



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.

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

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Great Commission: Evangelism & Discipleship

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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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Our Faith

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

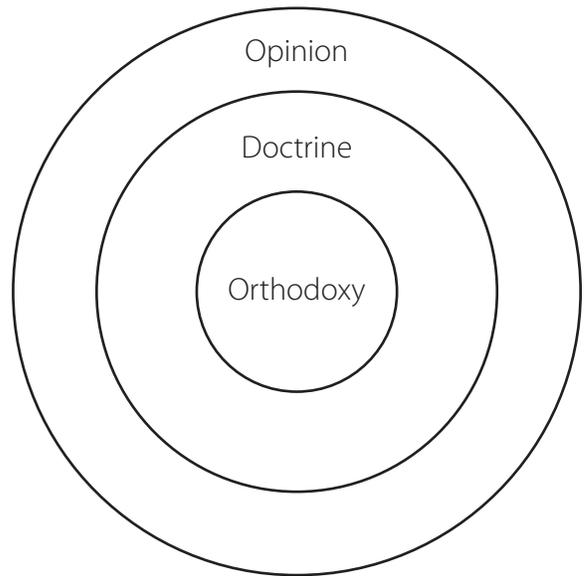
- 3. In the essentials.....unity
- In the non-essentials.....charity
- In all things.....love

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?

Session 2

I. Question—Who is God?

Even though we cannot know God exhaustively, we can know true things about God. In fact, all that Scripture tells us about God is true.

—Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 151

II. Survey of Key Passages¹

Genesis 1:1-5

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. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Big Idea: The one, true God created all that is, and He made it good.

¹ Scriptures selected for this survey were taken from pages 133-167 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.

Exodus 3:14-15

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.'"

"This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation."

Big Idea: God is a person with a name who can know and be known by people.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.

Big Idea: The Lord God of Israel is the only God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Big Idea: God is one, a unity.

Genesis 1:26

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, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Big Idea: The God who created all things is also, somehow, plural.

John 6:27

"Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

Big Idea: The Father is God.

John 1:1-4, 18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. . .

¹⁸ *No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.*

Colossians 2:9-10

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

Hebrews 1:3

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Big Idea: The Son, Jesus, is fully God.

Acts 5:3-4

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that **you have lied to the Holy Spirit** and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴ Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? **You have not lied just to human beings but to God.**" (emphasis added)

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Big Idea: The Holy Spirit is fully God.

Mark 1:9-11

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Big Idea: The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are distinct persons.

James 2:19

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

Big Idea: God is still one!

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. The God of the Bible is the one, true God who created all things.
2. The one, true God can be known personally and can be known through His people and the Scriptures.
3. There is only one God.
4. God eternally exists in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
5. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are each fully God.
6. The Christian belief in a God who is both one and three is called the Doctrine of the Trinity.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

God... We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. We further believe that God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each function differently in respect to God's purposes and dealings with man.

—Deuteronomy 4:39; 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

The Father... The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to His own purpose, pleasure, and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for His own glory. He graciously involves Himself in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

—2 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:9;
John 5:19-24; Ephesians 1:2-6

The Son... The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, surrendered nothing of His deity during His earthly life. Having led a sinless life, He satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by His substitutionary death. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His physical ascension, and His visible return to earth to establish His earthly kingdom.

—John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8;
Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:17-18; Revelation 20:11-15

The Holy Spirit... The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of men. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through His death on the Cross. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers the Church to live a lifestyle pleasing to God, endowing it with special gifts, which equip believers to accomplish distinct ministries, planned beforehand by God the Father.

—John 3:1-8; 15-16; 16:4-15; 1 Corinthians 12;
Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18-21

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed

We believe in one God, the Father All-sovereign, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens, and was made flesh by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into the heavens and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and cometh again with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end;

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and the Life-giver, that proceedeth from the Father [and the Son], who with Father and Son is worshipped together and glorified together, who spake through the prophets;

In one holy catholic and apostolic church:

We acknowledge one baptism unto remission of sins.

We look for a resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come.
Amen.

IV. Scripture to Memorize

*"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

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. Wait, but how does this Trinity idea work?
2. Is God like an egg or water?
3. How can we say that there is only one God?
4. Does this doctrine really matter?
5. Can I be confused about the Trinity and still be a Christian?

Session 3

I. Question—What is God like?

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

—A.W. Tozer

II. Survey of Key Passages

GOD IS GREAT

Exodus 3:14

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Acts 17:24-25

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else."

Big Idea: God exists in and of Himself. He is free and does not need anything to live and give life.

Malachi 3:6-7

"I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. ⁷ Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.

James 1:17

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Big Idea: God is unchanging.

Genesis 18:13-14

Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son."

Jeremiah 32:17

"Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you."

