



SEED

FOUNDATIONS FOR FAITH



EVERY NATION

G E N T

SEED: FOUNDATIONS FOR FAITH

Every Nation Gent

www.everynationgent.org

Published by Every Nation Gent

ISBN: 9798458624121

*Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words
and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like:
he is like a man building a house, who dug deep
and laid a foundation on the rock;*

Luke 6:47-48

Introduction	1
Worldviews	4
God's revelation	11
Sin	18
Salvation	25
Lordship	33
Repentance	37
Baptisms: Water	45
Baptism: Holy Spirit	49
The Bible	57
Prayer	71
The Church	79

Our journey starts with knowing God and His amazing Grace offered to everyone, everywhere. It doesn't start with a set of religious rules. God gave us foundations to build our lives on. These truths are timeless and crosses every cultural boundary.

The message of Jesus Christ is an invitation to a rich, fully restored relationship with God the Father. God designed us for a meaningful relationship with Him and has given us scripture to guide us in this life-changing journey.

This is what *SEED* consists of. The *SEED* course contains the basic truths about the Love and relationship with God and how you can grow in Him.

During the next 9 sessions, we pray that you will find faith and understand the Love of God for you.

Discipleship Track: Foundations

We encourage you to do this with someone else and not by yourself. God is a relational being and designed us to be relational as well. Learning these truths in a group with friends will help you to embrace these truths and live them out.



Introduction

Welcome to the SEED Course

Are you interested in Christianity, or maybe just became a Christian?

Either way, this SEED course, as part of our discipleship process, will help you understand the basic foundations of the Christian faith.

For most people the initial stages of discovering the foundational understanding of the Christian faith can be a little overwhelming. Know that you are not alone and that we are here for you, not only to help with the questions you might have, but also to support you and walk alongside you. If you haven't already noticed, the people at *Every Nation Gent* are very passionate about *sharing God with hearts and minds*. In fact, that is our vision statement:

Sharing God with hearts and minds

We want to help you take the first steps as a seeker of truth.

The *SEED* course is a safe place for people to come together and discuss questions about what it means to have faith in God, examining and learn who God is and what He has done for them, and to find out what it really is that God wants us to do with our lives. It is very important to have a good understanding about the Bible and God's plan for mankind before you grow further in your faith.

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Matthew 7:24

Take a few minutes and share with your group where you currently stand in faith towards God?

Use these following guidelines to help with your discussion:

1. Do you believe in God? Why / why not?
2. What implications do you think this has on your life?
3. What will it take for you to change your current believe in God's existence or non-existence?
4. What is your opinion about the Bible?
5. Who do you think Jesus Christ is?
6. What is the meaning of His crucifixion?
7. What is your opinion about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?



Worldviews

Why worldviews?

Everything you do in life is determined by your worldview. You might find this statement too absolute and might want to challenge it, but before you do let's first look at its validity.

What is a worldview?

According to Webster's Dictionary, a worldview is a comprehensive conception or apprehension of the [world](#) especially from a specific standpoint.

This means you live life and make your decisions based upon the way you view the world you live in. If you would believe the world is controlled by human beings, you will live accordingly.

This means your belief determines your behaviour and decisions.

What worldviews exists?

There are two basic worldviews: **Theistic and Naturalistic**. Let's compare these and look at the implications it has on your life.

Theistic

You ultimately believe in two realms. A physical and a natural realm. You believe there is a Divine Creator who created everything that exists. This divine creator has certain attributes:

Eternal: God is not bound by time nor live in time. God has existed for eternity past and will exist for eternity future. God has no beginning, cause or origin and will never cease to be.

Spiritual: God is not a physical being that exists in this world. God is a non-physical being that exists outside of the time-space continuum. God's being cannot be studied and observed through any scientific means.

Omniscient: God is all-knowing, all-seeing and wise beyond any human understanding.

Omnipotent: God is supreme, all-powerful, unstoppable, supreme and almighty. God has the power and ability to do anything within the bounds of logic and reason. For instance, God cannot make a rock that is too heavy for God self to pick up.

Holy: God is holy. No evil exists in God's nature. Everything God does is good and for the good of His creation.

Creator: God is the source of all life and everything that exists. Without God there will be nothing, and all life is accountable to God. God created the world to be observed and studied. All natural law has been designed by God and we have the privilege to observe and study God's creation.

