

**VOX CHURCH
THEOLOGICAL
QUESTION
GUIDE
FOR
COMMUNITY
GROUP
LEADERS**



INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been asked a theological question during Community Group, and you can't remember the answer or where to go in Scripture to support your answer? Have you ever been asked a theological question that has flat out stumped you? Have you ever been asked a theological question that you have wondered yourself?

If you said "yes" to any of those questions, join the club! It doesn't matter if you have a Bible college degree or are newer to the faith; we all need a little support at times. That is our aim with this Theological Question Guide.

This guide is not exhaustive, but it answers up to six questions in each of the following categories: the Bible, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, mankind, the church, salvation, heaven & hell, and baptism & communion.

Each answer will have linked Bible verses to biblegateway.com in the English Standard Version (ESV) for further commentary.

Our prayer is that you will find this guide valuable and beneficial as you continue to grow in your knowledge and understanding of God and his Word and help others do the same.

**“IN YOUR HEARTS HONOR CHRIST THE LORD
AS HOLY, ALWAYS BEING PREPARED TO
MAKE A DEFENSE TO ANYONE WHO ASKS YOU
FOR A REASON FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN
YOU; YET DO IT WITH GENTLENESS
AND RESPECT.”**

1 PETER 3:15

THE BIBLE

1. WHO WROTE IT?

It is accurate to say that God is the author of the Bible. The Bible even refers to itself as the “Word of God” in [Hebrews 4:12](#), [Isaiah 40:8](#), and other verses as well.

It is also accurate to say that God’s accomplished authorship through the process of “inspiration” (God breathing out the words), as human writers wrote God’s message under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. [2 Timothy 3:16](#), [2 Peter 1:21](#), [John 14:26](#)

2. ARE THERE ANY ERRORS OR CONTRADICTIONS?

The Bible, like any book, reflects its author. If the Bible had errors or contradictions, that would indicate God can make mistakes, which means he isn’t perfect, which means he isn’t God.

Therefore, we must believe the Bible is inerrant (without error) and infallible (incapable of errors) because God is the author. [2 Timothy 3:16](#), [2 Peter 1:21](#), [Psalm 19:7](#), [Proverbs 30:5](#)

3. CAN I TRUST IT?

Since God wrote the Bible, then it is true and trustworthy. [Psalm 119:160](#), [John 17:17](#)

God’s Word has given us ample evidence that it can be trusted, and those who do trust the Bible have a solid foundation upon which to build their lives¹. [Matthew 7:24–29](#), [Psalm 119:105](#)

“The sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history and that it now

¹ Why should I trust the Bible? - GotQuestions.org. <https://www.gotquestions.org/trust-the-Bible.html>

contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly²" (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1994).

Ultimately, God has given each of us free will to choose what we believe, but he also has written an instruction manual so we would know how to live. [2 Timothy 3:16](#)

4. WHY DO I NEED TO GO TO CHURCH IF I HAVE THE BIBLE?

While it is true that the Bible is sufficient to equip us for perfectly living the Christian life, it's also true that God gave us the church. The church is to teach us what God said and meant in his Word and to help us apply what we have learned to our daily lives. [Ephesians 4:11-15](#)

The Bible also teaches that Jesus is the head of the church. The church is his body, his representation in the world. [2 Corinthians 5:20](#) Therefore, the church should function together as the body of Jesus, speaking, acting, and serving as Jesus would. [1 Corinthians 12:12-27](#), [John 17:23](#)

Every individual was created and designed to live in community with one another. Before the world began, community existed in the relationship between God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If it's important to God, it should be important to us! [Genesis 1:26](#), [Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

² Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publs House, 1994.

GOD

1. WHERE DID GOD COME FROM?

What does the color blue smell like? Blue does not fit into the category of things with a scent, so the question is flawed. “Where did God come from?” or “When did he begin?” limits God to the category of time and space. God exists eternally outside of time and space. God created time and space. Therefore, the question is flawed. [Psalm 102:24-27](#)

It is difficult for mankind to explain the existence of God without using words associated with time and space. To say that HE existed “before” time or he has “always” existed is accurate but difficult to grasp because we think in terms of time. To say that he exists “everywhere” is also true but limited by our definition of our understanding of “everywhere.” God is the uncreated Creator who created the universe and everything in it. He eternally exists. Therefore we, as the created, must trust him fully! [Psalm 90:2](#), [Job 36:26](#)

2. IS THERE PROOF GOD EXISTS?

[Romans 1:20](#) tells us that God reveals his eternal nature and his eternal power through his creation. All men see and understand this aspect of God’s nature by witnessing the various elements of the created order. The sun and heavenly bodies continue in their orbits century after century. The seasons come and go in their appointed time; the trees produce leaves in spring and drop them in the fall. Year after year, these things continue, and no one can stop them or alter God’s plan. All of this attests to God’s eternal power and plan for the earth³. [Psalm 19:1-2](#)

God has placed eternity in every person’s heart, a deeper longing for something not of this world; him! Proven through God sending Jesus to save us from our sins. [Ecclesiastes 3:11](#), [John 14:6](#)

God came to earth, [John 1:14](#), so we could have a personal relationship with him [2 Corinthians 4:6](#). Those who sincerely seek God will find him [Matthew 7:7-8](#), resulting in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit [John 14:26-27](#).

