






LIFE|**EXPLORED**

WHAT'S THE BEST GIFT
GOD COULD GIVE YOU?

LEADER'S HANDBOOK

Key

-  Show a film
-  Discuss a question
-  Read a Bible passage


SESSION 1

THE GOOD GOD

 **Overture Part 1** (3 min 50 sec)

 **What's the best gift God could give you?**
(5 minutes, page 7 of Handbook.)

Note: You may want to write down people's answers, either now or later, as you'll be returning to this question in Session 7.

 **We're going to watch the next film now. By way of introduction, let me read you a little bit of Genesis chapter 1.** (Page 8 of Handbook.)

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

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Genesis 1:27-31


Blessed | Looked on them with love
and promised good things.

Subdue | Bring order to.

 **Overture Part 2** (11 min 02 sec)

Note: The following talk summary is on page 9 of the Handbook.

- Human beings have been described as “the glory and the garbage” of the universe.
- We’re “glorious” because we’re made by a glorious God, who has made us “in his own image” (Genesis 1:27).
- Being made “in God’s image” means that we can know and enjoy this God. God wants us to enjoy him!
- We flourish most, and enjoy him best, when we reflect him best.
- But there’s the “garbage” too. Rather than enjoying and reflecting our Creator, we enjoy and reflect “created things” more. We have other “gods”.
- A person’s “god” is anything they cling to and rely upon for their ultimate security and contentment.

 **Everyone seeks happiness. But are we searching in the right place? We’re going to look at a part of the Bible that explores that question – Psalm 19.** (Page 10 of Handbook.)

¹ *The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*

² *Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.*

- ³ *They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.*
- ⁴ *Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.*
- ⁵ *It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.*
- ⁶ *It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth.*
- ⁷ *The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.*
- ⁸ *The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.*
- ⁹ *The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever.
The decrees of the LORD are firm,
and all of them are righteous.*
- ¹⁰ *They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the honeycomb.*


Psalm 19:1-10

Glorify | God's perfect and limitless goodness.

The LORD | Literally *Yahweh*, the name of God.

Statutes, precepts, decrees | Rules/laws.

Righteous | Right in God's eyes; perfectly good.

 **1. According to verse 1, the heavens and the skies are telling us something. What is it?**

They tell us about the “glory” of God, which is shown through the work of his hands. Because the heavens and the skies are so beautiful, they point us towards the endless goodness (the glory) of the one who made them.

2. When and where can that message be heard, according to verses 2-4?

It can be heard every day and every night (verse 2), throughout the earth (verse 4).

3. Let’s take a look at verse 4. It says, “God has pitched a tent for the sun”. What do you think we’re being told here about what God is like?

God is spectacularly, unimaginably immense and powerful. He rules over the sun.

But the tent is also a symbol of protection. God not only creates the world and everything in it. He also sustains and nurtures it.

4. From verse 7 onwards, the writer begins talking about “the law of the LORD”, the Bible. What do verses 7 and 8 say about God’s words, and the effect they will have on us if we listen to them?

- God’s words are perfect and trustworthy (verse 7).
- They are right and radiant (verse 8).
- God’s words refresh the soul and make us wise (verse 7).
- They give us joy and light – they enable us to see clearly (verse 8).

5. Think of the popular views many people have about God. How does the God we’ve seen in Genesis 1 and Psalm 19 differ from some of these?

Genesis 1 and Psalm 19 show that God is overwhelmingly creative, kind, generous, and powerful. In other words, the God revealed here is good!

He's a personal, relational God, and not a blind or impersonal "force".

God is a Trinity. This means three divine Persons united in one divine nature. Each of these Persons relate to each other in selfless, joyful love.

He created us out of that overflowing love – not because he needed someone to love, or because he needed us to love him, but so that we could share in his joy.

Because the greatest joy a human being can experience is to know God, the greatest gift God could give us is himself.

(If guests mention the fact that God also acts in judgment, acknowledge the comment and say that we'll be exploring that theme in the next session.)

6. If you knew Psalm 19 was true, how would it affect the way you feel about God?

The kinds of answers you get might include:

- God is kinder and more loving than we thought
- God's rules are good rather than designed to spoil our fun
- We would take God's laws / the Bible more seriously
- We would read the Bible to find out more about God
- We would begin to trust that God is good, etc.

7. (If time) What has been most striking for you during this session?

This question helps you move naturally into one-to-one conversations at the end of the session.