

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com). The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible, New Living Translation*. Copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system without written permission from Q Place, P.O. Box 1581, Wheaton, IL, 60187, USA; 1-800-369-0307; [info@QPlace.com](mailto:info@QPlace.com).

*Foundations for Faith: The Basics of Knowing God*  
Copyright 2017 by Q Place  
Copyright 1999, 2012 by Virginia Bowen and Lorraine Fleischman

Cover photo by Emily Capo Sauermaun  
First printing 2017  
Printed in the United States of America  
ISBN 978-1-880266-46-5

# CONTENTS

## **GETTING STARTED**

How to Use this Discussion Guide .....	5
What Is a Q Place? .....	6
Q Place Guidelines .....	6
Q Place Discussion Tips .....	7
Tools for Studying the Bible in a Q Place .....	7
When You Are the Question-Asker .....	8

## **FOUNDATIONS FOR FAITH: The Basics of Knowing God**

Introduction .....	9
<b>1. According to the Bible, What Is God Like?</b>	
Genesis 1—2:3 .....	11
<b>2. How Does God Relate to the People He Created?</b>	
Psalm 139 .....	19
<b>3. What Provisions Does God Make for Humankind?</b>	
Genesis 2 .....	25
<b>4. What Changed Everything?</b>	
Genesis 3 .....	31
<b>5. What Is the Result?</b>	
Genesis 4, Romans 3:9-18, Ephesians 2:1-3 .....	39
<b>6. What Did God Do about the Problem?</b>	
The Gospels .....	45
<b>7. Did Jesus Really Come Back from the Dead?</b>	
The Gospels .....	53
<b>8. Why Did Jesus Have to Die?</b>	
Mark, Isaiah, New Testament Letters .....	59
<b>9. What Is the Significance of Jesus' Crucifixion?</b>	
The Point of It All .....	65

# Foundations for Faith

## The Basics of Knowing God

---

### Introduction

The steps people take to a living relationship with God are unique to each individual, but the underlying issues are universal:

*How did this world and its inhabitants come to be?*

*If an all-powerful God exists, why is the world today in such a deplorable state?*

*Does God really care for us?*

*Is it possible to know God? And if so . . . how?*

*Foundations for Faith* is a discussion guide designed to help you walk through these basic, essential questions and to explore the answers given in the Bible. As a frank examination of the Bible, this study puts it all together—what the Bible says God is like and how we can know God.

As you go through the questions, you will begin to see the Bible as a library of books whose central theme is the relationship between the Creator of the universe and humankind. Within this framework, you'll also be given information and the chance to evaluate and decide how its message personally relates to you.

If you're new to Bible study, here's how Bible references work:

*Genesis 1:1-5; 2:1-3* refers to the book of Genesis, chapter 1, verses 1 to 5 and chapter 2, verses 1 to 3.

*Isaiah 52:13–53:12* refers to the book of Isaiah, chapter 52, verse 13 through chapter 53, verse 12.

This study covers Bible sections that are not discussed in chronological order, but in the order in which many people's questions can be addressed more effectively. The study works best with a very small group (3-6 people), but individuals have also enjoyed going through this book with another person, taking turns reading the Bible passages and discussing the questions. The idea is to study together, not to set up a teacher/student relationship. It's crucial for those who are newly discovering the Bible's information to set the pace, with adequate pauses to think and express in their own words the things that they are discovering.

# 1

## Genesis 1—2:3

---

### According to the Bible, What Is God Like?

**W**hat do you think of when you see or hear the word *God*?  
Share your ideas.

There are many ideas about God, and many religions in the world. How can we know which one is true? Or will any of them do?

We can't see, hear, or touch God. Unless God reveals himself to us, we cannot know anything about God with certainty. Has God ever revealed himself? The purpose of these studies is to see what the Bible says about God and how we can know God. After carefully and honestly examining what the Bible says, each person will be better able to choose how he or she will respond to God. In this first study we begin to see what the Bible says God is like.

**Read Genesis 1:1—2:3**, looking for all you can learn about what God is like.

#### **Genesis 1:1-5**

1. What words describe God's actions in verses 1-5?

2. What would God have to be like in order to do these things?

### **Genesis 1:6—2:3**

3. What was the method by which God created (verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24)?
4. In order to accomplish all this, what would God have to be like?
5. What does this section tell us about God's relationship to nature?
6. Observe the order in which God creates things in the six days. What do you learn about God from this?

*Note: The Hebrew word for day can refer to the hours of daylight, a twenty-four-hour day, or an indefinite period of time. If an indefinite period of time is meant here, the length of each day may have been different, some even long ages. While there are differing opinions about the actual events and time frame of creation, the Bible clearly asserts that God brought everything into existence.*

7. What does God think of each thing he makes (verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25)?

How does this compare with most things we make?

8. What is created on the sixth day?

What do humans and animals have in common, according to verses 24-30?

9. What distinctions are made between humans and animals?





13. What difference would it make in your life if you believed that you are made in the image of the God presented in this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. God **blessed** (verses 22, 28) and **gave** (verses 29-30). What do these actions reveal about God?

What is God's final assessment of what he has made (verse 31)?

## **SUMMARY**

1. Recall the actions of God in Genesis 1:1–2:3. How would you describe God from these verses?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do the words ***in the beginning*** tell you about God, God's existence, and God's relationship to time as we know it?

3. How is God as revealed in this chapter of the Bible different from various ideas about who (or what) he is? Consider some common beliefs:
  - Nature, such as the sun or moon, are gods; there are a myriad of gods.
  
  - God is a dispenser of divine favors upon request, to use when you need help, but who can be ignored at other times.
  
  - God is a product of our minds: If you believe God exists, he does; if you don't believe he exists, he doesn't.
  
4. In Genesis, God is described not as a created being, but as the source of all life, a living person who made all things, including the first human beings. What attitudes do you think are appropriate for people to have toward such a God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How do you feel about the idea that God, rather than humankind, is central in the universe?

6. What questions about God has this study prompted for you? Write them here so that you can check back and note related discoveries.

The Bible begins with the assumption that God is eternal, and that God created the universe out of nothing by his power and design. Our abilities to plan, choose, evaluate, communicate, take responsibility, and act creatively—all express how we are in the image of God.

### **IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT STUDY**

How does this all-powerful Creator want to relate to us today? Has God gone off and left the world to run on its own? Or does God want to be involved in our lives today?

As you think about these questions, study Psalm 139 before the next meeting, using the questions provided in Discussion 2.