³ What does it mean that God is eternal? - GotQuestions.org. <https://www.gotquestions.org/eternal-God.html>

3. WHAT ARE THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD?

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”⁴ – A.W. Tozer

Only what God has revealed about himself can be known. Creation, the Bible, and Jesus Christ help us understand what God is like.

- God is **eternal**. He has no beginning and no end. [Psalm 90:2](#)
- God is **immutable**. he does not change. [Hebrews 13:8](#)
- God is **omnipresent**. He is present everywhere. [Psalm 139:7-13](#)
- God is **omnipotent**. He is all-powerful. [Jeremiah 32:17, 27](#)
- God is **omniscient**. He knows the past, present, and future. [Psalm 139:1-5](#)
- God is **sovereign**. Nothing is outside of his control. [Matthew 10:29-31](#)
- God is perfectly holy, just, loving, kind, faithful, gracious, merciful, and good.

There is no one like him. [Isaiah 46:9](#)

4. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT THE TRINITY?

The trinity is a concept that is difficult for human beings to understand. Grace is needed in explanation, understanding, and any attempt to illustrate it.

The Bible teaches that the Father is God, Jesus is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. God has existed in a relationship with himself for all eternity. He is one God, revealing himself in three persons, each with different functions, yet each fully God. [Genesis 1:26](#), [John 17:5](#)

⁴ Tozer, A. W. *The Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God, Their Meaning in the Christian Life*. GENERAL PRESS, 2019.

God eternally and necessarily exists as the Trinity. At the creation of time and space, God the Father spoke them into existence, God the Son carried out the words, and God, the Holy Spirit, was moving over the face of the waters. [Genesis 1:1-2](#), [Colossians 1:16](#), [1 Corinthians 8:6](#)

At Jesus' baptism [Matthew 3:16-17](#), all three members of the Trinity were present together, yet separate. All three members of the Trinity are mentioned together in [Matthew 28:19-20](#) and placed in the same category.

5. WHY DOES GOD ALLOW BAD THINGS TO HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

We must acknowledge that human beings, who are not eternal, infinite, or omniscient, cannot expect to fully understand God's purposes and ways. God is sovereign, so all that happens must have at least been allowed by him.

As hard as it is to acknowledge, we must remember that there are no "good" people. Sin contaminates all of us. [Ecclesiastes 7:20](#), [Luke 18:19](#) All of us feel the effects of sin in one way or another. Sometimes it's our sin; other times, it's the sins of others. We live in a fallen world, and we experience the effects of the fall.

Bad things do happen, but God uses them for good and to equip us for deeper ministry. [Romans 8:28](#), [Genesis 15:19-20](#), [2 Corinthians 1:3-5](#)

Whether or not we understand his reasons, we must remember that God is good, just, loving, and merciful. [Psalm 25:8-14](#)

Often, bad things happen to us that we simply cannot understand. Instead of doubting God's goodness, our reaction should be to trust him. [Proverbs 3:5-6](#) We walk by faith, not by sight.

There is always hope. [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#).

JESUS

1. DID HE REALLY EXIST?

Jesus is a real person. Most scholars, Christian or non-Christian, believe there was a historical Jesus. The evidence is overwhelming in both Biblical writings and many non-Biblical writings.

In the Old Testament, Jesus fulfilled many prophecies written about the coming Messiah. [Micah 5:2](#), [Isaiah 7:14](#), [Isaiah 53](#)

There are many reliable eyewitness accounts of his life and ministry in the New Testament. [Luke 24:46-48](#), [John 19:35](#), [1 John 1:1-4](#)

There is overwhelming evidence that Jesus did exist, both in secular and biblical history. H.G. Wells, a non-believing writer in the late 18th century, said, "...this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history."⁵

No other man has ever impacted the world, or ever will, as Jesus has. We have every reason to believe in him and follow him.

"A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse.... You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God."⁶ (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*)

2. HOW WAS HE FULLY GOD AND FULLY HUMAN?

Jesus Christ is 100% God and 100% human. [John 1:1,14](#) he is not God sometimes and man at other times. he is the God-man.

⁵ H.G. Wells, British author (1866–1946)

⁶ Lewis, C. S. 1960. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Macmillan.

