

Building Your
FAITH

BY FRANK HAMRICK
AND BEN WRIGHT

ProTeens

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Written by Frank Hamrick, Jr. and Ben Wright

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Preface

Have you ever wondered if there is one sin at the root of all others? Some people believe pride or selfishness are the root sins, and we certainly do fall into these temptations easily. But there is another sin that is ultimately even the cause of pride and selfishness. This sin is a lack of faith. When we decide that we are more important than other people or when we determine to get our own way, we are revealing that we do not believe what God says about how great He is and how weak we are.

This ProTeen study is designed to help us build ourselves up in the faith, which involves knowing the truth and applying it to our lives. It includes reminding ourselves that God has the right to control our lives, and we can trust Him to take care of us. It will do this in the following four major areas:

In the first section we will study about God—*The Foundation of Faith*. You will discover what God is like and find new ways to know Him better. We will evaluate common views of God. Do you view Him as Santa Claus, a highway patrolman, a jack-in-the-box, or a caring father?

The second section introduces us to the men and women of Hebrews 11—*Testimonies of Faith*. There is much to learn from the strengths and weaknesses in the lives of this group of people who bear testimony to God's goodness and wisdom and the blessing that He pours out on those who trust Him.

The third section leads us on a journey through the letter written by James. No book in the Bible teaches us more directly about what biblical Christianity really looks like—*Faith in Your World*.

In the final section of just one lesson we will reflect on the lessons from what we have learned about faith this year by testing our own faith. First John was written to help Christians know for sure that they have eternal life, and it contains criteria to examine ourselves—*Tests of Faith*.

This student workbook contains the entire Scripture memory course for the year. We have chosen passages of varying lengths dealing with the topic of this study. There are thirteen passages listed in the Scripture memory course. Your youth leader will give you specific instructions for the Scripture memory plan that your youth group will be following.

Scripture Memory Course for Building Your Faith

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Romans 8:28–32 | Isaiah 40:22–31 | John 1:1–5, 10–14 |
| Isaiah 6:1–8 | Hebrews 1:1–40 | Hebrews 12:1–8 |
| James 1:1–8 | James 1:19–27 | James 2:14–26 |
| James 3:1–12 | James 3:13–4:17 | 1 John 1:1–10 |
| 1 John 2:1–11 | | |

Whether you need grounding in your faith or something to stretch you to greater dependence on God, *Building Your Faith* will meet you where you are and point you in the right direction.

CONTENTS

| <i>Unit 1: Foundations of Faith</i> | | |
|--|--|----|
| Lesson 1 | Does God Exist? | 8 |
| Lesson 2 | What Is God Like? | 12 |
| Lesson 3 | How Many Gods Are There? | 15 |
| Lesson 4 | How Can We Know God? | 18 |
| Lesson 5 | What Do We Know About God? | 22 |
| Lesson 6 | Our Views of God | 25 |
| <i>Unit 2: Testimonies of Faith</i> | | |
| Lesson 7 | What Is Faith? | 30 |
| Lesson 8 | Living by Faith | 34 |
| Lesson 9 | Abel: Faith in the Plan of God | 38 |
| Lesson 10 | Enoch: Faith in the Person of God | 41 |
| Lesson 11 | Noah: Faith in the Proclamation of God | 44 |
| Lesson 12 | Abraham: Faith in the Purposes of God | 48 |
| Lesson 13 | Sarah: Faith in the Promises of God | 51 |
| Lesson 14 | The Patriarchs: Faith in the Program of God | 54 |
| Lesson 15 | Moses: Faith in the Pleasures of God | 57 |
| Lesson 16 | Joshua: Faith in the Power of God | 60 |
| Lesson 17 | Rahab: Faith in the Protection of God | 63 |
| Lesson 18 | Other Heroes: Faith in the Providence of God | 66 |
| Lesson 19 | So Great a Cloud of Witnesses | 69 |

| <i>Unit 3: Faith in Your World</i> | | |
|---|---|-----|
| Lesson 20 | Biblical Faith Produces Spiritual Maturity | 74 |
| Lesson 21 | Biblical Faith Provides a Proper Perspective on Circumstances | 78 |
| Lesson 22 | Biblical Faith Endures Temptation | 81 |
| Lesson 23 | Biblical Faith Changes the Way You Live | 85 |
| Lesson 24 | Biblical Faith Rejects Favoritism | 88 |
| Lesson 25 | Biblical Faith Provides Evidence for Its Existence | 91 |
| Lesson 26 | Biblical Faith Controls the Tongue | 94 |
| Lesson 27 | Biblical Faith Cultivates Humility | 98 |
| Lesson 28 | Biblical Faith Focuses on the Future | 102 |
| Lesson 29 | Biblical Faith Turns to God in Adversity | 105 |
| <i>Unit 4: Evidences of Faith</i> | | |
| Lesson 30 | Testing Your Faith | 110 |

UNIT 1

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

LESSON 1

DOES GOD EXIST?

