

Why God is not like us and why that's a good thing!

Session 1 – All sufficient for himself and us

Key verses: *Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 40:28-31; John 17:5, 17:24; Acts 17:24-28; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Colossians 1:15-18; Hebrews 1:3, 11:3.*

Talk notes:

Application questions:

- 1) We learned this evening that creation is a *theatre* for God's glory (e.g. Psalm 19:1; Isaiah 6:3), not a *factory* for producing it. So God doesn't *need* glory from us. He is just overwhelmingly generous in sharing his glory for our enjoyment!
 - How does God's generosity change the way you feel about him?

- 2) God doesn't *need* glory from us. Nevertheless, Revelation 4:11 and 5:9-10 say God the Father and the Lamb (Jesus) are *worthy* of it. Why is this? (Read the verses and see!)
 - How does this challenge or reshape your motivations for worshipping/serving God?

- 3) Read Acts 17.24-28, where Paul was speaking to the intellectual elite of Athens and challenging their ideas about God/gods.
 - How is God's self-existence and self-sufficiency confirmed in this passage?

 - How is our utter dependence upon God confirmed?

- 4) In what areas of life do you try to act most like you are self-sufficient or unlimited, instead of dependent on God?

(For example, are there particular achievements you take too much credit for? Are there areas of life that you don't regularly commit to God in prayer? Are there ways that you take on too much because you feel ashamed to acknowledge your limits? Do you fail to rest well or spend quality time with Jesus, family and friends because your sense of worth depends on how much you do? Do you struggle to give generously to the work of Jesus' kingdom from your time and resources *today* because you struggle to believe that God can provide what you need *tomorrow* (Matt 6:25-34)?)

- What would it look like to humbly embrace your dependence and God's limitless generosity in these areas?

- 5) Read Psalm 103:13-18. How does this reassure us that God does not despise our limitations and dependence on him?

For further reflection:

- 6) Psalm 135:15-18 says those who worship idols become like them – mute, blind, deaf, lifeless and useless. If we try to depend on ourselves instead of God, in idolatrous self-worship, we become less like true image bearers of God (Genesis 1:26-27). We become increasingly deaf to God's word, blind to his glory, unable to understand or speak his truth, and unable to do good – we become useless, like stone or wooden statues. Self-reliance makes you less human, not more!

But Jesus made himself fully dependent on God as a man, so that he could become a perfect saviour *and example* for us (e.g. John 13:5; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Hebrews 2:17-18; 1 Peter 2:19-21). We see this in places like Luke 4:1-4, where Jesus depended on the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to resist temptation from the devil, just as we should. We see it in Luke 6:12-16, where he spent a whole night praying (presumably for wisdom, among other things) before appointing the Twelve apostles.

In the Lord's prayer Jesus teaches us to prayerfully depend on God in all kinds of ways. Read the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:9-13: where could you grow more human by acknowledging your dependence upon God in prayer?