



THE BIBLE: GOD'S AMAZING BOOK • SESSION 6

God's Big Ideas



God's amazing book contains a huge variety of information, from detailed stories to specific instructions. We usually read or study only a small portion of it at any one time. As we look at the whole Bible, however, many themes and overarching ideas emerge. This week we'll look at some of those.

DAY 1—GOD'S AMAZING LOVE

1. Read John 3:16. This is probably the most famous verse in the Bible. What does it tell us about God, Jesus, and ourselves?

2. *People around the world have many different ideas about what God is like. Individuals who

haven't read the Bible tend to focus on only one characteristic of God, so they don't have a clear understanding of what He is like. Read the following verses, perhaps over several days, and think about what they show us of God's character.

- Numbers 14:18; Psalm 145:8
- Job 37:23; Psalm 147:5
- Psalm 25:6; Ephesians 2:4
- Jeremiah 31:3; Lamentations 3:22
- 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16

DAY 2—GOD'S AMAZING WORLD

- 3. The incredible variety, masterful design, and intricate balance we see in the world around us all point to God's mind-blowing creativity. Read Genesis 1:1 and Jeremiah 10:12. What does looking at the world and reading these verses make you think and feel?

DAY 3—GOD'S AMAZING POWER

- 4. Read Jeremiah 32:17; 2 Corinthians 5:17; and Ephesians 1:19-20. What is God able to do by His power?

DAY 4—GOD'S AMAZING PEOPLE

- 5. God's people are not perfect, but when they put their trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit enters their lives, and they begin to change in beautiful ways. Read Galatians 5:22-26. What might it be like to live in a community of people who are all growing in the ways these verses describe?

DAY 5—GOD'S AMAZING FUTURE PLAN

- 6. Read John 14:1-3 and Titus 2:11-13. No one knows exactly what God's plan for the future is, but what can we learn about it from these verses?

- 7. Read Revelation 21:3-4. What trials—common in our world right now—will pass away when God's amazing plan for the future is fulfilled?

- 8. When life gets hard and we struggle to find answers to our questions, how could looking forward to God's amazing plan for the future give us hope and courage to keep going?

*Questions marked with a * are optional, but they're really great questions. If at all possible, please take the time to go deeper and experience richer engagement with God in His Word.

The Bible is a book about God. Sure, it contains plenty about us,
but ultimately it tells His story.



As we read God's amazing book, we come away with a greater understanding of who He is and what He's like. In this lesson, we'll look at a handful of themes that describe just how awesome God is.

God's Amazing Love

Nearly every book of the Bible describes some aspect of God's incredible love. We learn that His love lasts forever. It is utterly reliable. It is beyond our understanding. And His love is very personal. The apostle John is only one of the biblical writers who wrote about God's love.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, *because God is love*. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation* for our sins. (1 John 4:7-10, emphasis added)

God's love is a deep part of His character. In fact, the Bible says He is the definition of what real love is. God's love means that He is faithful, protective, just, and right in all He does. God's love means that He is merciful to sinners. It is love that motivated Him to send Jesus to die in our place so we could live with Him in heaven forever.

God's Amazing World

Another one of the Bible's great ideas is the amazing world He created. Psalm 19 describes the glorious universe He made.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (verses 19:1-4)

People have always wanted to know how our incredible planet and universe came into being. The Bible tells us that God made it all from nothing, and that His power is what keeps it going. We learn that creation is God's pride and joy. Genesis 1:31 says that when God saw everything He had made He declared that it was "very good."

God's Amazing Power

The Bible often refers to God by the name *Almighty*. His power is another of the Bible's big ideas. We call many things today *awesome*, but they are nothing compared to God's power. We see God's power in creation—who else can create something so magnificent out of nothing?

God's power is displayed in many ways, not only in creation. For instance, we read about how He determines the fate of nations. The prophet Daniel said,

Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings. (Daniel 2:20-21)

I lost my father one year back. And now I know I have a loving Father in heaven. He dwells in heaven but lives with me always. He speaks to me through His Word.

—Someshwar from India

By His power, God caused a virgin to conceive Jesus, the Savior of the world. Understandably, Jesus's mother, Mary, wanted to know how this could be. The angel answered,

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.... For nothing will be impossible with God. (Luke 1:35-37)

God's power is beyond any physical, mental, or spiritual power ever known. Nothing in the past has been greater, nothing happening now can conquer it, and nothing that will happen in the future will destroy it.

God's Amazing People

God created people to live in community. When we follow Jesus, we become part of the community of God's people. It's a worldwide community that's worked out locally, in groups of people who help one another live the Jesus way.

The first time we see Christians living in this type of community is in the book of Acts:

Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them. (4:32-34)

When believers are committed to helping and supporting each other, the church is an amazing force. It's far more than an organization or a club. It's a living community, strengthened by the Holy Spirit to learn more about God, tell others about Jesus, and meet people's needs. At its best, it will act like a magnet, drawing people to belong to it and to discover Jesus for themselves.

God's Amazing Future Plan

Human beings have a linear view of time—the past, the present, and then the future. This perspective is how we see eternity, like time as we know it, but going on forever. The Bible, however, presents an expanded view. Eternity is not only about its length but also about its quality. In John 6:47, Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life." He was not simply saying that after we die we'll live with Him forever in eternity. He was also describing a different kind of life than what we had known before we met Him.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23 who promises that goodness and mercy will surely follow us all the days of our lives. This is the quality of life now. But there's more. Those who trust in Jesus will go on to "dwell in the house of the LORD forever" (verse 6). Physical death is not the end. Eternal life with God guarantees an eternity where everything is perfect, as God had intended it to be from the very beginning. And as Jesus followers, we can begin to know something of that quality of life now, as well as look forward to God's amazing future that He has planned for us.

**Propitiation* means "to make atonement for, to reconcile us to God."