As we try to build ourselves up in the most holy faith this year, the first and most foundational topic we could discuss is God Himself. In these lessons on God, we will discuss God's existence, what He is like, how we can know Him, and how our views of Him affect our lives.

Views on God's Existence

This brings us to the major question of this lesson: Does God exist? Let's take a quick survey of the seven major ways this question has been answered by philosophers, theologians, and common people.

- _____ —There is no God.
- _____ —We cannot know if there is a God.
- _____ —God is everything; everything is God.
- _____ —There are many gods.
- _____ —There are two equal gods; one is good and the other is evil.
- _____ —God created the universe and then left it to run by itself. God doesn't interfere in the world.
- _____ —One true God exists. He is a personal being who rules over His universe.

Arguments for God's Existence

Over the centuries, great thinkers have used a number of logical arguments to point us toward a belief in God's existence. It is important for us to be familiar with their best arguments.

Cosmological—Argument from _____

Every effect has a corresponding cause. An effect as big as the universe must have a cause much greater than itself. Sometimes this is called the “First Cause.”

Teleological—Argument from _____

Our world is not random. We can observe tremendous order and design in the universe.

Anthropological—Argument from _____

- There seems to be a _____ of God.
- Men have a _____ consciousness.
- Men are _____ beings; they have intellect, emotion, and will.

Ontological—Argument from man's idea of a _____

This argument says that because man has an idea of an absolutely perfect being, such a being must exist.

Theological—Argument from _____

This says that because we have a reliable historical source (the Bible) that tells us that God exists, He must exist.

Practical—Argument from explanation that _____ the _____

Of all the views of God we have studied, theism is the one that best explains the facts.

“Natural theology...can never establish the existence of the biblical God. These proofs may make one a deist, but only revelation will make one a Christian. Reason operating without revelation always turns up with a deity different from Yahweh, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Lessons for Our Lives

- The Bible _____ God's existence.
- God says that the man who says there is no God is a _____ (Ps. 14:1).
- God has _____ Himself plainly to man, but man has suppressed and rejected that knowledge (Rom. 1:18–20).
- Since there is a God, we should seek to _____, _____ and _____ Him.

Digging Deeper

Romans 1:18–32 describes for us how God has revealed His existence to mankind and how mankind has responded to that revelation. Read this passage and then fill in the blanks to complete the following statements.

- **1:18**—Men who hold down or suppress the truth God has revealed about Himself are described as _____ and unrighteous.
- **1:20**—The things that are clearly seen by men are God's invisible qualities such as His _____ and divine nature.
- **1:21**—Although men knew these facts about God, they refused to _____ God or give thanks to Him.
- **1:22**—When men rejected God's revelation of Himself, they thought they were being _____ when actually they were showing themselves to be foolish.
- **1:23**—Ungodly men exchanged God's glory for _____ made like various kinds of animals.
- **1:24**—Because men rejected God's revelation of Himself, God gave them up to _____.
- **1:25**—When men reject God, they get things turned upside down; and so they choose to worship the _____ instead of the Creator.

- **1:26**—Next, God gave men up to _____ (including homosexuality).
- **1:28**—Since they did not _____ God, He gave them over to a reprobate mind.
- **1:32**—Sinful mankind is so far from God due to rejecting God’s revelation of Himself that even though he knows that _____ is the penalty for his sin, he still continues to commit sins himself and to have pleasure in others who practice sin.

These points sum up the teaching of this passage:

- God has revealed Himself to us (mankind).
- We have rejected God.
- God allows us to live with the consequences of our sin.

LESSON 2

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

In Lesson 1 we discussed the fact of God’s existence. Once we have established that God does exist, the next logical question we ask ourselves is, “What is God like?”

God Is Spirit—Without Material Form or Substance (John 4:24)

The Samaritan woman was unsure about where God should be worshipped. Christ’s reply was that since God is spirit, He must be worshipped “in spirit and in truth.” Since He Himself is not in a body and confined to one place, the worship of God should not be confined to one place.

Since the Bible teaches that God is spirit and does not have a form or material substance, that leaves us with some questions.

Why is God described in human terms?

These are _____ to help our finite minds understand God.

In other words, God uses these terms to describe Himself because they are the terms with which we are familiar.

How can we be “in His image?”

- We have _____. The attributes of personality are knowledge, feelings, and a will.
- We have _____. This means that we have a sense of right and wrong, that we are free to make choices in our lives, and that we are morally responsible for the choices we make.
- We have _____. This simply means that we have an awareness of God.