Matthew 19:26

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Big Idea: God is all-powerful. There is nothing restraining Him or holding Him back. He can do anything that is consistent with His nature.

Isaiah 46:9-10

*Remember the former things, those of long ago;
I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me.
¹⁰I make known the end from the beginning,
from ancient times, what is still to come.*

Jeremiah 1:5

*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."*

Psalm 139:1-2

*You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me.
²You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.*

Big Idea: God is all-knowing, meaning that He has complete knowledge of all persons, things, and events whether past, present, or future.

John 4:24

"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

Big Idea: God is spirit, meaning that He does not have a material body.

Psalm 139:7-10

Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ *If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

⁹ *If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,*

¹⁰ *even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.*

Big Idea: God is all-present, meaning that there is nowhere that He is not.

Psalm 90:2

Before the mountains were born

or you brought forth the whole world,

from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

2 Peter 3:8

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

Big Idea: God is eternal, without beginning or end and not bound by time.

GOD IS GOOD

Psalm 100:5

For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Luke 18:19

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone."

Big Idea: God is completely good in all that He is, wills, and does.

Proverbs 30:5

*"Every word of God is flawless;
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him."*

John 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Big Idea: God is true, and His Word is always true.

Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Big Idea: God is wise, meaning that He always chooses the best means and end.

Leviticus 11:44a

I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy...

Big Idea: God is holy, meaning that He is perfectly pure and set apart from all creation.

Exodus 34:6-7

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

1 John 4:16b

...God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

Big Idea: God is loving, merciful, kind, and forgiving.

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. God is completely good in all that He is and does.
2. God is infinite in knowledge, presence, and power.
3. God is limited by nothing outside of Himself.
4. God is above and beyond us in every way and yet draws close to us in a personal way.

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—Deuteronomy 4:39; 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

IV. Scripture to Memorize

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

—Exodus 34:6-7

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. How can God be good, powerful and yet allow evil?
2. How do God and time work?
3. What is the role of prayer before a sovereign God?
4. How can I really know anything about a God who is so beyond me?
5. Is God present in hell?

Session 4

I. Question—What is wrong with the world and me?

Your view of the problem will determine your view of the solution.

II. Survey of Key Passages

CREATION

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:31

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Big Idea: God created all that exists, and He made it perfectly good.

ANGELS

Colossians 1:16

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.

Big Idea: God created all of the “invisible” beings, meaning angels.

Hebrews 1:13-14

To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

¹⁴*Are not all angels ministering-spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*

Big Idea: Angels are immaterial spirit-beings made to serve God and His people.

1 Peter 1:12

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Big Idea: Angels do not know everything, but they learn like us.

HUMANS

Genesis 1:26a

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness..."

Big Idea: God made mankind to be a picture of His character.

Genesis 2:7

Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Big Idea: God made humans with both a material (body) and immaterial (soul or spirit) part.

Genesis 1:26-27

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, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Big Idea: God made mankind to be a picture of His character and rule on earth, and this picture is expressed in both male and female genders together.

THE FALL

Genesis 3:1-7

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Genesis 3:8-14, 16-17, 19, 23-24

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." ¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" ¹² The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." ¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals!... ¹⁶ To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." ¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you. . . ." ¹⁹ "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return. . . ." ²³ So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Romans 5:18-19

Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Big Idea: All mankind was condemned as guilty when Adam sinned.

Ephesians 4:17-19

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

Big Idea: Every person has a sinful nature, which means they are inclined to sinful choices.

James 1:13-15

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Big Idea: Every person sins personally when they give in to sinful desires and choose to sin.

Romans 1:18, 21-23

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness. . .

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.

Big Idea: Sin is turning from God toward anything that is contrary to His nature and purpose.

1 John 2:15-16

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

Big Idea: Sins consist of many different temptations that are all contrary to the Father.

Romans 3:9-12

What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. ¹⁰As it is written:

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

Big Idea: Every single person is guilty and sinful.

Romans 6:23a

For the wages of sin is death, but...

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. God originally made everything that exists, and He made it good without any flaw or evil.
2. God made mankind with material and immaterial parts in His image to know Him and make Him known in creation.
3. Because of the Fall, every person is guilty, sinful, and sinning.
4. The fallen person is unable to do what is right and pleasing to God.
5. The penalty for our sin is the wrath of God and death.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

Man... We believe that man was directly created in the image of God to enjoy His fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Man sinned by voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God; as a result, all men are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of man was a non-repeatable historical fact; the effects of which are transmitted to all men, each of whom is born with a sinful nature and sins habitually in thought, word, and deed.

—Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:3-4; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-23; Ephesians 2:1-3

IV. Scripture to Memorize

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

—Romans 5:19

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. Where did evil come from?
2. Isn't the Bible sexist?
3. What about babies who haven't sinned yet?
4. What about scientific evidence against Creation?
5. How can I be guilty for someone else's mistake?