Naturalistic

You ultimately believe the universe is a product of natural processes and has no origin outside of itself. This natural world is all there is and exists only within the confounds of natural law.

Natural law: The world is governed by natural law and these laws should be studied and observed to understand how everything works. There is no such thing as a spiritual realm existing separate from the natural.

Time-bound: Everything exists within time and there is not eternal realm.

Nature centred: The centre point of all existence is nature, or in some cases might be humans.

No cause: The universe has no cause. It came into existence by forces of nature and needs to be explained through physics.

Nature of humans: Mankind is not distinct from nature and has no ultimate purpose besides being part of the natural processes in the universe.

How do these worldviews influence your life and existence?

Morality: Theists believe there is a Divine moral standard given by God that protects mankind from destruction.

Naturalists believe they determine morality themselves. This is either individually where each person decides what is right and wrong for themselves, or a governing body decides the moral standard based upon culture and laws.

Eternity: Theists will live with eternity in mind and believe there is life after the grave. This influences their decisions and lifestyle in a way that reflects a spiritual realm. An example might be the view on death and nobody has the right to take a life.

Naturalists believe the grave is the end of all things and death is a natural part of the cycle of nature. This might cause naturalists to have a different view on who has the right to end a life.

Identity: Theists believe man is created in God's image and has intrinsic eternal value. Life is sacred and Divine moral standards are given to protect mankind from destruction.

Naturalists believe man is part of nature and there is no divine insight into what is best for mankind's existence and life.

Purpose: Theists believe in intrinsic human value with a Divine purpose. In your relationship with God you will find meaning, purpose and value.

Naturalists do not believe in a higher purpose bestowed upon mankind from a Divine Creator, and needs to find meaning in life based upon themselves. Some might believe there is no ultimate purpose at all.

Questions

1. What worldview do you adopt? What are your main reasons for this?
2. Are you willing to consider other options? Why / why not?

Discipleship Track: SEED

3. What implications do you face if you are wrong about your belief?
4. Discuss with your group the application of your worldview and how it will change if you would adopt another.



God's revelation

Important Question

As you've seen from the previous chapter, the question about God's existence is the most important you will ever make in your life due to the eternal nature of the topic. But, if God is not natural and cannot be observed, how can we know God really exists?

Qualities

If you cannot observe God, you need to ask yourself what qualities would be visible from God to know whether or not God exists. There are four main qualities that God used to reveal Himself to us.

Creation

When we look at nature, we see design and intelligence. From DNA to the vast expanses of our universe, we see characteristics of intelligence and artistic expression. If

you could type 60 words per minute, eight hours a day, it would take approximately 50 years to type the human genome.

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

Morality

Unlike any other creature in existence, human beings were created by God in His image. This means we have an internal moral guide that no other being has. This in itself is a sign that we have a transcendent part to us that can communicate with God on a spiritual level.

When God made man, He did not warn us against wrong behaviour, He warned us not to take morality into our own hands and become our own gods. This means we need to follow moral guidelines instead of just living by our instinct and "animal nature".

... you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

Genesis 2:17 (NIV)

Bible

The Bible is a book second to none. It was written by more than 40 people over a time span of more than 1400 years in three different languages. Let's look at some of its supernatural attributes.

No contradictions: Although the Bible was written in multiple languages over many years, there is one unique story with no contradictions in the text. This shows the authorship of the scriptures were outside of time and human influence.

Prophecies: There are more than 300 prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. Most of these prophecies related to things that no human could control, like the place and timing of Jesus' birth, the genealogy of his parents, the events around Jesus's birth, life and death.

Isaiah for instance, prophesied that Jesus would be crucified over 500 years before crucifixion was even invented.

*...the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets
in the Holy Scriptures*

Romans 1:2 (NIV)

Trustworthiness of the text: The trustworthiness of the historical documents of the Bible is like no other. When the criteria for authenticating historical records are applied to the manuscripts of the Bible, we see that it stands out above any other historical document in existence. No other historical manuscript has the same integrity as those of the Gospel.

To see more evidence about these last three points, we recommend Dr. Rice Brooks' book *"Man, Myth, Messiah: Answering History's Greatest Question"*

Jesus Christ

When we critically look at the person and life of Jesus Christ, it is clear that there has never been, and never

will be another human being like Him. Everything about His birth, life and death was more unique than any other we've ever seen.

The most important aspect that reveals the nature of God to us through Jesus is the resurrection.