God Is a Person

God has attributes of _____

- God has _____ (Isa. 1:18; 55:9).
- God has _____ (Ps. 5:5; John 3:16).
- God has a _____ (Eph. 1:11).

God is _____ in our lives

Unlike what some people think, God is not an impersonal force. He is a personal being who is interested and involved even in the details of our lives.

Look up the references below and fill in the blanks with the activities God does that prove He is a person.

- He _____ (Matt. 3:17).
- He _____ (Matt. 6:6).
- He _____ (John 14:16).
- He _____ (Gen. 1:1).
- He _____ all things (Heb. 1:3).
- He _____ for animals (Matt. 6:26).
- He _____ (Matt. 6:30).

Lessons for Our Lives

We must _____ God with our spirit and in truth

Worshipping God “in spirit” means that the most important thing about our worship is the attitude of our hearts.

John 4:24 also says that God must be worshipped “in truth.” This means that we need to worship God in light of the truths He has revealed about Himself in His Word. We do not worship the god of our own ideas but the God of the Bible.

We must _____ to God in person

Since God is a person, He is a God who wants to relate to His creatures. He wants to have a personal relationship with us.

Digging Deeper

The lesson emphasized the point that God is spirit. Let’s look at this point again.

God is spirit. This means that God does not have a material form or substance. He does not have a body or any other material shape. He is not composed of matter.

There are ten passages listed below. Only six of them have anything to do with God being spirit and thus not confined to a body or a building (such as a temple) but rather filling heaven and earth. Read each passage and place a check (✓) in front of the six passages that show that God is spirit.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 4:12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 8:27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 78:31 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 53:6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeremiah 23:24 | <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 18:19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 7:47–49 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Timothy 1:17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Timothy 6:16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 4:8 |

LESSON 3

HOW MANY GODS ARE THERE?

God Is One

How many gods are there? The Bible teaches that there is only one true God (Deut. 4:35; 6:4; Isa. 44:6; 45:5, 21; 1 Cor. 8:4; 1 Tim. 2:5; James 2:19).

We may not realize how important this point is if we don't understand what is required of us when we believe that God is one. One of the passages we looked at helps us apply this truth to our lives. When we read Deuteronomy 6:4–5, we see that we are supposed to love God with all our being.

- Since God is one, He demands _____ from us.
- Since God is one, we should have a single heart of _____ for Him.

God Is Three-in-One

Even though the word “Trinity” is not found in Scripture, the concept that it represents is found there. Although God is one in _____ and being, there are three Persons within the Godhead.

How can there be three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and yet only one God? That is the mystery of the Trinity. Some have tried to point to illustrations within nature. However, at some point all of these illustrations seem to break down because the simple fact is that there is nothing else like the Trinity.

The Trinity is unique. We may not understand all of its mystery, but we can know it is true from the teachings of Scripture.

Old Testament indications of the Trinity

- The Hebrew word for “one” means one in _____ (Deut. 6:4).
Examples of this would be a bunch of grapes or when a group of people respond as one.
- God speaks to _____ (Gen. 1:26a; 11:7; Isa. 6:8).
God refers to Himself in the plural.

New Testament indications of the Trinity

While the doctrine of the Trinity is hinted at in the Old Testament, it is crystallized in the New Testament.

- All three persons of the Trinity are called _____.
 - The _____ is God (Rom. 1:7).
 - The _____ is God (Heb. 1:8).
 - The _____ is God (Acts 5:3–4).
- All three persons of the Trinity _____ together as equals.
 - _____ (Father—Gen. 1:1; Son—John 1:3; Spirit—Job 33:4)
 - _____ (Luke 1:35)
 - _____ (Matt. 3:16–17)
 - _____ (Heb. 9:14)

- _____ (Father—Acts 2:32;
Son—John 10:17–18; Spirit—Rom. 1:4)
- _____ (1 Pet. 1:2)
- _____ (Matt. 28:19)
- _____ (Eph. 2:18)

Digging Deeper

Match the following statements with the correct Scripture reference.

| | | |
|-----|---|------------------|
| 1. | The Son is called God. | A. Deut. 6:4 |
| 2. | God raised Jesus from the dead. | B. Eph. 2:18 |
| 3. | Father, Son, and Spirit seen at Christ's baptism | C. 1 Cor. 8:4 |
| 4. | New Testament verse saying there is only one God | D. John 10:17–18 |
| 5. | The Father is called God. | E. Acts 5:3–4 |
| 6. | In prayer we have access to God through Christ by the Spirit. | F. Matt. 3:16–17 |
| 7. | Old Testament verse saying there is only one God | G. Gen. 1:26 |
| 8. | The Spirit is called God. | H. Rom. 1:7 |
| 9. | God speaking to Himself | I. Heb. 1:8 |
| 10. | Christ says He has the power to raise Himself from the dead. | J. Acts 2:32 |