



Hope Community Church

Study Plan for Community Groups

Fall 2022



Welcome to Community Groups at Hope!

Small group study is a powerful way for the people of God to learn together, support one another, and come into closer relationship with Jesus.

This plan puts together a general outline for 8 weeks of study together which will journey through the Bible and dive into some important topics using resources from the Bible Project. www.BibleProject.com

If you are a small group leader, being able to show the video can be very a valuable way to help generate discussion. If you have technical questions, please contact Kari Foote at kfoote76@gmail.com and we will try to help you find the resources you need.

Week One: God

Key question:

How do we understand the complex identity of God in the Bible?

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/eAvYmE2YYIU>

Or search “Bible Project God Identity” on YouTube

- Compare and contrast Genesis 1:1–3. How is God described in these two passages?
- Read Proverbs 3:19, Exodus 35:30–32 and Colossians 2:2–6 and think about how God’s triune being (that is—three in one) uses wisdom to build places where he can be with his people. What do you see?
- Read Daniel’s vision of God in Daniel 7:9–14. What do you think Jesus is connecting to when he says he is the Son of Man in John 9:35–38?
- Read John 15:9–2, Phillipians 2:5–11 and Ephesians 1:15–23 and notice some of the ways we are invited to partner with God. What are examples of what God’s partners are invited to imagine, trust, speak, and do in these passages?
- Other take aways and reflections?

Week Two: The Image of God

Key Question:

What does it mean to be made in God's image?

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/YbipxLDtY8c>

Or Search: Bible project God's Image" on YouTube

- Compare Genesis 1:24–25 with Genesis 1:26–28. God makes animals, patterning them after their kind. What likeness does God pattern humans after, and what does he bless them to do?
- Read Genesis 1:28–30 and 2:15–18. What does God want his image bearers to rule over? What does he want them to multiply?
- Read Genesis 3:1–7. How do humans forget about their identity as bearers of God's likeness? How does the animal rule over the humans and what multiplies?
- Consider again how God creates his living images to rule with him as you compare Genesis 1:27–28 with Exodus 20:4–5. What ends up ruling over humans when they create carved images for themselves, and how do consequences multiply through generations?
- Consider how Jesus – the exact image of God (Hebrews 1:3) chooses to rule. Read Matthew 20:25–28. To rule as image bearers like Jesus, what does Jesus instruct us to do?
- Jesus shows us the mindset we need in order to rule as images of God. Read Philippians 2:3–15 and describe the attitude of Jesus, the complete image of God. What is one way we can shift our mindset to be like him?
- What other key takeaways and reflections do you have?

Week Three: Holy Spirit

Key Question:

What does the phrase “The Holy Spirit” mean?

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/oNNZ09i1Gjc>

Or search: “Bible Project Holy Spirit” on YouTube

- Describe how the Spirit is first introduced in the Hebrew Bible by reading Genesis 1:1–3. What does God’s ruakh (spirit, breath, wind) do in this passage?
- God’s Spirit empowers others for specific tasks. Read Genesis 41:16–39, Exodus 35:29–35, and Isaiah 61:1–4. What tasks did God empower through his Spirit, and what do these tasks have in common?
- Read the account of Jesus’ baptism in Matthew 3:16–17. Compare the presence of the Spirit (above the baptism waters) in this scene with the presence of the Spirit (above the chaotic waters) in Genesis 1:1–3. How does this comparison help us see that Jesus is the beginning of a new creation?
- Read John 20:11–23, Acts 1:1–8, and Acts 2:32–39. What did Jesus give the disciples after his resurrection? How did the disciples receive Jesus’ gift, and what did his gift specifically empower them to do?
- What other questions, reflections and takeaways do you have?

Week 4: The Law

Key Question:

What does it mean for us to follow God's law?

Video Link:

https://youtu.be/3BG09Mmd_cU

Or Search: "Bible Project The Law" on YouTube

- Read Matthew 22:23-40 What does Jesus identify as the greatest commandment in the law? Notice how Jesus' statement is a summary of the ten commandments, which are themselves a synthesis of the 613 laws in the Torah. What do you think is significant about this?
- Observe the structure of the ten commandments and discuss how they specifically describe practices of loving God and one's neighbor (see Exodus 20:3-17)
- Read Jeremiah 17:5-10. Which metaphors describe desperately sick hearts and which describe blessed hearts? Does humanity have any hope for having healthy, functioning hearts again? (see Ezekial 36:26-27 and Isiah 61:1-3) If so, how would we talk about that hope in our own words?
- Read John 15:1-13 carefully and notice the metaphor Jesus uses to describe himself. How does Jesus fulfill the law and the prophets as the blessed vine/tree? How do we "abide," or live, within his blessing?
- Compare Exodus 19:3-6 and Exodus 20:1-3 with Galatians 5:1 and Galatians 5:13-14. Notice how these passages describe God's identity and ours before giving a list of commands. How do you think remembering these identities can provide a foundation for following God's commands?
- How does the Spirit make us new, help us remember God's redemption, and empower us to follow his life-giving ways (John 16:7-15, Galatians 5:16-25, Ephesians 1:7-14, Ephesians 2:3-7, Ephesians 3:4-18)?