In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line, and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 1:3-4 (NLT)

The ultimate proof of God's existence is found in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Questions

1. What attributes reveal God to you?
2. How do you see God in nature?
3. What moral compass do you follow?
4. What is your opinion about the Bible?

5. Who do you think Jesus is? Why do you think that?
6. How will these attributes that reveal God influence your decisions in life?



Sin

A wrong definition.

Having a clear and true definition of sin is vital to understanding the reason God had to send Jesus as a saviour. Sin, contrary to many wrong definitions, is not when you do something wrong that needs to be punished.

Many people define sin within the framework of a Santa Claus mindset. God does not keep a naughty and nice list of which He punishes those who have more naughty deeds than nice.

Many people say "God will not send me to hell because I am a good person." This implies that God sends bad people to hell and takes good people to heaven. Nothing can be further from the truth.

Defining sin

The sea of sin

Sin should be seen like a state of existence instead of an act of immorality. When the Titanic sank on 15 April 1912, all the people on the boat sank as well. It wasn't only the good or the bad people that ended up in the water, but all people. Whether people were good or bad, intelligent or illiterate, rich or poor, everyone ended up in the water.

This describes one way of looking at sin. When mankind turned away from God and took matters into their own hands, they died spiritually. This means the whole human race ended up in the sea of sin separated from God eternally. Whether people are good or bad, intelligent or illiterate, rich or poor, all are in the sea of sin.

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:23 (ESV)

Holiness

Imagine you own a painting from the famous French impressionist Oscar-Claude Monet. This original will be worth a lot of money. But, if you have a print hanging in your living room, it might look just like the original, but will hardly be worth much.

Even though we are created in God's image, we are not God. This means we are not as Holy as God. The only way to be as holy as God is when we are one with Him. Only His nature in you can make you Holy.

By being nice, good, smart, successful or even righteous according to the world's standards, you will never be God and never be as Holy as what He is.

This imperfection is sin. Even nice and good people are sinful. Not even our best efforts are as holy as God and are worthless in comparison to His nature.

*All have turned aside; together they have become
worthless; no one does good, not even one.*

Romans 3:12 (ESV)

Cut off

When you cut a branch off from a tree, the branch is separated from the source of life. This separation in itself does not make the branch evil or good.

Just like the branch needs to be part of the tree in order to have life, so we need to be in God to have life. But, due to the fact that mankind sank into the sea of sin and got separated from God's holiness, we are now removed from the tree of life.

This separation is called sin. Some branches may be good branches and some may be bad. Regardless of the state of the branch, it needs life by getting back into the tree.

Results of sin

Sin does not result in punishment. This might sound contradicting to what most people believe about sin. The results of sin is not punishment, but death. This does not mean God kills those who sin, but that we die in our sin.

Just like people who are drowning in the sea of sin and removed from the tree of life, death is the result of mankind's separation from God and the source of spiritual life.

Heaven and hell

Unlike the Santa Claus idea of getting rewarded for your good deeds and punished for your bad deeds, heaven and hell are not rewards or punishments for our moral behaviour.

When someone is reconnected to the tree, or rescued from the sea of sin, they will be reconnected to God's holiness. This is called eternal life. When someone does not get reconnected to the tree of life or rescued from the sea of sin, it is called eternal death.

Because we are created in God's image, we are spirit, just like He is. This means we will live eternally just like He does. But, when you die in sin, you will exist eternally without God. This is called hell. When you are saved from the sea of sin, or reconnected to the tree of life, you have this spiritual life in you and God's

Holiness is in you. This is called eternal life. Being with God in His life is called heaven.

Although heaven and hell are real places we will be in for eternity, it is not based upon our moral behaviour, but based upon the life we have in us after being rescued by God.

Questions

1. Are you currently connected to the tree of life?

Based upon what do you answer this?

2. If you would die tonight, where do you think you will spend eternity? Based upon what do you answer this?



Salvation

The lie

Like we've seen, sin is a problem that is not within any person's power or abilities to solve. The only answer to sin, this sea of eternal separation from God, is to be rescued from sin.

Contrary to many beliefs, sin cannot be reversed or solved by any individual, group of people, organisations, churches or religions. Many believe their good lives, church affiliation or religious belief will bring them into God's good graces.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

Ephesians 2:1 (ESV)

The truth

The only way to be saved from drowning is to be rescued. Rescue implies someone else coming to your aid giving you something you are unable to obtain yourself.