He is not like God; he is the Most-High God himself. [Titus 2:13](#), [Hebrews 1:8](#)

Every year at Christmas, we celebrate God becoming a man. This, of course, doesn't mean that he stopped being God. In his book *Knowing God*, J.I. Packer explains it like this: "Christ was not now God minus some elements of his deity, but God plus all he had made his own by taking manhood to himself."⁷

Jesus, while 100% human, remained in full possession of all of his divine attributes. [Luke 6:8](#), [John 18:4](#) There were, however, times that he operated within the limits of humanity. He was, at times, tired and hungry. He also allowed himself to be chained, beaten, and ultimately crucified. [Philippians 2:7-8](#)

3. IS JESUS THE CREATOR?

Yes. God the Father created everything through God the Son, Jesus. God, the Holy Spirit, was also active in creation.

God the Father — God spoke *almost* everything into existence: "And God said." [Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,14,20, 24, 26](#) However, God made Adam from the dust of the ground and made Eve from Adam. [Genesis 2:7, 21](#)

God the Son — All things were created **by** him, **through** him, and **for** him. [Colossians 1:16](#), [John 1:3](#), [Hebrews 1:2](#)

God, the Holy Spirit — To which degree the Holy Spirit was involved in creation is scarce in Scripture, but we know he was present and active. [Genesis 1:2](#), [Psalm 33:6](#)

"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

4. DID JESUS SIN?

No. Jesus never sinned or will ever sin. Romans 5:12 reminds us that sin came into the world through one man, Adam, and spread to all of mankind through him. Jesus was not born of a man but through the Holy Spirit. [Matthew 1:18](#) Therefore, the sinful nature was not passed to Jesus, and yet, since he was born of a woman, he was fully human. [Luke 1:35](#)

⁷ Packer, J. I. (1984). *Knowing God*. Evangelical Classics Library.

Jesus is, was, and will always be **holy**. [Acts 3:14](#) For Jesus' death and resurrection to pay for the sins of the whole world, past, present, and future, he had to be sinless. If he had sinned, he wouldn't have been able to pay for everyone's sins, and he wouldn't be God. [2 Corinthians 5:21](#), [Hebrews 4:15](#), [Hebrews 9:14](#)

5. WHY WAS JESUS' MINISTRY SO SHORT?

The first thing to remember is that Jesus did the will of his Father. [John 6:38](#), [John 4:34](#)

Jesus accomplished everything he had been sent to do. [John 17:4](#), [John 19:30](#)
God had a plan for Jesus' earthly ministry that we can trust. His plan included displaying his love, power, holiness, and grace in Jesus. It also allowed humanity to know himself in Jesus, to receive the forgiveness of sins through Jesus' death and resurrection, and to receive instructions on how to live a life that is pleasing to him. His plan also included that Jesus' life and ministry would be recorded in Scripture for everyone who has not seen and yet believed. [John 1:14](#), [Ephesians 1:11](#)

If Jesus hadn't left, the Holy Spirit would not have been poured out. Jesus said in John 16:7, "Nevertheless, 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." God's plan was for his church to take his gospel message to the world. [Acts 1:8](#), [John 14:12](#)

6. WHEN IS HE COMING BACK?

The Bible does not give us the exact timetable of when Jesus' return to his church will occur, but we can be sure it will happen. His return is "imminent," meaning it could happen at any time and any moment. [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#), [Matthew 24:36-44](#)

Jesus returning isn't something to fear. It's not something to try and predict. Many have tried and failed. It's not something to be focused on—it's motivation. The return of Christ is a call to action. As we "keep watch" and "be ready," we find ourselves obediently serving the Lord and sharing the good news with others as if every day were our last day on earth. [1 Corinthians 15:58](#), [John 9:4](#), [Mark 13:32-36](#)

"Preach and live as if Jesus was crucified yesterday, rose from the dead today, and is returning tomorrow" (Martin Luther).

HOLY SPIRIT

1. HOW AND WHEN DO WE RECEIVE HIM?

The Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence in a person at the moment of belief in Jesus' death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance of eternal life. [Ephesians 1:13-14](#), [Titus 3:5-6](#), [John 3:5-16](#), [John 14:17](#), [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)

2. WHAT DOES HE DO?

“The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world, and especially in the church⁸” (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 634).

The Holy Spirit is active today. Leading up to salvation, the Holy Spirit convicts people of sin and their need for a Savior. [John 16:8](#) At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ, [1 Corinthians 12:13](#), and permanently indwells them. [Romans 8:15-17](#), [John 14:17](#), [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#) He also seals their soul with eternal life at the moment of salvation. [Ephesians 1:13](#)

After salvation, as the Holy Spirit continues to indwell the believer, he accomplishes the following:

- Illuminates Scripture so that it can be understood and applied. [1 Corinthians 2:12](#)
- Gives spiritual gifts for believers to use to strengthen the faith of others. [1 Corinthians 12:1-11](#)
- Gives wisdom and discernment in decision making. [Romans 8:13-14](#), [John 14:26](#)
- Produces the fruit of the Spirit in the life of the believer. [Galatians 5:22-23](#)
- Intercedes between man and God, according to God's will. [Romans 8:26-27](#)

⁸ Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publs House, 1994.

