



BELIEVE: Beliefs 101  
Introduction to Christian Doctrine

Leader's Guide



Welcome people as they arrive. Introduce yourself.

Watch the first video segment. At the end, it transitions back to the group leader for a brainstorming session.

# Getting Started

(5 minutes) Let’s brainstorm. When I say “God,” what are some words, pictures, and ideas that come to mind?...Jesus?...salvation / being saved?

Possible answers:

<b>God</b>	Old man with gray beard, sitting on a cloud in heaven Father Judgment Love
<b>Jesus</b>	Cross white guy with brown hair and beard, blue eyes, wearing white cloak and sandals baby in a manger
<b>Salvation/ being saved</b>	Hell—fire, devil Heaven—streets of gold, pearly gates, white clouds Names written in the Book of Life

# Who is God?

Now that our brains have started thinking about the topics at hand, the first question we want to dive into is, “**Who is God?**”

God is **Father**.

*...yet for us there is but one God, the Father,  
from whom all things came and for whom we live... 1 Corinthians 8:6a*

YHWH *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Deuteronomy 6:4*

Discuss (3 min.):

- > Name some positive ideas of fathers.
- > Name some negative ideas of fathers.

- > How do these descriptions explain who God is, or is not?

Check out this video from Angie with more about who God is.

*Watch the second video segment.*

God is **Creator**.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1*

*For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb. Psalm 139:13*

*He who forms the mountains,  
who creates the wind,  
and who reveals his thoughts to mankind,  
who turns dawn to darkness,  
and treads on the heights of the earth—  
the Lord God Almighty is his name. Amos 4:13*

God is **love**.

*God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 1 John 4:16*

Discuss (5 min.):

- > What would it mean to you for God to be your Father?
- > When have you experienced God through his creations (nature, people, etc.)?
- > Does your faith background support or contradict the idea that God is love?

# Who is Jesus?

Our next question is, “Who is Jesus?” Let’s check out the video.

*Watch the third video segment.*

Jesus is both **God** and **man**; he’s **divine** and **human**.

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form. Colossians 2:9*

*Since the children have flesh and blood,  
he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might...free those who all  
their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death....*

*For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way....  
Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who  
are being tempted. Hebrews 2:14-18, excerpts*

## Jesus’ titles

### 1. The Word

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him  
nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all  
mankind....The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen  
his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and  
truth....No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is  
in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. John 1, excerpts*

### 2. Lord

### 3. Christ/Messiah—Anointed One

### 4. Immanuel—God with us

Discuss (15 min.):

- > Jesus is Immanuel, God with us, and he promises that he is with us always (Matthew 28:20). When have you felt like Jesus was with you? What does it mean to you that Jesus is with us?

- > How is making Jesus Lord, or ruler, of your life difficult for you?  
(possible answers would be areas of our life that are hard to turn over to Jesus, like our finances, careers, family relationships that we still want to be in charge of, or lord over)

These are just a few of the titles or names for Jesus; there are many more. Jesus also gives himself names or descriptions. I could say, "I am..." and then end the sentence with different phrases. For example, I might say, ... (Leader gives personal examples like "I am a packer of lunches," or "I am the bread winner for my family.") Let's look at how Jesus defines himself, and how you might define yourself.

- > What are some "I am" statements about YOU?

I am \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_.

Divide up the following verses among the group. You could split into 5 groups and have each look up one. Or, you could divide into fewer groups and have them look up more than one passage.

- > Let's check out how Jesus described himself.

Verse:	Description of Jesus:
John 6:48-51	_____
John 8:12	_____
John 10:7-17	_____
John 14:6	_____
John 15:1-8	_____

# Who is the Holy Spirit?

Our next question is, “Who is the Holy Spirit?” Let’s check out the video.

*Watch the fourth video segment.*

The Greek word for “spirit” in Holy Spirit is pneuma; the same word for wind.

What does the Holy Spirit do?

**1. Intercedes**

*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. Romans 8:26-27*

**2. Comforts**

**3. Counsels / Teaches**

*But the Advocate (or Comforter), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26*

**4. Convicts**

*He will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment  
John 16:8*

Spiritual Gifts (more to come in Bless 101)

Day of Pentecost

*Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:2-4*

# The Trinity

Discuss (3 min.):

- > At this stage in your life and spiritual journey, which realization of God (Father, Jesus, or Holy Spirit) is most meaningful to you?

<5 minute break>

# Who are we?

Now that we've talked a bit about God; let's talk about us. Check out this video.

*Watch the fifth video segment.*

Imago Dei—image of God

*...God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27*

Sin

*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23*

Discuss (5 min.):

- > In our culture, do we think of people more as like God (made in the image of God) or the opposite of God (born with a sinful nature)?
  
- > Is it more difficult for you to accept being made in God's image or being born with a sinful nature?



- > How might these beliefs about people affect how we interact with others?
  - How would it change your day if you looked for the image of God in each person you encountered?
  - How would it change your day if you were aware that everyone you encounter has a sinful nature?

## Salvation

*Watch the sixth, and last, video segment.*

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world... Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus... For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:1-10, excerpts*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16*

*Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:1-3*

Discuss:

- > What questions do you still have about Christian beliefs? How will you seek out answers to them?

# Next Step—Become 101

## Suggestions for Further Development

Books to read:

- > 30 Days to Understanding the Bible by Max Anders
- > Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

Studies to do:

- > Starting Point by Andy Stanley