You need a saviour to rescue you and graft you back into the tree of life. Without a saviour you will be unable to get rid of the state of sin and will be eternally without God.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

Titus 3:4-5 (ESV)

The Rescuer

God sent a rescuer into this world of sin to throw a life-rope to everyone drowning in the sea of sin. This rescuer is Jesus Christ. Throughout the Old Testament,

God gave us prophecies and promises about the coming Saviour who will rescue us from sin.

*"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."
Isaiah 49:6 (ESV)*

The method

In order to reverse the death that sin brought into this world, God had to step into this world to rescue us Himself. He became a man in Jesus Christ and became death on our behalf.

*He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we
might die to sin and live to righteousness.*

1 Peter 2:24 (ESV)

When Jesus died on the cross, He came into this ocean of sin to rescue us. On the third day, Jesus was raised from the dead to restore eternal life to mankind.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved

Ephesians 2:4-5 (ESV)

The solution

When you realise the death and resurrection of Jesus is God's method of reversing the effects of sin, you will recognise the tremendous price God paid to save you from eternal death. To be restored to life, cost Jesus His life. By Him being raised from the dead, He brought new life into this world and we can be restored to God's new life.

Jesus is the one who drafts us back into the vine to give us new life.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

John 15:1 (ESV)

For you to be drafted into this vine and be made alive in Christ and restored to relationship with God, you need to believe that Jesus is the Saviour of the world. To call Jesus Lord and believe He was raised from the dead will make you a child of God.

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9 (ESV)

New Family

God's holiness is the standard of God's righteousness. When you are raised to eternal life by the resurrection of Jesus, you are born into God's family. This new-birth makes you a child of God.

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

John 1:12 (ESV)

When you are a child of God, you are restored to God's standard of Holiness because His Spirit is now alive in you. God is now your Heavenly Father and you are His child.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 8:11 (ESV)

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Romans 8:15 (ESV)

Questions

1. Have you received Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?
2. Have you prayed this prayer of salvation?

Prayer for salvation

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that the separation between us is because of my sin. I confess that I am a sinner in need of a saviour. Thank you that you had sent Jesus to pay the penalty for my sin. I believe that He died on the cross for me. I believe that You raised Him from the dead. I turn away from my sinful lifestyle today and ask you to forgive me and cleanse me from sin. I want to turn away from everything that the Bible calls sin and receive You as my Lord, Master and Saviour. Please help me to love, serve, and obey You for the rest of my life.

In Jesus' name. Amen

If you have sincerely prayed that prayer, the Bible promises that the old has gone and the new has come! The next five lessons will introduce you to some of the new things that have come



Lordship

Lordship and salvation

The starting point of salvation is the knowledge of the Lordship of Christ. Confessing Jesus is Lord implies a submission to His Lordship in every area of life. **If Jesus is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all.** We do not have the option of receiving Him as Saviour and not as Lord. Salvation is an all-or-nothing proposal.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

Lordship demands obedience

Anyone who claims Christ as their Lord is expected to do what He says. Intellectual faith and empty confession is not enough. If we say Christ is our Lord, our lifestyle should back up our claim.

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"

Luke 6:46

Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my father who is in heaven." Matthew 7:21

Lordship begins in the heart

Submitting to Christ as Lord is not about following a set of religious rules and traditions. Rather, Lordship is a matter of the heart. Lordship begins as an eternal submission of the heart. If it is genuine, it will eventually manifest itself in outward obedience.

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord ...

1 Peter 3:15

Lordship is a continuous walk

We begin our Christian life by acknowledging that Jesus is Lord. We must continue to walk under His Lordship

for the rest of our lives. Lordship is not having a one-time experience with God, but developing a lifetime walk with God. The more we know Him, the more we submit to Him.

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,
continue to live your lives in him.*

Colossians 2:6

1. Have you submitted the following areas of your life to the Lordship of Christ? Health, relationships, finances, time?
2. What other areas of your life do you still need to submit to His Lordship?



Repentance

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about the word *repentance*?

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, everyone of you,

*In the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your
sins ..."*

Acts 2:38

Driving a car in the wrong direction on a one-way street is foolish and dangerous. Some drive the wrong way out of ignorance; others out of rebellion. There is a spiritual parallel. Whether out of ignorance or rebellion, we are all on a dangerous one-way street that will ultimately lead to eternal separation from God. Until we turn around (repent) and begin following Christ, every

step we take is a step in the wrong direction – a step away from God.