- Comforts. [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#), [2 Corinthians 1:3-4](#)

Thank God for the continued work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers!

3. CAN YOU LOSE THE HOLY SPIRIT?

No. There is ample evidence in Scripture that a person who truly places their faith in Jesus Christ alone for their salvation receives the Holy Spirit once, forever. [John 14:16](#) This permanent indwelling began on the day of Pentecost in [Acts 2](#) when the church began.

God promised eternal life to all who believe in Jesus, and the Holy Spirit serves as the guarantee of that promise. “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and **believed** in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.” [Ephesians 1:13-14](#)

Unfortunately, believers still sin, even with the Holy Spirit residing in them. While our position with God remains secure and our inheritance unaltered, unconfessed sin can dampen our fellowship with him. This doesn't mean that we somehow lose the Holy Spirit and the inheritance promised through faith. It simply means we must confess our sin and have our relationship with God restored. [1 John 1:9](#), [Ephesians 4:30](#) Imagine your son or daughter disobeying you. You may feel disappointed, but they remain your son or daughter.

4. WHAT IS THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Before this question is answered, one thing must be clear; this Baptism has nothing to do with water baptism, which takes place after salvation. This is a spiritual baptism that takes place at the moment of faith in Jesus Christ.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the work where the Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus and the church, where believers receive the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The phrase “baptism of the Holy Spirit” is synonymous with salvation. [1 Corinthians 12:13](#), [John 3:5](#)

5. MORE TERMS...

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- **The outpouring of the Spirit** – Simply defined, it is when the Holy Spirit first came to fill and indwell believers permanently. It was prophesied about in the Old Testament, [Joel 2:28-29](#), and fulfilled in the New Testament, beginning in [Acts 2](#). The Holy Spirit has been poured out and continues to fill and indwell those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Filling of the Spirit** – The Holy Spirit indwells the believer at the moment of salvation. However, believers still sin, which dampens our relationship with him. Disobedience causes us **not** to experience the full working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. To be filled with the Spirit implies freedom for him to occupy every part of our lives, guiding and controlling us. This is accomplished through confession of sin to restore the broken relationship and obedience to his commands. [Ephesians 5:18](#), [Acts 11:24](#), [Acts 13:52](#)
- **Praying in the Spirit** – Praying in the Spirit is praying according to the Spirit's leading. It is praying for things the Spirit leads us to pray for. [Romans 8:26](#) Praying in the Spirit does **not** include praying in tongues. In Ephesians 6:18, Paul instructs us to “pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” According to I Corinthians 14, when a person speaks in tongues, they do not know what they are saying. How can we pray with all kinds of prayers and requests if no one, including the person praying, understands what is said? Therefore, praying in the Spirit should be understood as praying in the power of the Spirit who resides in you, by the leading of the Spirit, and according to his will, not as praying in tongues.

MAN

1. WHY DID GOD CREATE US? WHAT IS MY PURPOSE?

God created us for his glory. [Isaiah 43:7](#), [Colossians 1:16](#) Therefore, we are to do all for the glory of God. [1 Corinthians 10:31](#), [Colossians 3:17](#) God gave each person, members of his body, specific works to do inside each person's ultimate purpose of glorifying him. [Ephesians 2:10](#), [1 Corinthians 12](#)

God gave us his Word to learn who he is, who we are, how to glorify him, have a relationship with him, and ultimately spend eternity with him. What a gift! [James 1:17-18](#) Every time we open his Word, the manifestation of our purpose becomes more and more clear.

God also gave us himself in the person of Jesus. [John 1:14](#) says, "God became flesh and dwelt among us." his goal was to show us who he was [John 14:6-7](#), to save us from our sins [Ephesians 1:7](#), and to show us how to glorify him by example [Ephesians 2:10](#). What an eternal treasure!

One thing is clear; our Creator God alone is worthy to receive glory and honor, and power. Our purpose is to glorify him in everything we do. [Revelation 4:11](#)

2. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD?