Session 5

I. Question—What did God do about the problem?

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

—Isaiah 53:4-6

II. Survey of Key Passages

Genesis 12:1-3

The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

²"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Big Idea: God's plan from the beginning was to reverse the curse of sin through the family of Abraham (Israel).

INCARNATION

Matthew 1:18

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

John 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Philippians 2:5-7

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Big Idea: The eternal God and second person of the Trinity took on flesh and became a man when born of the Virgin Mary.

Hebrews 2:17-18

For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

Big Idea: Jesus was human in every way except that He never sinned.

DEATH

Matthew 20:28

"...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Isaiah 53:4-5; 10

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD'S will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

Hebrews 9:27-28

Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 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.

Big Idea: Jesus' death was a substitute sacrifice for our sins.

Colossians 2:15

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Big Idea: Jesus' substitutionary death secured victory for us over our enemies.

RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15:3-5; 20-22

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.

²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

Big Idea: The resurrection of Christ is the beginning of God making all things new.

ASCENSION

Acts 1:9-11

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Hebrews 1:3

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:25-26

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Big Idea: Christ has ascended to Heaven where He reigns as King and works on our behalf.

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man forever.
2. Jesus knows what it is to be human, but He never sinned.
3. By dying on the Cross, Jesus freely offered Himself as a substitute for sinners.
4. By Jesus' resurrection from the dead, God showed Him to be victorious over death and sin.
5. By Jesus' ascension to Heaven He was glorified as Lord and ruler over our lives.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

The Son... The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, surrendered nothing of His deity during His earthly life. Having led a sinless life, He satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by His substitutionary death. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His physical ascension, and His visible return to earth to establish His earthly kingdom.

—John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8;
Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:17-18; Revelation 20:11-15

Salvation... We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God, forever, and members of the one true Church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God.

—John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 5:8;
1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10;
Titus 3:4-7; Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed

We believe in one God, the Father All-sovereign, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens, and was made flesh by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into the heavens and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and cometh again with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end;

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and the Life-giver, that proceedeth from the Father [and the Son], who with Father and Son is worshipped together and glorified together, who spake through the prophets;

In one holy catholic and apostolic church:

We acknowledge one baptism unto remission of sins.

We look for a resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come.
Amen.

IV. Scripture to Memorize

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

—John 3:16

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. Could Jesus actually have sinned? Was He really tempted if He couldn't sin?
2. How is one person suffering for another fair?
3. How is Jesus both God and man? Didn't He quit being God to become a man?

Session 6

I. Question—How can I be saved?

II. Survey of Key Passages

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Genesis 12:1-3

The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."

²"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Big Idea: God's plan in salvation is to put right the whole world.

Genesis 15:5-6

He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Big Idea: God grants righteousness based on faith.

Mark 1:15

¹⁵ *“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”*

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

...for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Big Idea: Conversion involves turning from sin and self to trust in God.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Big Idea: Faith moves us into Christ and eternal life.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

Big Idea: God's power of salvation comes through the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:1-5

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ²By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.

Big Idea: The Gospel is the Good News about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah.

Romans 4:4-5

Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. ⁵However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

Big Idea: Our salvation is nothing we can earn, but rather is entirely a gift of God.

FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

Romans 8:29-30

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Big Idea: Our salvation begins and ends with the action of God.

Ephesians 1:4-6

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Big Idea: God chose and predestined those who would believe to be His before the creation of the world.

John 6:44

"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

Big Idea: God must draw to Himself and enlighten those who believe.

John 3:3

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

Big Idea: God gives new life to those who trust in Him.

Romans 3:23-24

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Big Idea: God justifies (declares “not guilty”) believers as an act of grace.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 8:1

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus...

Big Idea: Our justification gives us peace with God and removes all condemnation.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them.

Big Idea: We are brought into right relationship with Christ by having our sins forgiven in Christ.

Romans 6:6-7

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Big Idea: In Christ and by the Spirit, believers are set free from the power of sin in their lives.

John 1:12-13

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Romans 8:15-16

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Big Idea: Through salvation, God adopts us as His children.

Ephesians 2:1-10

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 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.

Big Idea: Our salvation is a holistic process accomplished by grace through faith that moves us from our life of sin and death to a life of hope and good works.

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. Salvation from sins is found only in Christ Jesus.
2. To be saved, one must repent and trust in the person of Jesus.
3. Salvation is entirely by grace through faith.
4. Salvation transforms our relationship with God, self, and others.
5. Salvation results in a changed life of obedience and good deeds.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

Salvation... We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God, forever, and members of the one true Church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God.