Repentance, sorrow, and fruit

Real repentance begins when we are truly sorry for our sins. This "Godly sorrow" makes no excuses, takes full responsibility, and never places blame on people, society, or circumstances. **It acknowledges that our sin is primarily against God.** Godly sorrow produces true repentance and a changed life.

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

2 Corinthians 7:10

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said,

"I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Psalms 32:5

On the other hand, "worldly sorrow" only produces excuses. While Godly sorrow is having a broken heart when we realise we have offended a Holy God, worldly sorrow is being sorry we got caught, or being sorry we have to suffer the consequences of sin. The ultimate difference between Godly sorrow and worldly sorrow is fruit. **Worldly sorrow never produces the fruit of a changed life; it only produces spiritual death.**

"...I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds."

Acts 26:20

"Produce fruit in keeping with repentance."

Matthew 3:8

What do you think is the main difference between *repentance* and *sorrow*?

Repentance and forgiveness

The parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-24 is a beautiful picture of true repentance. The son that left his father's house in rebellion, came to his senses,

turned his back on his lack of good sense and returned to his father. He made a 180 degree turn around, walking away from his former life of sin and rebellion. His father forgave him for his offences and received him back. In the same way, our Heavenly Father is faithful to forgive us when we turn to Him and repent of our sins.

*Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be
wiped out,
that times of refreshing may come from the Lord ...*

Acts 3:19

Ever had a stain on your shirt that you couldn't wash out? Imagine a stain remover that would not only remove the stain, but would make the shirt just like new again. That's what happens when we repent and receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. He not only cleans the sin's stain of guilt and shame from our hearts, He gives us a new heart.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

No regret

Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to God. It means we stop trusting in our own good deeds and religious activity and start trusting in Christ alone. We were going in the wrong direction; now we are going in the right direction. We were running from God; now we are walking with Him. Repentance is the starting point of a new life. Repentance takes us off the treadmill of a self-centred life and puts us on the fast track of God's glorious purpose for our lives. Turning to God means no looking back and no regrets.

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret ...

2 Corinthians 7:10

Supernatural power

You might be asking the question "How will it be possible to not do all these things anymore? Even if I would try to live holy, will I be able to do this by myself?" This is obviously not possible. For this reason God gave us His Holy Spirit. When we receive the Holy Spirit, God gives us the strength to live this life that He plans for us to live. We will not do this out of our own strength, but out of His power. When we live by the power of the Holy Spirit, we will see the characteristics of God develop in us.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law

Galatians 5:22-23

Questions

1. Have you repented of your sin and fully placed your trust in Jesus Christ to save you?
2. How has this decision changed your life?



Baptisms: Water

A new life

What comes to mind when you hear the word *baptism*?

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit ... Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 2:38,41

When the crowd asked Peter what they should do in response to his sermon, he gave them a three-fold answer: repent, be baptised and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thousands responded and were added to the fellowship of believers. The biblical pattern is that everyone who is baptised is also added. Every baptised disciple is expected to become an active member of the local fellowship.

Does baptism make you a church member?

Water baptism

The Bible presents several illustrations to help us understand water baptism. Each of these pictures of water baptism show the old life being put away and the new life emerging. In water baptism, we publicly identify with what Christ did for us on the cross, put away the old life of sin, and begin a new life of obedience to Christ.

Burial and resurrection

Paul compares Christian baptism to a burial. In order to be buried, a person must first die. In the same way, the prerequisite for baptism is death to sin. After we are buried in baptism, then we are raised to live a new life.

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus have been

baptised into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:1-4

Does this then mean you only become a Christian after you are baptised?

Crossing the Red Sea

In the same way the Israelites were in slavery to the Egyptians, we were all slaves of sin. The Israelites were freed from their bondage by passing through the Red Sea. Baptism pictures the freedom from sin that Jesus purchased for us on the cross.

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1 Corinthians 10:1,2

The Flood

Peter teaches that it is not the water or the removal of dirt that saved us, but the death and resurrection of Christ.

who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

1 Peter 3:20,21

Questions

1. What then saves you; baptism or the resurrection of Christ?
2. Why then get baptised

Baptism: Holy Spirit

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Do you think you need the Holy Spirit in your life? Why?

It is impossible to live the Christian life apart from the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come to lead us into all truth.

