

Small Groups

6-Week Character of God

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Leader Guide

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to learn about the foundational description of God's attributes found in the book of Exodus.

Each lesson comes with a suggested video to watch while beginning, and these videos are produced by The Bible Project.

LESSON OVERVIEW:

WEEK ONE: The Foundational Attributes - Exodus 34:6-7

WEEK TWO: Compassion

WEEK THREE: Grace

WEEK FOUR: Slow to Anger

WEEK FIVE: Loyal Love

WEEK SIX: Faithful

Questions? If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your Small Group Director Tracy at tracy.malloy@unitecommunitychurch.com

Week 1

WEEK ONE – THE ATTRIBUTES

WEEK ONE: The Foundational Attributes - Exodus 34:6-7

GROUP QUESTION BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO:

- When you think of God, what are the main characteristics (or attributes) you think of first? Why?

VIDEO LESSON

WATCH THE VIDEO ON RIGHT NOW MEDIA OR YOUTUBE:

“Character of God” by The Bible Project

<https://youtu.be/nxwzq1PJlM>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Do you have a hard time believing that any of the five attributes mentioned in the video are true about God? Have you failed to experience any of those attributes from Him? (compassion, grace, slow to anger, loyal love, faithful)
- 2) Share about a time when you DID experience God giving you compassion, grace, slow to anger, loyal love, OR faithfulness.

Read Exodus 34:6-7

- 3) Do other translations use different words to describe these attributes? Does it give you a different understanding?
- 4) Can you think of other scripture references throughout the Bible that highlight these five attributes of God?
- 5) How can God seemingly be both merciful and vengeful at the same time? (forgiving sin yet bringing punishment)
- 6) Read Exodus 34:8-9. What is Moses' response to what God says? Why do you think he responded this way?
- 7) What do you think it means to be taken by God as an inheritance?
- 8) What does Moses' response teach us about responding to God's compassion, grace, slow to anger, loyal love, and faithfulness?

CLOSING PRAYER

Week 2

WEEK TWO – COMPASSION

WEEK TWO: Compassion

GROUP QUESTION BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO:

- What does it mean when the Bible describes God as compassionate?

VIDEO LESSON

WATCH THE VIDEO ON RIGHT NOW MEDIA OR YOUTUBE:

“Compassionate” by The Bible Project

<https://youtu.be/qJEtyAiAQik>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) As a refresher, read the main scripture passage that is guiding us through these five different characteristics of God: **Exodus 34:6-7**.

Compassionate = Rakhum (Hebrew); Compassion = Rakhamim

Both of these words are related to the Hebrew word for “Womb” (Rekhem)

The Biblical word for compassion is centered on a person’s core, and invites us to think of a mother’s tender feelings for her vulnerable infant.

- 2) Share about a time that you have seen a mother express tender feelings for an infant (or a time when you, a mother yourself, have expressed those feelings).
- 3) What are some examples in scripture of God showing compassion? Take time to search if needed.
- 4) The video says that Jesus is deeply moved by human suffering. Can you think of any Biblical examples that illustrate that thought?

Luke 6:36 says, “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” The Greek word for “merciful” can also be translated as “compassionate,” and it carries the same understanding as the Hebrew words used for compassion/compassionate.

- 5) What are some examples of Christians (people you know personally, or famous stories) being compassionate to other people?
- 6) Has a Christian ever shown you compassion? How?
- 7) In Luke 6:36, Jesus is the one asking his disciples/followers to be compassionate. How can you do that in the midst of your normal, everyday life?

CLOSING PRAYER

Week 3

WEEK THREE – GRACE

WEEK THREE: Grace

GROUP QUESTION BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO:

- What does it mean when the Bible describes God as gracious?

VIDEO LESSON

WATCH THE VIDEO ON RIGHT NOW MEDIA OR YOUTUBE:

“Grace” by The Bible Project

https://youtu.be/ABPVVw_aw44

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) As a refresher, read the main scripture passage that is guiding us through these five different characteristics of God: Exodus 34:6-7.

Gracious = Khanun (Hebrew); Grace/Favor = Khen

“Khen” is often used to describe a gift given with delight

Giving a gift of favor is “Khen” because it is motivated by delight.

The most extreme form of “Khen” is showing favor to someone who should, instead, get what they deserve.

- 2) Share about a time you have been given a gift because the other person delights in you.
- 3) The video mentions that Esau shows Jacob grace that he doesn't deserve. What are some other examples in scripture where God (or humans) shows undeserved grace to people?
- 4) The Psalms are filled with people crying out for God's grace. What are some examples of Psalms that include this?
- 5) In the New Testament, the Greek word “Kharis” is used in place of the Hebrew word “Khen.” In the beginning of the Gospel of John, it says that Jesus is God's glorious “Kharis” (gracious gift) sent into a world of people trapped in darkness and death. And as with any gracious gift, all one needs to do is receive it.
- 6) Have you ever struggled to receive a gift that seems too big, or too gracious? What happened?

- 7) How do you feel when others don't seem to want to accept YOUR gracious gifts to them?
- 8) How do we RECEIVE Jesus as a gracious gift?

CLOSING PRAYER

Week 4

WEEK FOUR – SLOW TO ANGER

WEEK FOUR: Slow to Anger

GROUP QUESTION BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO:

- What does it mean when the Bible describes God as slow to anger?

VIDEO LESSON

WATCH THE VIDEO ON RIGHT NOW MEDIA OR YOUTUBE:

“Slow to Anger” by The Bible Project

https://youtu.be/TeQ1nq_YJD0

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) As a refresher, read the main scripture passage that is guiding us through these five different characteristics of God: **Exodus 34:6-7**.