—John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 5:8;
1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10;
Titus 3:4-7; Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13

IV. Scripture to Memorize

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.

—Ephesians 2:8-10

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. How is God choosing people for salvation fair?
2. Does grace mean that obedience and good works don't matter?
3. Can I ever really know I'm saved?
4. What about people from other religions?
5. What about those who have never heard?
6. Can I lose my salvation?

Session 7

I. Question—How do I live the Christian life?

II. Survey of Key Passages

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, 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."

Big Idea: The Christian life is one of purpose (make disciples), service (all authority), and relationship (I am with you).

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Big Idea: Our mission is empowered by the Spirit and has its aim as the whole world.

Romans 6:6-14

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Big Idea: As followers of Jesus, we are not only freed from the penalty of sin but also its power. We are no longer slaves!

Romans 7:21-25

So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Big Idea: Yet, the Christian life is still an ongoing struggle with sin.

Galatians 5:16-23

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Big Idea: The inclination to sin remains with us even as the Spirit indwells us. The Christian life consists of following the Spirit's desire for righteousness over the flesh's desire for sin.

Ephesians 4:20-24

That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Big Idea: Spiritual growth requires a transformation of the mind.

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Big Idea: True worship of God is the renewal of mind and lifestyle that comes from knowing what He has done for us in Jesus Christ and offering ourselves to Him.

Philippians 3:20-21

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Big Idea: No matter how hard and long the struggle, God will complete His work of transforming us at the resurrection.

THE CHURCH

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Big Idea: The early church was a loving community committed to each other, the apostles' teaching, and to prayer. This community worshiped and grew.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Big Idea: The Church is Christ's body to do His work on earth. The Church is united as one and yet very diverse in its gifts.

Ephesians 5:25-27

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Big Idea: The Church is Christ's bride given to love Him and be loved by Him.

1 Timothy 5:1-2

Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

Big Idea: The Church is Christ's brothers and sisters, given to love, encourage, and challenge each other.

Titus 1:5

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

1 Peter 5:1-5a

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ²Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. ⁵In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders.

Big Idea: The leadership of the church is given by God to care for, watch over, and instruct the church. The church is to honor that leadership.

Galatians 2:9-10

James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. ¹⁰All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.

Big Idea: The Church has a responsibility to love and serve the poor.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Big Idea: Communion is God's gift to the Church to regularly remember the Cross and Christ's saving work for us.

1 Peter 3:21-22

...and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,²² who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Big Idea: Baptism is the proclamation of saving faith in Christ before the church and all people.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Big Idea: We must be faithful to attend and contribute to our local church for ongoing spiritual growth.

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. The Christian life is a life of progressive growth in faith and godliness.
2. The Christian life is a partnership as we rely on God's Spirit to transform us.
3. The Christian life depends on the local church as the community of faith.
4. The Church is the body, bride, and family of Christ.
5. The Church has leadership for structure and care.
6. The tasks of the Church are evangelism, acts of love and care, and worship of God.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

Salvation... We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God, forever, and members of the one true Church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God.

—John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 5:8;
1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7;
Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13

The Church... We believe that all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal Church and are directed by the Scriptures to associate themselves in local, visible churches. The local church is the only scriptural representation of Christ's invisible Church and consists only of regenerated believers. The local church is autonomous in its government and recognizes its own members for the Biblical offices of elder and deacon. Two ordinances have been committed to the local church—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The purpose of the church is to lead others to Christ, mature them in the faith, and equip them for personal ministry.

—Matthew 16:13-28; 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29;
Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:11-13; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3

5. What about certain more “supernatural gifts”?

Range of Views of Supernatural Gifts¹

DEIST	CESSATIONIST	CONTINUATIONIST	CHARISMATIC	HYPER-CHARISMATIC
<p>This view teaches that the Holy Spirit has no role in our lives today. It is just our minds and the Bible.</p>	<p>This view teaches that the supernatural gifts (tongues, miracles, and prophecy) were for the early church and are not given as gifts to the church today (though God can still do as He pleases). God speaks through the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit enables us to understand, trust, and apply the Scriptures.</p>	<p>This view teaches that the supernatural gifts are given to every generation and should be practiced today as God gives them but always tested according to the guidelines of Scripture. Gifts are given by grace and are not the evidence of salvation or spirituality. New words from the Lord are always secondary to Scripture.</p>	<p>This view teaches that the supernatural gifts are given to every generation and should be practiced today but always tested according to the guidelines of Scripture. This view teaches that manifestations should be actively sought after. Gifts are given by grace and are not the evidence of salvation or spirituality. New words from the Lord are always secondary to Scripture.</p>	<p>This view teaches that the supernatural gifts are given to every generation and should be practiced today and are valued more than Scripture. These manifestations should be actively sought after as evidence of God's presence. Some hold that only the supernaturally gifted are truly saved and are more spiritual than others.</p>
<p>Verdict: Unbiblical Option</p>	<p>Verdict: Biblical Option</p>	<p>Verdict: Biblical Option</p>	<p>Verdict: Biblical Option</p>	<p>Verdict: Unbiblical Option</p>

¹ Adapted and modified from Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 386.