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you... But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

John 16:7,13

Jesus the Baptiser

John the Baptist taught that water baptism was an act of repentance, and pointed out that Jesus would baptise His disciples with the Holy Spirit.

"I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Matthew 3:11

Why do you think you should be baptised in the Holy Spirit as well as getting baptised in water?

Power to be a witness

The Holy Spirit empowers us to be effective witnesses. A witness is one who not only tells the truth, but also lives the truth.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,

and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8

God's gift for today

Peter taught that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a gift promised for every believer, not just for those present during Pentecost.

Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

Acts 2:38-39

How to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit

James tells us that we do not have because we do not ask. In order to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we must ask – and we must ask in faith.

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Luke 11:13

The Laying on of hands

Many disciples in the New Testament received the baptism of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands.

Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:17

Spiritual gifts

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is accompanied by the manifestation of spiritual gifts. In the biblical accounts of baptism in the Holy Spirit, the most common spiritual gifts manifested is the gift of tongues.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:4

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God.

Acts 10:44-46

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

Acts 19:6

The gifts of tongues and prophecy

Tongues and prophecy are both designed for edification or for strengthening. Tongues strengthen the individual and prophecy strengthens the church.

Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

1 Corinthians 14:1,3

One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

1 Corinthians 14:4,5

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

1 Corinthians 14:14,15

Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues. But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

1 Corinthians 14:39,40

1. Have you received the Gift of the Holy Spirit?
2. If so, what are the main gifts of the Holy Spirit you think you are functioning in right now?

A black and white photograph of a Holy Bible lying on a wooden surface. The Bible is open, and the words "HOLY BIBLE" are embossed on the cover. A rosary with a cross pendant is draped over the Bible. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the wood and the metallic sheen of the rosary.

HOLY
BIBLE

The Bible

A new devotion

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:42

Christianity is more than just a religion. It is first and foremost a relationship with God. The foundation of any healthy relationship is communication. The better the communication, the better the relationship will be. God talks to us in many ways but primarily through His Word, the Bible. We talk to Him through prayer. We learn to listen to the sound of God's voice in our lives when we read His Word. He listens to us when we pray. We respond to His Word with action. He responds to our prayers with action.

In what ways does God speak to you?

The Bible

The Bible is the inspired written Word of God. It consists out of stories from ***history, poems, letters and prophecies***. We should value the Bible more than even our daily food.

I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

Job 23:12

Before turning to Christ, we lived by the world's standards. Now we accept the Bible as the final authority for what we believe and how we live. God's Word is the ultimate and absolute standard for every area of life.

Here is a brief overview of the Bible:

The New Testament (27 Books)

1. Gospel and Acts

- a. Matthew
- b. Mark
- c. Luke
- d. John
- e. Acts

These historical accounts follow Jesus' life, death and resurrection and the rise of the early church

2. Pauline Letters

- a. Romans
- b. 1&2 Corinthians
- c. Galatians
- d. Ephesians
- e. Philippians
- f. Colossians
- g. 1&2 Thessalonians
- h. 1&2 Timothy
- i. Titus
- j. Philemon

Paul's letters were written to individuals or churches and often explain the nature of the Christian life

3. General letters

- a. Hebrews
- b. James
- c. 1 & 2 Peter
- d. 1, 2 & 3 John
- e. Jude

These letters were written by others and often focus on the church in general

4. Apocalyptic Literature

- a. Revelation

Apocalyptic literature uses vivid imagery and a cosmic narrative to portray God's ultimate consummation of history, a vision of the future that gives hope in the present

The Old Testament (39 Books)

1. Pentateuch

- a. Genesis
- b. Exodus
- c. Leviticus
- d. Numbers
- e. Deuteronomy

Pentateuch means “Five Volumes”. These books include mostly narrative stories as the Law that God gave Israel.

2. Historical Books

- a. Joshua
- b. Judges
- c. Ruth
- d. 1&2 Samuel
- e. 1&2 Kings
- f. 1&2 Chronicles
- g. Ezra
- h. Nehemiah
- i. Esther

These books contain narratives that follow Israel’s up and down history.