“Slow to anger” in Hebrew literally means “long of nose.” There are examples in scripture of people getting angry and having their “nose burn hot.” It describes how your body, more specifically your face, gets hot when you fill with anger. That’s why people who are “long of nose” are slow to get angry—it takes a while for the anger to reach the face.

- 2) What are the things that you think anger God the most?
- 3) Why do you think God gives people lots of opportunities to change?
- 4) Do you think there are instances when God gives fewer opportunities to change?

- 5) The video talks about how God gave 10 chances for Pharaoh to change (through Moses' intervention). What do you think would have happened if God had given Pharaoh an unlimited number of opportunities to change from his wicked ways?
- 6) Often in the Old Testament, God is patient with people and gives them many chances to do what's good and right. But when God's patient has run out, he allows the consequences of their actions to take over. Can you think of a time when you have been spared from consequences you probably deserved?
- 7) The ultimate act of sparing consequences is when Jesus died on the cross (and resurrected) — providing forgiveness and new life for humanity lost in self ruin. Are you able to describe what you thought or how you felt when you first truly grasped the importance of Jesus dying on the cross to spare you from the consequences of sin?
- 8) It is good that God is patient with us, and it is also good that God allows for consequences — consequences keep horrible things from happening. How can we be people that show incredible patience while also being people that seek God's justice?

CLOSING PRAYER

Week 5

WEEK FIVE – LOYAL LOVE

WEEK FIVE: Loyal Love

GROUP QUESTION BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO:

- What does it mean when the Bible describes God as someone who shows loyal love?

VIDEO LESSON

WATCH THE VIDEO ON RIGHT NOW MEDIA OR YOUTUBE:

"Loyal Love" by The Bible Project

https://youtu.be/UfbyFLgs_NM

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As a refresher, read the main scripture passage that is guiding us through these five different characteristics of God: Exodus 34:6-7.

Loyal Love = Khesed (Hebrew)

This Hebrew word is hard to translate into any language because it combines the ideas of love, generosity, and enduring commitment all into one word. Khesed is a promise-keeping loyalty motivated by deep personal care.

- 1) Has anyone ever shown you love and commitment even though it felt like you didn't do anything to earn it or deserve it? How did that make you feel?
- 2) Have you ever had to show "khesed" to someone, keep your commitment to loving them, even when it seemed like they were turning their back on you?
- 3) The video says that God shows loyal love simply because it's who He is, not because of who we are or what we've done. What do you think about that?
- 4) The video mentions several examples of God's loyal love. What are those stories (elaborate on them if you would like)? Can you think of any other examples?
- 5) Jesus is the ultimate example of loyal love. When we experience Jesus' loyal love, it compels us to re-imagine how we can love God in return and love the people around us.
- 6) How can we live a life of loyal love for God?
- 7) What are some specific ways we can live a life of loyal love for other people?

CLOSING PRAYER

Week 6

WEEK SIX – FAITHFUL

WEEK SIX: Faithful

GROUP QUESTION BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO:

- What does it mean when the Bible describes God as faithful?

VIDEO LESSON

WATCH THE VIDEO ON RIGHT NOW MEDIA OR YOUTUBE:

"Faithful" by The Bible Project

https://youtu.be/HCLuq_5o7_o

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As a refresher, read the main scripture passage that is guiding us through these five different characteristics of God: Exodus 34:6-7.

Faithfulness = Emet (Hebrew) (this word can also mean “truth”); Related to “Amen!”
(untranslated Hebrew expression meaning “that’s truth!”)

“Emet,” when describing people, refers to reliable and stable character, trustworthiness

- 1) There are many places in scripture that describe God as a rock. Take time to search for some examples and share with the group.
- 2) How does the imagery of God being a rock relate to faithfulness/trustworthiness?
- 3) God promised Abraham and Sarah, a couple who couldn’t have children, that they would have generations of descendants. Abraham and Sarah trusted God, and He proved His trustworthiness by following through on that promise. Have you ever had to trust God for something that didn’t seem totally possible? How has God shown his faithfulness?
- 4) It is not abnormal to question God’s faithfulness. Would you be willing to share about a time when you questioned God’s faithfulness?

The Israelites experienced times of faithful human leadership and kingship, but also experienced times when it was broken—leaving them to question who will save them. Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of God’s faithfulness. He is the faithful king whose kingdom will endure forever and invites all nations to trust in him. Jesus asks us to take the same risk in trusting Him/God, just as Abraham, David, and many others did many years ago trusting that God is overflowing with faithfulness.

- 5) Why is trusting God risky?
- 6) What are the alternatives to trusting God?
- 7) How do we grow in our capacity to trust God?

CLOSING PRAYER

GO! CHALLENGE

Congratulations! Your group has finished the 6-week study on the Character of God. Before ending your group, share with your group members the final challenge. GO'ing together!

At UCC, we believe that faith must be lived out (James 2:14-26 - faith without works is dead) and we celebrate GO'ing into our communities through our Small Groups.

To celebrate the ending of your 6-week study group, think of a serve project you can do to serve together this month. It can be something small, like writing cards to veterans or shut ins at a local nursing home or something bigger like doing lawn work for seniors, taking care packages to health care workers, volunteering at a local organization like the Downriver Foster Closet, etc. If you need a list of ideas, reach out to your Small Group Director.

Brainstorm your ideas below:

Serve Date: _____

Remember - let's always be working and encouraging one another to live out our NEXT STEPS into becoming more like Jesus!

SOURCES:

Video Lessons: The Bible Project

Discussion questions: <https://www.bwcflorida.com/bible-studies>