Session 8

I. Question – How will God finish His rescue plan?

II. Survey of Key Passages

Genesis 1:27-28

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Big Idea: God’s original purpose and design for mankind was to live a blessed, physical, and spiritual life on earth.

Genesis 12:1-3

The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”

² “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

Big Idea: God’s work in redemption is bringing all nations back to His original blessing.

Isaiah 65:17

"See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind."

Big Idea: God will recreate both heaven and earth.

Daniel 2:44

"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever."

Big Idea: All human governments will fail, and God will rule the earth forever.

Daniel 12:2-3

Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Big Idea: All of the dead will be resurrected, but with different destinies.

Joel 2:30-32

I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke.³¹ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.³² And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

Big Idea: God will come in judgment of sin, and only those who call on the Lord will be saved.

THE LAST DAYS

Matthew 24:4-8

Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. ⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of birth pains."

Big Idea: False messiahs, wars, and natural disasters are normal parts of life until Jesus returns.

Matthew 24:9-14

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. ¹⁰ At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, ¹¹ and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, ¹³ but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

Big Idea: Persecution, disappointment, and defeat will go with great advances of the Gospel until Jesus returns, but the Gospel will go out to all nations!

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ²not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. ³Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Big Idea: Before the end, a figure will rise who will oppose God and personify evil and rebellion.

THE RETURN OF CHRIST

Matthew 24:22-29

"If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. ²³At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. ²⁴For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵See, I have told you ahead of time. ²⁶'So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. ²⁷For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.

²⁹"Immediately after the distress of those days " the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken."

Big Idea: When Jesus returns, it will be big and obvious, so do not be deceived by other claims.

Revelation 19:11-16

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. ¹²His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Big Idea: At Jesus' second coming He will return as Warrior, King, and Judge to bring justice and rule to earth.

Acts 1:6-11

Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Big Idea: Jesus will return visibly, coming down from the heavens.

THE RESURRECTION

Romans 8:18-23

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

Big Idea: What we now experience in Christ is only a taste of what is to come when all creation will be restored.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—⁵²in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

Big Idea: At the resurrection, those who have died will be resurrected and those who have not will be transformed into resurrection bodies.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

... their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Big Idea: Our salvation is entirely by grace through faith, but our deeds done in life will still be assessed at the judgment seat and rewarded.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Big Idea: We have the hope that we will be reunited with loved ones again when Jesus gathers His followers to Himself.

THE MILLENIUM

Revelation 20:1-6

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ²He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. ⁴I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Big Idea: Jesus' Second Coming brings victory and peace in His Kingdom-reign.

ETERNITY

Revelation 21:1-8

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ²I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” ⁵He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ⁸But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

Big Idea: When Jesus returns, He will create a new home for believers to remain with Him forever while those who reject Him will be cast out forever.

III. Summary of Biblical Truth

1. God will finish the rescue plan that He started.
2. Jesus is our hope to put the world right.
3. We were made for earth and our forever home will be a new earth with Jesus.
4. God will judge mankind for our response to Jesus.
5. As followers in Jesus we have hope for the future and a mission for the present.
6. Jesus will return physically, visibly, and it will be unmistakable.
7. We will all be resurrected, some to eternal reward and others to eternal punishment.

Doctrinal Statement of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

Future... We believe that prophetic scriptures teach the imminent return of Jesus Christ.

—John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

We believe the second coming of Christ will occur in a bodily, visible manner with great glory.

—Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Revelation 20:1-4

IV. Scripture to Memorize

*"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.
²My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?
³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.
⁴You know the way to the place where I am going."*

—John 14:1-4

V. Difficult Questions and Objections

1. How can a loving God send people to hell forever?
2. Why are there so many views about the end times?
3. Does all this really matter?
4. How can I know who the anti-christ is?
5. Will Heaven be boring?
6. Will I remember people I knew? What about remembering sad things?

Appendix A

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

GOD...

We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. We further believe that God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each function differently in respect to God's purposes and dealings with man.

—Deuteronomy 4:39; 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

THE FATHER...

The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to His own purpose, pleasure, and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for His own glory. He graciously involves Himself in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

2 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:9;
John 5:19-24; Ephesians 1:2-6

THE SON...

The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, surrendered nothing of His deity during His earthly life. Having led a sinless life, He satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by His substitutionary death. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His physical ascension, and His visible return to earth to establish His earthly kingdom.