3. Poetry & Wisdom Books

- a. Job
- b. Psalms
- c. Proverbs
- d. Ecclesiastes
- e. Song of Songs

What these works have in common is their artistic form. They incorporate poetic or proverbial elements

4. Prophets

- a. Isaiah
- b. Jeremiah
- c. Lamentations
- d. Ezekiel
- e. Daniel
- f. Hosea
- g. Joel
- h. Amos
- i. Obadiah
- j. Jonah
- k. Micah
- l. Nahum
- m. Habakkuk
- n. Zephaniah
- o. Haggai
- p. Zachariah
- q. Malachi

They were God's spokespersons who challenged the rebellious people to turn back to God.

What is the key to spiritual growth?

As new-born babies crave milk and need it to grow, so genuine new Christians crave God's Word and need it to grow strong in faith.

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Peter 2:2,

The more we hear or read the Bible, the more our faith will grow.

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word about Christ.

Romans 10:17

How important do you think it is to have the Bible as your absolute standard in life?

How can I resist temptation?

Jesus resisted temptation, not by will power, but by knowing and quoting God's Word. We can win the

temptation war the same way, by knowing and speaking God's Word.

The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'People do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4:3,4

Head knowledge and religious facts don't produce purity and holiness. The word planted deep in our hearts will keep us from sin.

How can those who are young keep their way pure? By living according to your word ...

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalms 119:9,11

How can I be successful?

Meditate on God's Word and carefully obey it. Then success is certain. Obedience brings success.

"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it.

Then you will be prosperous and successful."

Joshua 1:8

How can I know God's will for my life?

As we renew our minds by studying God's Word, we will be transformed and we will understand God's will.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:2

What happens if I know God's Word but don't do what it says?

The measure of our spiritual progress is not how much of the Bible we know, but how much we obey. Those

who constantly learn but fail to obey, end up deceiving themselves.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

James 1:22

Write down areas in your life that you know is contradicting to the Word of God.

How can I resist temptation?

How should I study the Bible?

Studying the Bible is one of the most exhilarating things you can do. There is something for everyone. Poetry, History, love stories, wars, etc. All of this together explains God's Grand design and plan for mankind. But to make sense of it is sometimes a bit daunting. This is why a good bible study routine helps. First of all, it is important to understand the purpose of Bible study, make sure you understand the content of this chapter.

Then some tools might be handy:

- Get a good translation of the Bible. (There are many available. Some are translations and some interpretations. Get both and compare them to get the fuller meaning of what the verse has to say.)
- Find a good commentary. (There are some commentaries online as well as good translations with commentaries in them.)
- Find a place (i.e. a special chair)
- Choose a time (i.e. schedule it and don't try to squeeze it in)
- Read and study (i.e. try to read through entire books of the Bible)
- Prayer (i.e. pray about the passages you read and let the Holy Spirit help you)
- Journal (i.e. record the things God is doing in your life)

- A good tool to help in your Bible study is the Every Nation Biblical Foundations booklet called “The Purple book”.

Discipleship Track: SEED



Prayer

Jesus is our best example for prayer. By observing His personal prayer life, we can learn important principles on how to have an intimate time of connection with the Father.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." Luke 11:1

Prayer is something we should learn to do on a continual basis. Prayer is like an iceberg; the majority of the ice is below the surface and can't be seen. Our personal time in prayer is private, but the more we spend in prayer the larger the area above the surface will become.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful

Colossians 4:2

What prayer is and is not

There are some prescriptions from Jesus on how to NOT pray. Hypocrites are people who do things to gain favour with people. Prayer is something between you and God and should not be used to impress others with.

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full." Matthew 6:5

Pagans are people who are religious and have no relationship with God. They pray all kinds of mantras and repetitive words thinking the more they say the greater the chances of something happening. God desires relationship with us and is willing to answer any prayer that is prayed by faith – not repetition.

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

Discipleship Track: SEED

*Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need
before you ask him."*

Matthew 6:7,8

How are we to pray then?

Pray to the Father... not to the mother, saints or angels.

*But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and
pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who
sees what is done in secret, will reward you."*

Matthew 6:6

Pray through Jesus. He is the only way to the Father.

*For there is one God and one mediator between God and
human beings, Christ Jesus, himself human ...*

1 Timothy 2:5

*Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one come to the Father except through me."*

John 14:6

What can we pray for?

Jesus gave us an example of a prayer that gives us guidelines on prayer. Prayer is not simply approaching God with some requests. Prayer consists out of worship, thanksgiving and requests.

First of all **Worship** God for who He is and what He has done.

Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

Matthew 6:9

Pray for **God's will** to be done in your life, country, church and other areas.

