

SMALL GROUP SERIES

FOUNDATIONS

THE SALVATION ARMY - USA EAST

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Foundations of the Faith
8-week Study Guide

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Foundations of the Faith

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GOD'S STORY

SESSION 1



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THE MORE WE KNOW OF GOD, THE MORE UNRESERVEDLY WE WILL TRUST HIM; THE GREATER OUR PROGRESS IN THEOLOGY, THE SIMPLER AND MORE CHILDLIKE WILL BE OUR FAITH.

~J. GRESHAM MACHEN, CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERALISM (1923)

GOD'S STORY

God's story is not a short one; from the foundations of creation to present day it was, is, and will be present. As you begin this Foundations study pray for God to give you the ability to see His big picture. In spending time together talking about God's desire to be involved in our lives, may He move among your group, blessing your discussion and your study of His Word.

**This first session is the longest of the eight because it seeks to provide a broad overview of God's story. His story is not a short one since it covers from creation to the end times. If you feel the need to break it into two sessions a natural break is between Crossroads event #5 and #6.*

Opening Questions

- What is theology?
- Why should we study theology?
- If you had to list ten events from the Bible that tell God's story, what would they be?

Watch the Video

Please watch the video about God's story, and take time to fill in the blanks and discuss the broad events in His story.

Crossroads Event #1: Creation

1. Theology is the _____ .
2. In the creation story every day or piece is _____ for the next day. God is a God of order.
3. Moving through the creation story it is very clear that God's intent is _____.

Crossroads Event #2: Rebellion

Rebellion happens in three ways in the scriptural account.

1. _____ rebellion. In the third chapter of Genesis we see that Adam & Eve believe their personal agenda is more important.
2. _____ rebellion in Genesis 6. It has moved across all of humanity.
3. In Genesis 11 we see _____ rebellion. Given a clean slate it doesn't take long for people to rebel.

GOD'S STORY

Group Discussion

1. How do you see rebellion on a personal level? Perhaps in your own life or household.
2. How do you see rebellion as a universal issue in our society today?

Crossroads Event #3: Patriarchs

In Genesis 12 through the end of this book of the Bible, we begin to see that God wants to establish covenant living in relation to us.

1. We learn how we can come to the _____. It's about what God expects of me.
2. He becomes the God of _____, _____, and the God of _____.

Crossroads Event #4: The Covenant

- A. The first part of the covenant is through _____. A son of promise is given to Abraham in Isaac, through which all of the promise will be given.

The Tempter attempts to modify this part of the covenant in three distinct methods.

COVENANT PROMISE	ATTEMPTS TO BREAK COVENANT	
Seed of Israel	Genesis 6:4-7	To dilute the seed
	Genesis 16	To divert the seed
	Matthew 2:16-18	To destroy the seed

- B. The second part of the covenant is _____ in Genesis 12.

"And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 12:2-3 ESV Reference

- a. In the end of verse three the word bless is in the _____ form.

GOD'S STORY

C. The third promise of the covenant is _____.

Why would God give them the land and then wait for 500 years? Genesis 15:7-16 provides an explanation.

Crossroads Event #5: Egypt, Sinai, & The Wilderness Experience

1. There are 400 years of exile in _____.
2. God established the covenant of worship at _____. In that context he reveals something of his holiness.
3. In _____ chapter _____ twelve spies are sent out. The account of the _____ is believed over the _____ and Caleb and Joshua's account caused an uproar.

Then the LORD said, "I will pardon them as you have requested. ²¹ But as surely as I live, and as surely as the earth is filled with the LORD's glory, ²² not one of these people will ever enter that land. They have all seen my glorious presence and the miraculous signs I performed both in Egypt and in the wilderness, but again and again they have tested me by refusing to listen to my voice. ²³ They will never even see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have treated me with contempt will ever see it. ~ Numbers 14:20-23

Crossroads Event #6: Judges, Kings & Prophets

1. In 1 Samuel the nation of Israel asks God for a _____. They have said to God we reject you as the ultimate authority and want to be like the other nations surrounding us.
2. In 1 Kings 12 they have completely given over to _____.
3. Finally, in Isaiah 1:2-20 we see the final demonstration of Israel's defiance in _____.

Crossroads Event #7: 400 Silent Years

1. During this period there is no _____, _____, and _____.
2. The Pharisees are a group that Jesus often questions in his ministry, but they were responsible for _____ during this period of time.
3. Finally, there is a sense of _____ as recorded in Luke 2.

Crossroads Event #8: Kingdom of Jesus Christ

1. It begins with the incarnation. From the very beginning God had a plan for _____. It can be lived in _____, not in rebellion or anarchy.
2. This ends with his _____, his suffering and death. Jesus after living perfectly is subject to _____. Not his own but ours.
3. The resolution of this period is Pentecost. We see in the _____ the fullness of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Crossroads Event #9: Church History

1. In the first 1500 years of church history there is a _____ . There are some divisions, heresies, but a singular _____ .
2. In 1517 a man named _____ begins to question where the church is going and begins something called the _____ .
3. Several hundred years later, there was a sense that religion had become dry. This group of people became known as _____ , of whom John Wesley was a member. Their belief was that God is personal and that religion must have a heart component that makes a difference in how we live.
4. It was this religion of holiness and heart that attracted William & Catherine Booth, and they became enamored with the teachings of John Wesley. They understood that this pietist view was not just personal, but also _____, things could change through a focused effort.