—John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8;
Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:17-18; Revelation 20:11-15

THE HOLY SPIRIT...

The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of men. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through His death on the cross. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers the Church to live a lifestyle pleasing to God, endowing it with special gifts which equip believers to accomplish distinct ministries, planned beforehand by God the Father.

—John 3:1-8; 15-16; 16:4-15; 1 Corinthians 12;
Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18-21

MAN...

We believe that man was directly created in the image of God to enjoy His fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Man sinned by voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God; as a result, all men are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of man was a non-repeatable historical fact; the effects of which are transmitted to all men, each of whom is born with a sinful nature and sins habitually in thought, word, and deed.

—Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:3-4;
Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-23; Ephesians 2:1-3

SALVATION...

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God, forever, and members of the one true Church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his life to the control of the Holy Spirit, who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God.

—John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 5:8;
1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10;
Titus 3:4-7; Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13

THE CHURCH...

We believe that all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal Church and are directed by the Scriptures to associate themselves in local, visible churches. The local church is the only scriptural representation of Christ's invisible Church and consists only of regenerated believers. The local church is autonomous in its government and recognizes its own members for the Biblical offices of elder and deacon. Two ordinances have been committed to the local church—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The purpose of the church is to lead others to Christ, mature them in the faith, and equip them for personal ministry.

—Matthew 16:13-28; 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; 4:1-16;
1 Corinthians 11:23-29; Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:11-13;
Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3

MARRIAGE...

We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin.

—Genesis 2:24-25; Exodus 20:14, 17; Matthew 19:4-6, 9;
Romans 1:18-31; I Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20; Jude 7

Marriage ceremonies conducted on Fellowship Bible Church premises or by Fellowship Bible Church staff should represent the establishment of this covenant relationship.

We believe that God created the human race male and female, and all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin.

—Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 22:5

FUTURE...

We believe that prophetic scriptures teach the imminent return of Jesus Christ.

—John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

We believe the second coming of Christ will occur in a bodily, visible manner with great glory.

—Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Revelation 20:1-4

—Adopted by the Elders of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas
January 23, 2016

Appendix B

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, what does “theology” mean?
2. How do you feel about theology? Does it scare you? Why?
3. Have you ever seen an intense fight over something religious?
What was it about?
4. Why is theology important for following Jesus? How does what you believe about God effect the way you live?
(Ro. 10:2-3, Mt. 28:19-20, Ga. 1:6-9)
5. What are some common things people in your school and world say or think about God and religion?
6. What are some of the biggest theological questions you have or people you know have?

7. How can you do theology in a helpful, loving, and worshipful way?

(1 Cor. 8:1, Deut. 29:29, Mk. 7:8)

Note: "Worship" is responding rightly to God's revealing of Himself. So, "worshipful" theology would be theology that pauses to respond to God, acknowledging who God is and who we are.

8. What are some of your hopes and goals for this study?

This week: Make a list of areas in your life where you have theological questions that you want to explore.

For further study:

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 1

by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

Who Needs Theology? An Invitation to the Study of God

by Stanley Grenz & Roger E. Olson

Big Idea: Everyone already does theology. Any thought you have about God, anything you say about God, that's theology! The question is, are you doing good theology? Are you thinking and speaking true things about God?

SESSION 1 | HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?

What theological questions did you come up with after last week?

1. Have you ever wished God would speak?
Have you ever felt like you couldn't find God? What was that like?

2. If you had to find God on your own, where would you look?
How would you get started?

3. What does revelation mean?

4. How has God revealed himself to mankind?

5. How do we find and know Christ today?

6. What does hearing from and meeting with God look like in your daily life?

This week: Commit to spending time reading the Bible at least 5 days this week. Write down the answer to one simple question each day, “What did I learn about what God is like?” You may try reading Psalm 1, 19, or 119. You may also look at 2 Timothy chapters 2 and 3.

For Further Study:

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 1
by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

Big Idea: We can only know God if He makes Himself known, and He has done this primarily through His Son, Jesus, and the Scriptures.

SESSION 2 | WHO IS GOD?

Last week's follow up:

What did you learn about God from your time in the Scriptures?

1. How do you recognize someone? What things do you notice in person? On the phone?
2. Do you know anyone who worships a god other than the Biblical God? How do you know that you worship the true God?
3. If someone asked you, "What is the Trinity?" how would you answer? (This might be a good one for everyone to take a stab at).
4. What does it mean that there is one God? (Gen. 1:1-5; Deut. 4:39, 6:4)
5. Who are the three persons of the Trinity?
6. How do we know that each person is fully God? (Jn. 1:1-4, 18; Col. 2:9-10; Heb. 1:1; Ac. 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 3:17-18)

7. How do we know they're not all just the same person showing up in different forms? (Mark 1:9-11)

8. If the one true God is Trinity, how should that truth effect how you worship?

9. How is daily life changed by knowing God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

This Week: Spend time writing out why it matters to know and worship each person of the Trinity. Pray, thanking God for the work of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in your life.