*May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.*

Matthew 6:10

Ask God to help you in **your needs**. These can be in various forms, physically, relationally, financially and in your spiritual growth and relationship with Him

Give us today the food we need,

Matthew 6:11

Forgiveness is a huge aspect of God's grace. If you have anything against anyone else, then you should bring it in prayer to God and forgive them. Also confess the known sins in your own life to God.

...and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

Matthew 6:12

There is also an enemy – the devil – that would want you to turn away from God and will try to bring you into temptation. Pray that God will protect you against his schemes.

And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one

Matthew 6:13

Does God really answer prayer?

Absolutely! The more specific you are in your prayers, the more specific the answer will be. The secret is to pray according to His will. We know His will by knowing His Word. Therefore if we pray according to His Word, we know He will answer.

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him.

1 John 5:14,15

But what if my situation is not directly mentioned in the Bible? How do I know I am praying the will of God?

When you spend time in Gods Word and in prayer, you become sensitive to the leading of His Holy Spirit. God speaks to us in various ways and one of them is through the Holy Spirit. We obtain a sensitivity to His voice when our hearts are filled with His Word.

But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be

Discipleship Track: SEED

granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples.

This brings great glory to my Father.

John 15:7,8



The Church

A new community

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you.

You did not learn this from any human being. Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.

Matthew 16:16-18

Through a revelation of the Holy Spirit, Peter confessed the true identity of Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus said this truth would be the foundation stone that His church would be built on. He also described the type of church He would build, a victorious church that would overcome the kingdom of darkness. Jesus and Paul

used the word "church" in reference to the people of God. Church never referred to a religious building. Here following are some benefits of being part of a local church community:

Friendship

Real friends. Everyone needs them. Few find them. The best place to look for real friends is in the church, among the people of God. True friends are those who have our best interest in mind. They stick with us through thick and thin. Real friends never lead us away from God. Instead, they provoke us to godliness.

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity. Proverbs 17:17

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 18:24

Fellowship

If a piece of burning coal is removed from the fire, it will cool off. If it is put back in the middle of a pile of red-hot coals, it will burn again. The same is true of Christians. If a Christian is removed from fellowship with other red-hot Christians, he or she will cool off spiritually. If a Christian stays in fellowship, he or she will stay on fire for God.

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity.

Acts 2:42-46

Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness?

2 Corinthians 6:14

Worship

God is looking for sincere worshipers. Worship is simply the expression of our love, devotion, and commitment to God. This is expressed in primarily three different ways: time, talents and treasures.

We Worship God by giving Him our **time** to serve in the church community He has placed us.

We worship God through making our **talents** available in our local church to help make it a place where we give our best for God and help organise and serve the vision with skill and excellence.

We worship God through our **treasures**. As a local church, we are being commanded by God to take care of the financial needs of the church where He has placed us.

But the time is coming--indeed it's here now--when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way.

John 4:23,24

Discipleship

The last command Jesus gave His followers before He ascended to heaven was to go and make disciples, to baptise these disciples, and to teach them how to obey God's Word. Therefore, we should first be disciples or followers of Jesus, then we should teach others to follow Him.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:19,20

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

2 Timothy 2:2

What does Every Nation Gent do?

When you attend Every Nation Gent, you will soon find out we are very passionate about ***Making disciples, Raising leaders***. In fact, this is our vision statement.

We want to GO and make disciples. We should not wait around for people to come to us. We love God and want people to know who He is and what He has done for us through His Son Jesus.

Besides making disciples, we should also teach others how to make disciples. This happens through intentional leadership development.

What are the values of Every Nation Gent?

When we share God with hearts and minds, we deeply value

Lordship,

Evangelism,

Discipleship,

Leadership,

Family

During our NEXT STEP groups, we will explain in detail the reasons we believe these values will help us fulfil God's call for this church.

Sign up now for the NEXT STEP group and become part of this exciting journey.

Next Step

- Have you been baptised?
- Are you attending the weekly worship services?
- Have you joined a small group?

- Sign up for the NEXT STEP small groups and see where you can become involved.
- Are you serving at Every Nation Gent with your time, talents and treasures?

To know more about Every Nation internationally, visit our website www.everynation.org

To know more about what is happening at Every Nation Gent, visit www.everynationgent.org

Other links to follow us:

www.everynationcampusgent.org

www.engagebelgium.org

www.facebook.com/Everynationgent