"Humankind was created to be a graphic image of the Creator; a formal, visible, and understandable representation of who God is and what He's really like." – John Piper [Genesis 1:26-27](#)

Humankind is different and unique among all of God's creation and was made to reflect him in the following ways:

- All human beings possess both material (physical) and immaterial (spiritual) characteristics. We will live forever. [1 John 5:13](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:23](#) Spiritually, we can relate to God, pray to him, praise him, and hear from him. [2 Corinthians 3:18](#), [Hebrews 4:12](#)

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- Humans have a conscience and a moral compass. When we act according to God's standards, we reflect his image. [Romans 2:15](#)
- Humans can reason, think logically, and make choices far superior to any other created thing. [Romans 12:2](#), [1 Corinthians 14:20](#)
- Humans possess a unique creative ability given by God, the Creator, unlike any other created thing. [Exodus 35:30-35](#)
- Humans possess a unique range of complex emotions that can be experienced all at once. [Philippians 4:6-7](#)

3. ARE WE ALL BORN SINNERS?

Yes, the Bible teaches that each person was born with a sinful nature. We inherited our sinful nature from Adam. [Romans 5:12](#) Before we were even born, we were already a sinner. [Psalm 51:5](#)

Have you ever noticed that you don't have to teach a child to lie, hit, steal, or touch the thing they were told not to? Sinful behavior comes naturally for little ones because they are born with a sinful nature. You might relate to the same understanding in patterns of thought and behavior you experience to this day.

[Romans 3:23](#) reminds us that "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." If anyone thinks he has not sinned, they deceive themselves [1 John 1:8](#). [Ephesians 2:3](#) tells us that before salvation, "we were by nature children of wrath." We deserve God's wrath not only because of our actions but because of our nature.

Because we are born sinners, we must experience a second, spiritual birth. We are born once into Adam's family and are sinners by nature. When we are born again by faith in Jesus' death and resurrection for our sins, we are born into God's family and given the nature of Christ. [John 1:12](#), [Ephesians 1:7](#), [John 3:1-14](#)

THE CHURCH

4. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The church is the community of believers whom Christ died to redeem, in other words, those who have placed their faith in Jesus' death and resurrection alone for their salvation. [Ephesians 1:22-23](#)

It is not a building; it's the people, the body of Christ. If the meeting place where believers met burned to the ground, the church would continue. [Romans 16:5](#)

In the New Testament, we can see a pattern of how the church met together. They met locally in houses, temples, rented rooms, and even schools. [Acts 1:12-13, 2:46, 19:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19](#) Churches were often labeled by the cities they gathered in. [Galatians 1:1-2, 1 Corinthians 1:2](#)

5. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH?

The purpose of the church, every believer, is to fulfill the Great Commission given by Jesus in [Matthew 28:19-20](#), to make disciples. A disciple is a believer in and follower of Jesus Christ.

Making disciples begins with sharing the gospel message with unbelievers. [Acts 1:8](#) When an unbeliever believes in Jesus, they must learn what it means to follow him through the church, the body of Christ.

The church meets regularly together to teach Biblical doctrine, be a place of fellowship with other believers, baptize believers, pray together and encourage each other, observe the Lord's supper together, and meet the needs of others. [Acts 2:42-47, Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 5:11](#)

6. WHERE DO I FIT IN?

God chooses you to be a part of his church. [1 Peter 2:9-10](#) That's special. We believe that every individual was designed to live in a biblical community with one another. Even in the early church, some neglected meeting together with other

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believers. [Hebrews 10:25](#) calls that a “bad habit” because we need each other for all the purposes mentioned in the last question.

God made each believer uniquely to fit well within the body of Christ. Read all of [1 Corinthians 12](#) for proof. **The church needs you.** 1 Corinthians 12:26 says, “if one member suffers, we all suffer; if one is honored, all rejoice together.” What happens if you injure your pinky toe? The whole body suffers from pain, and the body limps on until that part of the body is restored. So it is with the church. You are an essential part of the body. Without you, the whole body suffers.

In [1 Corinthians 12:1-11](#), [Romans 12:3-8](#), [Ephesians 4:11-16](#), and [1 Peter 4:10-11](#), Paul reminds believers that each of us was given spiritual gifts to strengthen the faith of others. As a member of the body of Christ, the church, you have spiritual gifts to use. There is a place for you!

To learn more about Vox Church and how you can use the gifts God has given you, sign up for the next Essentials Class offered at a campus near you. <https://voxchurch.org/essentials>

HEAVEN & HELL

1. ARE THEY REAL PLACES?

Yes. The Bible is clear that both places are real and eternal. God has placed eternity into the hearts of every person. [Romans 1:19-20](#)

In [Luke 16:19-31](#), a rich man dies and goes to hell. He can speak, feel pain and thirst, and experience emotions just like we are today. In the New Testament, Jesus spent more time warning people about the punishment of hell than he did about the splendors of heaven.