For Further Study:

What is the Trinity?

by R.C. Sproul (free download at <http://www.ligonier.org/store/what-is-the-trinity-paperback/>)

Christian Beliefs

by Wayne Grudem, ch. 3.

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 1

by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

Big Idea: The one true God who created the world is the Triune God of the Bible, one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit.

SESSION 3 | WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Last week's follow up:

Can you explain what it means that God is Trinity?

1. When you picture or imagine God, what do imagine God is like? Are there images or ideas that come to mind? Where did those ideas come from?
2. Of the attributes of God discussed, which ones seem most amazing or mind-boggling to you?
3. How does knowing that God is eternal and not bound by time help you to trust Him for your future?
4. Is knowing that God is everywhere and with you always encouraging to you or a little scary? Why?
5. We said that God is all-powerful and not limited by anything outside of Himself. Where do you doubt this? Where is it difficult to believe this?

6. Have you ever doubted the goodness of God? When and why?

7. What do we do when we want to trust God's power and goodness, but we're having a hard time seeing how our circumstances can work out for good?

8. What questions are still lingering about what God is like?

This Week: Choose one attribute of God discussed and choose a way to worship Him for that—perhaps by journaling about it or an act of obedience and trust.

For Further Study:

The Knowledge of the Holy
by A. W. Tozer

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 1
by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

SESSION 4 | WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD AND ME?

Last week's follow up:

Can you talk about one attribute of God we discussed and how it affects your life?

1. What are some of the biggest problems you see in our world?
Where do you think they come from?
2. Read Romans 1:18-23. What does the word "wrath" mean?
(Leader Note: The word "wrath" means "anger towards wrongdoing.")
3. What brings God's wrath? Does the idea of God being angry bother you? Why or why not?
4. Why is it actually good news that God is angry towards wickedness?
What would it say about God if He were not?
5. What is sin? (Leader Note: Sin describes what we are, what we believe, and what we do. Sin is separation from God, lack of trust in God, and disobedience to God.)
6. Read James 1:13-15. Where does sin come from?
Where does sin lead?

7. How would you respond to a friend who said their actions had to be right because they felt so right inside?

8. Read Ephesians 4:17-19. What does it mean to be “darkened in understanding,” “separated from the life of God,” and “having lost all sensitivity?”

9. If sin is the biggest problem with the world, how are you part of that problem? Or, in other words, where do you see sin in your life?

10. How does recognizing the sin in your own life help you when dealing with others’ sins?

This Week: Choose one area of need in your life where you see sin at work. Commit to praying each day that God would give you strength and faith to love Him more than that sin.

For Further Study:

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 2
by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

Romans 1-3

SESSION 5 | WHAT DID GOD DO ABOUT THE PROBLEM?

Last week's follow up:

Where did you see the effects of sin in your life and the world last week?

1. What was the best news you ever remember hearing?
2. The word "gospel" means good news. Take a moment and try to write down what the "good news" of the Christian faith is in just a few sentences, then share what you wrote with the group.
3. Read Romans 1:1-6. We talked about the words "Cradle, Cross, and Crown" in the videos. Can you find those three ideas in this Romans passage that describes the Gospel?
4. How does verse 3 describe Jesus as both God and man?
5. Jesus, the Son of God, is called Immanuel, meaning "God with us." Why is it important to you that God became a man and walked with us on earth?

6. Why did Jesus die?

(Leaders, you may have students look up and read the following verses:
Mark 10:45; John 3:16; 15:13; Romans 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:10;
1 John 3:16; Colossians 2:15).

7. Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-22. What does “resurrection” mean? According to this passage, why is the resurrection essential to Christian faith?

8. How much does God love you? Have you ever truly believed that Christ died for you? If that’s true, how does it change your life?

This Week: Spend some time responding to God in prayer. Consider reading Mark 8-16 to learn about Christ’s death for you. Pray or journal your thoughts about the “good news” of our faith.

For Further Study:

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 2
by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svingel

50 Reasons Jesus Came to Die
by John Piper

The Cross of Christ
by John Stott

SESSION 6 | HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

Last week's follow up:

Take a second attempt at writing down the "good news" of the Christian faith in a few sentences.

1. What's your most memorable Christmas present? Tell the story.
2. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. What does grace mean?
3. What do the words "faith" and "salvation" mean?
4. What roles do grace and faith play in your salvation?
5. Read Romans 4:4-5. In what ways have you tried to work and earn your salvation? How do you try to prove to God, others, and yourself that you are good enough?
6. If salvation is by grace and not works, then how do you receive God's grace?

