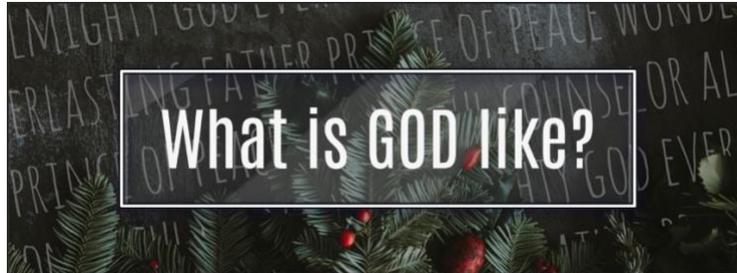


Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series: What is God like?

While much about who God is and how God works remains a mystery, we can know what God is like through the revelations of God that have been given to us: the images and names of God revealed in scripture, the tradition and experience of the Church, and at Christmastime through the greatest revelation of all, the birth of Jesus Christ.

"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell..." Col 1:19

Join us this Advent as we reflect on four of the many names given to the Messiah (Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace) and discover how the gift of Jesus fulfilled the long-awaited expectations of the people and the plan of God to bring hope, joy, peace, and love to all creation.

Message description:

We long to see peace on earth as it is in heaven. Not just calm or tranquility, but the kind of peace that allows all people to thrive: restored relationships, equity, justice, that allows goodness and mercy to flow. Israel attempted such peace, but often through methods of war and dominance at the expense of the poor and vulnerable, whom God has charged them to seek the well-being of. It is Jesus, the true Prince of Peace, who shows us the way to *shalom*. It doesn't come through power and violence and victory, but through humility, love, forgiveness, and blessing one person at a time. His is the peace the world longs for.

Key Scriptures

Colossians 1:15-20

Isaiah 9:6-7

Check out these additional resources with your group, family, or on your own:

- > Advent Countdown to Christmas with Names for Jesus- <https://revolutionky.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Advent-Countdown-to-Christmas.pdf>
- > Advent Wreath to color at home- <https://revolutionky.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Advent-Wreath.pdf>
- > Advent Prayer Walk- <https://revolutionky.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Advent-Prayer-walk.pdf>
- > Advent Devotional, *Unwrapping the Names of Jesus*- <https://www.amazon.com/Unwrapping-Names-Jesus-Advent-Devotional/dp/0802416721>

Questions Related to This Week's Message:

1. What do you *really* want for Christmas?
2. Where do you long to see peace, either personally or in the world?
3. When have you experienced the peacemaking work of God in your own life?
4. How do we see God calling us into the mission of *shalom*?

Going Deeper:

***"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."* -Matthew 5:9**

In her teaching, Rachel talked about how Jesus shows us the way to having and participating in real peace, shalom. In his book *Names for the Messiah*, Walter Brueggemann lists the "ways that make for peace" that Jesus illustrates through his life and teaching. He says that peace requires you to...

- Forgive
- Share generously
- Break class stratification
- Attend to the vulnerable
- Show humility in the face of exaltation
- Be last in a world of aggressive firstness
- Deny yourself for the sake of your neighbor

Spend a few moments of personal reflection on this list, then share:

1. Which of the above "ways" of peace come easiest for you?
2. How have you participated in peacemaking (according to the list) recently?
3. Which way of peace do you struggle with the most?
4. Is God calling you to focus on a new practice of peace this season?

Reread Luke 24:36-49

1. Why do you think Jesus greets the disciples with, "Peace be with you"? Why is this significant?
2. What connections do you see between doubt, asking questions, and finding peace with Christ? What would it be like to have Jesus respond to your fear or questions by showing you the very scars of his body? What would that feel like?
3. What does Jesus promise to send to the disciples? How is this key, to not only experiencing the peace of God, but also in joining the peacemaking mission of Jesus in the world?
4. Where are you called to be a witness for Christ right now?

Experience:

Consider the prayer walk/drive as a fun alternative for your group time during Christmas week!

Advent Prayer Drive/Walk- <https://revolutionky.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Advent-Prayer-walk.pdf>