In [2 Corinthians 12:1-4](#), Paul goes to heaven and experiences wonderful things that human words cannot describe. Jesus is in heaven now, preparing a place for all believers. [John 14:1-4](#)

Heaven and hell are real places, where people who have died before us reside. All people will be in one or the other for eternity. [Matthew 25:46](#)

2. WHAT ARE THEY LIKE?

Hell is a place of eternal punishment for sin. [Matthew 25:46](#) It is a place of torment in unquenchable fire, smoke, and darkness where there will be eternal shame, weeping, and gnashing of teeth. There is no escape, no end, alienated from God's presence forever. [Mark 9:44-49](#), [Luke 16:23-24](#), [Revelation 14:10-11](#), [Revelation 20:10](#)

Heaven is a place of eternal reward. [Revelation 21](#) gives us the most extended picture of what heaven looks like. A few examples: pearly gates, streets of gold, no more crying or pain, no more night, prepared places for us to live. These are interesting and fun to think about, but the greatest reward is being in the presence of God/Jesus forever! The reality is that heaven will be greater than anything we can ever imagine.

3. WHY DID GOD CREATE HELL?

Hell was created for the devil and his fallen angels. [Matthew 25:41](#), [2 Peter 2:4](#)

Hell was not initially created for humanity; however, when mankind sinned against an eternal God, an eternal punishment was due. Because of sin, mankind fails to meet the standard of holiness to be allowed in the presence of the holy God in heaven. [Romans 3:23](#) Therefore, the just penalty of sin is death, separated from God forever. [Romans 6:23](#)

If God did not send people to hell for breaking his standard, he would not be just. He is a just judge, and therefore he must punish the lawbreaker as a just judge would. [Psalm 7:11](#), [Deuteronomy 32:4](#)

Hell is a harsh reality, but the good news is that God is also merciful. He made a way for all people to escape the horrors of hell simply by believing in his Son, Jesus, as the Messiah. Jesus took all of our sins and nailed them to the cross. He received the punishment of death on our behalf, and all that he requires of us is faith. [Ephesians 2:8-9](#), [Romans 5:9](#), [1 Peter 2:24](#)

4. WHO GOES TO HEAVEN, AND WHO GOES TO HELL?

Hell is the eternal destination for people who die and have never placed their faith in Jesus as the payment and forgiveness for their sins. [Romans 6:23](#), [Matthew 25:41-46](#), [Revelation 20:15](#), [John 3:18](#)

Heaven is the eternal destination for people who die and have placed their faith in Jesus Christ as the payment and forgiveness of their sins. [Romans 10:9-10](#)

SALVATION

1. WHAT IS SALVATION?

Salvation is deliverance from God's punishment for sin. Every person, born of a man and woman, is born a sinner. Salvation is achieved when a sinner puts their faith (trust) in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. [Ephesians 2:8-9](#), [John 3:16](#), [Romans 10:9-10](#)

When a person puts their faith in Jesus as the payment for their sins, their relationship with God is restored, and their sins are forgiven. [2 Corinthians 5:18](#), [Romans 5:10](#) They also receive the Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of their eternal destination, eternal life in heaven forever. [Ephesians 1:13-14](#), [2 Corinthians 1:22](#)

2. IS SALVATION BY FAITH AND WORKS?

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast."

[Titus 3:5](#) says, "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."

Perhaps some confusion stems from what [James 2:24](#) says: "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." However, this conclusion can only be made if this one single verse is singled out. That never happens in any interpretation of the Bible.

One must always consider the context. The context is the whole chapter, the chapter before or after, or even the entire book of the Bible. In this context, James describes what faith and works should look like. **Works should be the result of faith.** In verse 18, James says, "I will show you my faith by my works." James emphasizes that genuine faith in Christ will produce a changed life and good works. He is **not** saying that we are justified by faith, but instead, works prove our faith.

Salvation comes through faith and faith alone in Jesus. [Romans 3:28](#), [Romans 5:1](#), [Galatians 3:24](#)

3. CAN SOMEONE LOSE THEIR SALVATION?

If a person truly places their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, they are given an eternal inheritance in heaven sealed by the Holy Spirit and cannot lose their salvation. [John 3:16](#), [Ephesians 1:13-14](#), [John 10:28-30](#)

The death of Jesus on the cross paid for all of everyone's sins, past, present, and future. [Hebrews 10:10](#)

[Romans 5:1](#) says that all believers have been justified by faith. "Justified" means declared righteous. For a believer to lose their salvation would mean that God would have undeclared what was already declared righteous.

God gave and promised eternal life as a gift to believers in his Son, Jesus Christ. To say a person can lose their salvation is to say that God's gifts are irrevocable and his promises untrue. [Romans 11:29](#), [Titus 1:2](#)

The question arises when a person who has professed faith in Jesus later rejects faith, denies Jesus as the way to heaven, denies the existence of God, denies the existence of heaven or hell or is living an unrepentant, sinful lifestyle. Did they lose their salvation? The problem with these scenarios is that it is assumed that the person is truly born again. [John 3:3](#) No one, apart from God, can judge a person's heart or knows whether their faith was genuine or not. What we can do and must do is go to God's Word.

