

Can I Know God Personally?

Discussion 1

Read John 1:1-18

¹ In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

² He existed in the beginning with God.

³ God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.

⁴ The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.

⁶ God sent a man, John the Baptist, ⁷ to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸ John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. ⁹ The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him.

¹² But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

¹⁴ So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

¹⁵ John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.'"

¹⁶ From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

DISCUSS

1. What do we know about "the Word" and the "Light" in these verses?
2. What is the purpose of "words" and of "light" in daily life?
3. Who is the author referring to by these descriptive terms? (See verses 14 and 17.)
4. From these verses, why do you think the author would refer to Jesus Christ as "Word" and "light"?
5. What were the different responses of people to the coming of Jesus Christ into the world (verses 10-12)? Why do you think they responded in those ways?
6. How does verse 12 describe how someone can know God personally?

GROUP GUIDELINES

1. The purpose of this group is to discuss questions about God.
2. The role of initiators is to facilitate a healthy small group process.
3. This group is not for experts. It's for new discoveries. If you think you are an expert, resist the urge to let the rest of us know. Instead, try to listen and ask questions so that everyone can discover answers for themselves.
4. The format is informal discussion, not lecture.
5. If at all possible, read and think through the content and questions ahead of time. Share your ideas honestly and openly.
6. In each session a different person may ask the questions in order to encourage group ownership and dynamic discussions.
7. Maintain confidentiality, courtesy, and respect toward others, even if they don't agree with your position. Do not judge others and avoid side conversations.
8. Do not attempt to resolve all differences or conflicts of opinion. Keep moving when there seems to be an impasse.
9. Begin and end on time.
10. Review the discussion guidelines whenever there's a new person in the group.

DISCUSSION TIPS

1. **Stick to the topic or passage under discussion** in order to build a common frame of reference. Refer to other material only if your group has studied it together or if it is mentioned in the discussion questions.
2. **Avoid tangents.** Many ideas will surface during the discussion. If the subject is not dealt with in any detail in the material, do not let it occupy too much time. Discuss peripheral topics later.
3. **When discussing the Bible, let it speak for itself.** Instead of quoting other books, religious leaders, or notes in the Bible, try to discover the facts, meaning, and application of the passage together while avoiding religious jargon.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION



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