

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

We believe in a relational God who created a good world where we could live as his Kingdom community.

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-3, Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 1:31, Genesis 2:2-3, 1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:12

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

1. It's always good to start a small group discussion with an icebreaker, even if your group has been together for a long time. You still learn more about each other through this exercise, and it can often be a moment of humor.
2. There are many reasons we might want to examine what our faith community practices. In general, we tend to drift from our best ideas and values unless we intentionally check in with them and readjust our attitudes and practices around them. We are in a season where many people are reconsidering their faith and deconstructing what they've previously believed. Reexamining our beliefs also allows us to recognize our assumptions whether we are new to faith, long-term believers, or exploring faith for the first time.
3. If we reflect on God as a fundamentally relational being, several thoughts emerge. God doesn't become relational after the moment of creation; rather, the idea of relationship is central to God and in God's creation. It also strongly suggests that we are made for each other. We are social creatures, and for full human flourishing, there must be a symbiotic relationship between God, humankind, and the broader creation. These ideas also teach us that God loves his creation, and he wants it to flourish – that God isn't trying to get “beyond” what he has made but wants to see it flourish, redeemed, and glorified.
4. If God creates by saying “Let there be,” it means that there's room for creation to have its own interdependent life and reality with God. The creation is not the dream of God or an emanation of God; creation has room to grow and flourish and work out what it means to be the good creation. God shares power with creation. He ordains the sun and moon to do their job and charges humankind to live and rule on the earth as his agents.
5. Consider what happens if we have a cruel view of God, like a cosmic cop ready to get you if you step out of line. How does that view of God impact the way a person might engage in human relationships? How might that impact a church's view of leadership and social engagement? Help the group think about examples from their own life. What was their primary image of God? How did it impact their thoughts and attitudes?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND QUOTES

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? communitychristian.org/baptism/
4. Who have you been able to BLESS?

“I was brought into being, and you were brought into being by the Trinity to be a co-lover within the Trinity!” -Darrell W. Johnson, *Experiencing the Trinity*

“The aim of God in history is the creation of an inclusive community of loving persons, with Himself included as its primary sustainer and most glorious inhabitant.” Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*

“Bring me a worm that can comprehend a man, and then I will show you a man that can comprehend the Triune God.” – John Wesley