.
 Different issues call for different responses:

- Orthodoxy**—Die for and Divide over
- Doctrine**—Debate and Defend
- Opinion**—Discuss



The Apostles' Creed

(third—fourth centuries AD)

I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth.
 And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by
 the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius
 Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose from
 the dead; he ascended into heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of
 God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the
 quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the
 communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the
 body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Session 1

I. Question—How can I know God?

Because humans are finite and God is infinite, if they are to know God, that knowledge must come about by God taking the initiative to make himself known.

—Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, pg. 122

II. Survey of Key Passages¹

Psalm 19:1-6

*The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
²Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
³They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
⁴Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
⁵It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
⁶It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth.*

Big Idea: We know what God is like by observing His creation.

¹ Scriptures selected for this survey were taken from pages 31-56 of *Exploring Christian Theology Volume 1: Revelation, Scripture and The Triune God*. Ed. Nathan D. Holsteen and Michael J. Svigel. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2014.

Romans 1:18-21

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.

Big Idea: Our sin causes us to reject God's revelation in creation.

Hebrews 1:1-2

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Big Idea: We know God by listening to the Old Testament prophets and to His Son, Jesus.

2 Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things.²¹ For 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.

Big Idea: The Holy Spirit caused the prophets and apostles to write in Scripture exactly the words God desired.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Big Idea: All Scripture comes from God and gives us the revelation we need to know and follow Him.

John 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Big Idea: God's Word is true in all that it affirms.

1 Corinthians 2:14

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

Big Idea: The Holy Spirit must open a person's heart to understand and accept the truth of God's revelation.

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. God can be truly known because He has made Himself known to us. This process is called revelation.
2. The ultimate revelation of God to mankind came in His Son, Jesus Christ, and all other revelation, including Scripture, finds its ultimate fulfillment in Him.
3. The words of Scripture contain the very words of God given through human authors. This process is called inspiration.
4. Everything that Scripture affirms is true. This is often called the inerrancy of Scripture.
5. The 66 books of the Old and New Testaments contain all of the words from God that believers need to know and follow God.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

The Scriptures... We believe that the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired of God, in whole and in part, error-free in the original writings and the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. We further believe that there is but one true interpretation of any Biblical passage and this is only found when one accurately applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation.

—Psalm 119:160; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2, 4:12

IV. Scripture to Memorize

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. —2 Timothy 3:16-17

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. What about all of the errors in the Bible?
2. What about all of the different interpretations of the Bible?
3. What about things in the Bible that are offensive to us?
4. What about new revelation given today?