- The Bible says that a true believer will not continue living in sin. Read [I John 3:4-10](#) for a great description of this truth.
- The Bible says that anyone who departs from the faith was never truly a believer. [I John 2:19](#)
- The Bible says that a true believer will bear fruit of the Spirit and fruit for God. [Romans 7:14](#), [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

4. HOW DO I LEAD SOMEONE TO JESUS?

VOX CHURCH THEOLOGICAL QUESTION GUIDE

If and when the opportunity arises for you to lead someone to Jesus, there are some very simple yet profound truths that they must hear and believe. As you speak through these steps, it is vital that you open up the Bible and have them read these verses.

- **The first step to leading someone to Jesus is to help them see that they are a sinner.** [Romans 3:23](#) says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory (standard) of God.” [Romans 3:10](#) says, “there is none righteous, not even one.” Every person is a sinner, but God’s standard is holiness. He cannot allow sin in his presence. He is holy, but he is also just.
- **The second step is to help them understand their sin deserves punishment.** [Romans 6:23a](#) says, “the wages (penalty) of sin is death.” Because of sin, mankind dies. [Romans 5:12](#) says, “death spread to all men because all sinned.” The bad news is that when we die in our unforgiven sin, we end up in a place separated from God for all eternity. That place is called hell. Hell is the eternal destination for all who die without having their sins forgiven and their broken relationship with God restored.
- **The third step is to start pointing them to Jesus.** Here is the good news, Jesus, God in the flesh, came and died in your place! He took the punishment that you deserved and died on the cross. [Romans 6:23b](#) says, “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Because of our sin, we deserve death, “But God demonstrates his love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” [Romans 5:8](#)
- **The fourth step is to help them place their belief and their faith in Jesus alone for the forgiveness of their sins.** All you have to do to receive the forgiveness of sins is to believe. Believe that Jesus was God in the flesh, that he died on the cross for your sins, and that he rose again from the dead, proving he indeed was the Son of God. [Romans 10:9-10](#) says, “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. For with the heart, one believes and is justified, and with the mouth, one confesses and is saved.” Other verses to look up to back up this step: [Ephesians 2:8](#), [John 3:16](#), [Acts 16:31](#)
- Lord willing, faith in Jesus is happening in their heart right now! One way believers help others verbalize what they are sensing and feeling in their hearts is to say a prayer of confession and faith to God. It’s not a magic formula. A prayer with words doesn’t save a person. It’s simply a way to express what is happening in their minds and hearts in a tangible, evidential way, one that they will remember, Lord willing, forever.
- Here is an example of a prayer that they can pray, or that you can pray, and they repeat after you: “God, I know that I am a sinner. I know that I deserve

punishment for my sin. Today, I trust in Jesus Christ as my Savior. I believe that his death and resurrection provided for my forgiveness. I trust in Jesus and Jesus alone as my personal Lord and Savior. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me and forgiving me. In his name, Amen."

- REJOICE WITH THEM! Now, help them understand that they are starting a journey of growth in the knowledge of God's Word and a deeper relationship with him. For more help on how to disciple this person moving forward, reach out to your coach, your campus community group director, your campus pastor, or the person who led you to the Lord or disciplined you.

5. MORE TERMS USED IN THE BIBLE...

- **Atonement** – Jesus absorbed people's sin on the cross and deflected God's wrath away from them. [John 1:29](#), [1 John 2:2](#)
- **Justification** – When a person places their faith in Jesus, they are declared righteous in God's sight. The righteousness of Jesus is placed on our account. [Romans 5:1,9,18](#)
- **Redemption** – When a person places their faith in Jesus, they are freed from slavery to sin. They are bought back by the blood of Jesus. [Hebrews 9:15](#), [Ephesians 1:7](#)
- **Reconciliation** - When a person places their faith in Jesus, their relationship with God is restored. [Romans 5:11](#), [2 Corinthians 5:18-19](#)
- **Propitiation** – Jesus satisfied or appeased the wrath of God as the just judgment for people's sin. [Romans 3:25](#), [1 John 4:10](#), [Hebrews 2:17](#)
- **Regeneration** – When a person places their faith in Jesus, God imparts new spiritual life to them. In effect, they are spiritually "born again" as new creatures who receive eternal life and can now please God with their life. [John 3:3-8](#), [Ezekiel 36:26-27](#), [Ephesians 2:5](#)
- **Adoption** – When a person places their faith in Jesus, they are adopted into the family of God and become heirs and co-heirs with Christ to all that God promises— blessings, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. [Galatians 4:3-7](#), [Romans 8:17](#)