7. Have you ever personally responded to God's grace in faith?

8. If our salvation is a gift of grace through faith, then why does the way we live matter?

9. What are some of the benefits of our salvation? (John 3:3; Romans 5:1, 6:6-7; 8:1; 8:15-16; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

This Week: How can you receive grace and give grace this week? Share one response to grace with your group and commit to practice it this week.

For Further Study:

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 2
by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

SESSION 7 | HOW DO I LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

Last week's follow up:

Did you see any examples of people offering grace this past week?

Did you have the chance to offer grace to someone?

Take a moment to share about it.

1. Think back to one year ago. How are you different now from a year ago?
2. Read Ephesians 4:20-24. What are some of the actions, thoughts, and feelings of the "old self" that you need to put away from your life?
3. How can a desire be "deceitful?" Where have you seen your desires deceive you?
4. What would you look like if you "put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness"? How would you be different from how you are now?
5. Verse 23 says that you must "be made new in the attitude of your minds." What attitudes or thoughts keep you from changing? What thoughts about God and yourself need to change?

6. Read Acts 2:42-47. What role does church play in your everyday life?

7. What kinds of things was this church in Acts doing? Which of those does your group do well? Which could you grow in?

8. What are you personally doing to help your group be stronger and healthier?

9. At the end of the passage, we are told that this healthy church saw new people coming to faith. Who has come to faith through your group? Who is in your world that could hear about Jesus through your group?

This Week: Identify one area to grow in your walk with Jesus this week. What “deceitful desires” and wrong beliefs hinder growing in this area. Commit to share this with another person and pray for growth.

For Further Study:

Exploring Christian Theology. Volume 3
by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svigel

You Can Change by Tim Chester

Life's Healing Choices by John Baker

Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

SESSION 8 | HOW WILL GOD FINISH HIS RESCUE PLAN?

Last week's follow up: How did your growth area go this week?
Would anyone want to share a story of how they sought to grow and how that went?

1. When you think about "the end times," what thoughts, feelings, and images come to mind?
2. If you could dream up a perfect world, what would it look like?
3. Read Matthew 24:9-14. What kinds of things does Jesus promise will happen to His followers during this life?
4. What is our responsibility in spite of this persecution, according to verses 12-14?
5. Read Revelation 21:1-8. What does John see in verses 1-2? What is surprising about that?

6. What do the words “heavens,” “earth,” and “city” mean? How is a city on earth different than you may have imagined eternity looking like?

7. What is taken away in verse 7?

8. How would you live differently if you truly believed that this was your inheritance, your destiny? How does hope of what Jesus will do in the future give you courage to do what He has given you to do today?

This Week: Spend some time doing some “theological day-dreaming.” Set aside 15 minutes to go somewhere you love being or to do something you really enjoy, and imagine being free to enjoy this forever, without temptation, sadness, or death. Thank God that He will restore life on earth as it was meant to be.

For Further Study:

Exploring Christian Theology, Volume 3

by Nathan Holsteen and Michael Svingel

Heaven by Randy Alcorn

Surprised by Hope by N. T. Wright

Appendix C

OUR FAITH

Personal Statement of Belief

I. How can I know God? I believe about the Scriptures...

(Psalm 19, Hebrews 1:1-2, 2 Peter 2:1:20-21, Timothy 3:16, 1 Corinthians 2:14)

II. Who is God? I believe about the Trinity...

(Exodus 3:14-15, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, John 1:1-4, John 1:18, Colossians 2:9-10, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, Mark 1:9-11)

III. What is God like? I believe about God's attributes...

(Exodus 34:6-7, Acts 17:24-25, James 1:17, Jeremiah 32:17, Psalm 139, Psalm 90:2, 1 John 4:16)

IV. What is wrong with the world and me? I believe about humanity and sin... (Genesis 1:1, Genesis 1:26-31, Genesis 3, Romans 3:9-12, Romans 6:23)

V. What did God do about the world's problems? I believe about Jesus... (Genesis 12:1-3, John 1:14, Hebrews 2:17-18, Isaiah 53:4-10, Hebrews 9:27-28, 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

VI. How can I be saved? I believe about salvation...
(Mark 1:15, John 3:16, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:1-5, Romans 4:4-5, Romans 8:29-30, John 3:3, Romans 5:1, Romans 6:6-7, Ephesians 2:1-10)

VII. How do I live the Christian life? I believe about spiritual growth and the church... (Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 6:6-14, Galatians 5:16-23, Ephesians 4:2-24, Acts 2:42-47, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 1 Peter 5:1-5, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 1 Peter 3:21-22)

VIII. How will God finish His rescue plan? I believe about the last things... (Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, Acts 1:6-11, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 20:1-6, Revelations 21:1-8)