Week 5: Holiness

Key Question:

What does it mean that God is Holy?

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/l9vn5UvsHvM>

Or Search: “Bible Project Holiness” on YouTube

- Discuss some of the ways the video mentioned God’s holiness is similar to the dangers and benefits of the sun. Read Exodus 3:1-12, Leviticus 9:23-24, and Leviticus 10:1-3
- Read Leviticus 15:25-30 and Numbers 19:11-12. How does God provide a way to be purified from these two examples of ritual impurity?
- Read Isaiah 6:1-7 and discuss God’s reply when Isaiah admits his impurity. What does this tell us about God’s character?
- When Jesus arrives, he touches diseased and dead people. What is going on? Read Matthew 9:20-26, paying attention to what happens to Jesus and others. How does Jesus mirror God’s response to Isaiah in Isaiah 6:1-7? How is Jesus also like the priest in Leviticus 15:25-30 and the cleansing water in Numbers 19:11-12? What does this tell us about the identity of Jesus?
- What other themes, questions, or takeaways did you notice?

Week Six: Justice

Key Question:

What does it mean to live justly?

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/A14THPoc4-4>

Or search “Bible Project Justice” on YouTube

- Read Leviticus 19:33–34, Exodus 23:9, and Proverbs 31:8–9. Who was vulnerable and mistreated in Israel’s society? What does God instruct Israel to do for the vulnerable and why?
- How do you think humans’ role as image bearers of God (e.g. Genesis 1:26–27) informs what the Bible says is right and just?
- Read James 1:19–27 aloud. What is one example of how both powerful and vulnerable people might use anger to achieve justice and righteousness?
- What does James say about the anger of humanity (James 1:19) and what does he urge us to do instead? (James 1:19, 1:21–22, and 1:27)
- Discuss other themes, questions or takeaways you have

Week Seven: Grace

Key Question:

What does it mean for God to be full of grace?

Video Link:

https://youtu.be/ABPVVw_aw44 or Search “Bible Project Grace” on YouTube

- The Hebrew word from ‘gracious’ Exodus 34:6 is “*khanun*,” which is related to the Hebrew noun “*khen*.” This word, “*khen*,” is often translated as “grace,” but it can also be translated with words like ‘delight,’ ‘favor,’ ‘charm,’ or ‘beauty’. People with wise, eloquent, or physically beautiful qualities naturally attract *khen*. Read Proverbs 1:8-9, 22:11, and 31:30 in a few translations. What do you notice about how your Bible translates the word “*khen*”? Discuss the different ways *khen* is used in these examples?
- *Khen* can also be used to communicate an act of generous favor. In these cases, the recipients of *khen* are usually undeserving or perceived as such, so translators use words like “mercy” or “plead” for *khen* or *khanun*. With this in mind, read Genesis 42:21, Esther 4:8, and Ruth 2:10 before discussion how *khen* works in these examples?
- Let’s look at more ways *khen* is used in the Bible. When undeserving people cry out for God to be *khanun* or gracious (Psalms 4:1, Psalms 102:12-14), how does God consistently respond (Psalms 102:17-21, Isaiah 30:18-20)?
- God’s consistent response of grace ultimately leads us to Jesus. So, let’s turn to the New Testament, where the Greek word “*kharis*” is often translated as “grace.” Read John 1:14-17 aloud together in your group. How does Jesus fully embody God’s glorious grace?
- When extraordinary gifts of grace are given, they cannot be experienced unless they are received. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 as well as 1 Peter 5:4-7. According to these passages, with what attitude to people receive God’s gift of *kharis*?

Week Eight: Heaven and Earth

Key Question:

What does the Bible really teach about Heaven and what is Heaven's relationship to Earth?

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/Zy2AQLK6C5k> or Search "Bible Project Heaven and Earth" on YouTube

- The Garden of Eden was the first place where God's space and humanity's space were one. Read Genesis 3 and discuss how these two spaces were driven apart.
- God wants to live with his people, so he made a place (tabernacle/temple) and a practice (animal sacrifice) for humans to be forgiven so that God's space and humanity's space could once again overlap. Explore these ideas in Psalm 65:1-4 and Leviticus 4:34-35. Share your observations as a group.
- With all the above in mind, share any significant details you notice about Jesus' dwelling, or 'tabernacling', on Earth (see John 1:14) and Jesus being called the Lamb of God (see John 1:29 and Revelation 5:1-12)
- Revelation 21 tells us that one day God's space and humanity's space will completely overlap. As you read Revelation 21, how does the author describe the tabernacle and the Lamb? Share your observations with the group.
- What are some of the most significant takeaways you have over the previous 8 lessons? How has studying the Bible with others impacted your personal relationship with Jesus?