BAPTISM & COMMUNION

1. WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is simply an outward expression of a person's inward faith in Jesus alone for their salvation. A person goes down into the water [Acts 8:36-38](#), and is taken under the water and brought back up, which publicly identifies them with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, signifying their new life found in him. [Romans 6:4](#), [Colossians 2:12](#)

Jesus instructs everyone who places their faith in him to be water baptized; therefore, to be baptized is an act of obedience. [Matthew 28:19](#)

2. IS BAPTISM NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

No. Baptism is simply an act of obedience that a person should take at some point *after* salvation. There is no perfect timetable or direct command of *when* a person should be baptized. In Scripture, some were baptized immediately following conversion. [Acts 2:38](#), [Acts 8:36-38](#), [Acts 10:47-48](#), [Acts 19:1-7](#) Others were baptized later for various reasons. [1 Corinthians 1:14](#) The thief on the cross next to Jesus wasn't baptized before he died and went to heaven with Jesus. [Luke 23:39-43](#).

In conclusion, Baptism is **not** a requirement for salvation. As previously discussed in the "salvation" portion of this document, salvation is by faith alone in the finished work of Jesus' death and resurrection. To say that Baptism or anything other than faith is necessary for salvation is contradictory to what the Bible teaches.

3. WHY WAS JESUS BAPTIZED?

Jesus' baptism is another argument that baptism is **not** required for salvation but rather a step of obedience to God. Jesus modeled that obedience to his followers and instructed them to be baptized. [Matthew 28:19](#)

It was also important for Jesus, who was about to begin his public ministry, to be recognized as the Messiah by John the Baptist, one whom many people followed, to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah in [Isaiah 40:3](#).

It was also important for Jesus to identify with sinners. Jesus was about to fulfill all the Law's righteous requirements once, for all people. [Romans 6:10](#) his Baptism symbolized our death and burial to sin, being raised back to life in Christ, and the ability to walk in the newness of life. [Colossians 2:12-13](#)

4. IS INFANT BAPTISM OK?

The Bible is clear that only believers who had placed their faith in Jesus were baptized as a public declaration of their faith. [Acts 2:41](#), [Acts 16:13-15](#) There isn't a single record, in the Bible, of infant baptism.

An infant cannot understand they are a sinner and in need of a Savior. They cannot make a conscious decision to obey Christ, nor can they understand what Baptism even is or means.

If a child was baptized as an infant, we would encourage them to be baptized, by immersion, after making the conscious decision to follow Christ.

5. WHAT IS COMMUNION?

Communion is a time of remembrance and thankfulness for the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins. The elements of communion are bread, which represents the broken body of Jesus, and juice or wine, which represents his shed blood for our sins. We are instructed to eat and drink the elements to remember his shed blood and, ultimately, his death for our sins.

Communion is often referred to as the Lord's Supper because Jesus, himself, demonstrated communion with his disciples to give us the example of what it should be like. An account of the Lord's Supper is available in all four gospels. [Matthew 26:26-29](#), [Mark 14:17-25](#), [Luke 22:7-22](#), [John 13:21-30](#)

In [1 Corinthians 11:23-29](#), the Apostle Paul instructs the church on why and how to partake in communion. There is no set timetable in which a church ought to conduct

communion but rather to do it “often.” In verse 26, Paul reminds us that when we practice communion, we proclaim the Lord’s death until that day when he comes again for his church.

6. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TAKE COMMUNION IN AN UNWORTHY MANNER?

In [1 Corinthians 11:27](#), Paul mentions not to take communion in an unworthy manner; otherwise, you will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.” What does that mean?

When Paul wrote this letter, he wrote to the Corinthian church. At the time, they were struggling with divisions in the church. One of the avenues by which divisions were occurring was through communion. Communion was being accompanied, in this church, by feasts. Some were getting full and even drunk during the communion feast, while others were leaving hungry. It seemed as though the Corinthians favored the wealthy and neglected the poor. Paul warns them that they are taking communion in an unworthy manner.

Believers must be careful not to forget the real reason and meaning for why we are taking communion. To take communion without focusing on and remembering the death of Jesus for your sin is missing the whole point. Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me.” [1 Corinthians 11:24](#)

Believers must also be careful not to come to the table with unconfessed sin. [Matthew 5:23-24](#) speaks to this idea. It’s not necessarily about communion, but the same principle applies.

In verse [1 Corinthians 11:28](#), Paul instructs us to “examine ourselves” before we take communion. The death of Jesus for our sins is so serious. Of such eternal significance that we ought to approach communion with a sincere reverence for him, complete thankfulness, humble adoration, and an internal examination of where our lives have fallen off track with the life he intended us to live, one that he purchased with his own blood.

**“SO THAT WE
WHO WERE THE
FIRST TO HOPE
IN CHRIST
MIGHT BE TO
THE PRAISE OF
HIS GLORY.”**

EPHESIANS 1:12