CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY (C3) HOMEWORK

“Edifying the body by embracing the grace of the Spirit to live out the love of the Son in fellowship that glorifies the Father”

Red Text = Tips and guides to help use the questions

Blue Text = Sample Answers

Green Text = Additional questions to ask

WARM UP

1. If you had to choose to live out the life of your favorite Bible character, who would it be and why?

DIGGING DEEPER

2. In your own words, how would you describe Imago Dei and why it important?

* The Imago Dei is God's imprint on humanity that enables us to reflect His glory and represent His authority in relationship to God, each other, and the rest of creation.
* The Imago Dei is important because that is what we were made for! (Gen 1:26) God created man as symbols with the capability to display His glory and enjoy fellowship with God. That reality changes everything because that means that humans have an intrinsic value and worth as the imprints of the most worthy Creator. (Gen 9:5) And since the Imago Dei is what was disordered in the Fall, God is not working everything in order to conform us to look like Christ who is the perfect image we were designed to be (Rom 8:28-29).

3. How does God relate to the purpose, design, and intention of the Imago Dei?

* God created the Imago Dei so He has creator rights and ownership over His creations.
* God designed the Imago Dei so He knows how they are supposed to work to function according to their purpose.
* God is happy and good so His intentions for the Imago Dei are good and beautiful.
* In other words, God is sovereign and supreme over His images and His designs for them are good.

4. Read Romans 1:18-27. In this passage, Paul talks about the dark exchange of God and His glory for other things and the consequences of that exchange.

a) In vv19-20, how does Paul describe the way's God reveals Himself?

* V19 - God has shown Himself to men by revealing His character in them. Paul says that the things we can know about God (His revelation) are manifest or made visible in humanity because that is where God chose to reveal himself.
* V20 - Paul says that God's attributes are clearly visible in nature and they are understood "in the things that are made." The Greek word used for "the things that are made" is the word *poema* which is where we get the English word poem. This implies that God revealed Himself in His handiwork and like a poem it displays beauty, intentionality, and intelligence.

b) Make a list of the characteristics you think would be included in God's "invisible attributes", "eternal power and divine nature".

* The point of this question is to bring to light that God has revealed more than nature can show us. He has revealed His relational and personal characteristics through created man.
* These three descriptions would include everything we know about God. Not just the things that nature shows us but also His personal characteristics as well.
  + Powerful, intelligent, creative, relational, personal, emotional, rational, moral, good, righteous, etc

c) In v20, what are the "things that are made" and how do they display the list you just made?

* The things that are made (*poema*) is literally everything in all of creation. The only thing that falls outside of this description is God himself. So this included space, earth, living creatures, spiritual beings, and mankind.
* Nature displays many of God's qualities like power, creativity, intelligence, and design. But man displays all of His relational and personal characteristics like morality, rationality, and will.

d) According to Paul, how obvious is God's revelation of Himself?

Paul says God has made Himself "evident." He says that God's attributes are "clearly seen" and "understood." He says that God's display is so obvious that all men are "without excuse" when it comes to knowing God, and Paul even implies that all mean "knew God" even though they did not honor Him.

e) Does the clarity of God's revelation mean that everybody knows that there is a God? Does that fit your own personal experience?

There is no right or wrong answer to this question but the implication of this passage is that every person knows God or at least knew God before their understanding was darkened.

f) In V23 and V25 Paul talks about an exchange or a trade we make. What is that exchange and how does it relate to Imago Dei?

Paul says that men exchange the glory of God for images of men and other creatures. We see the glory of God (V21) but instead of enjoying it we trade it for things that were made to image or reflect that glory. Paul literally says when we exchange God what we end up with is "an image in the likeness of corruptible man." In other words, we trade the original (God) for an image of an image of an image. Furthermore, V24 says, God then allows us to further degrade the image by dishonoring one another (image bearers).

g) We reflect God's attributes like rationality, creativity, emotion, and desire (will). How does the exchange effect our reflection of those attributes?

* Our rationality is disordered. Paul says our thoughts became futile (literally empty) and we think ourselves wise but we are actually fools. (**Psalm 14:1** **(NKJV) —** **1** The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.)
* Our emotions become darkened. Paul says our hearts are darkened and the heart represents the center of affection and emotion.
* Our desires or will becomes evil. Paul says we are given up to uncleanness, lusts, and vile passions. All of those things represent a will that loves darkness instead of light. (**John 3:19** **(NKJV) —** **19** And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.)
* Our creativity is misplaced. Paul says that instead of using our capacity for symbolism (creativity) to glorify God, we now use it to make images of birds and four-footed creatures and creeping things to worship.

h) We represent God's authority in procreation (having children) and rule over nature. How does the exchange effect our representation of God authority in those areas (V25-27)?

* Part of the wrath of God that is revealed is the appearance of homosexual relationships among both men and women (V26-27). By definition, homosexual relationships cannot represent God's authority in procreation. Part of the consequence of the exchange of God humanity abandoning God's privileged to have children by engaging in homosexual relationships.
* God created us to have dominion over nature and rule it. However, when we exchange God the result is that we now "worship and serve" creation instead of having dominion over it. Instead of reigning we now make images of birds and animals and creeping things and submit to those images.

i) We are made to relate to God, man, and nature. How does the exchange effect each of those relationships?

* V24 says, God gave us up. In the exchange, we give God up for other things and so God gives us up to purpose those things. Our relationship with God is severed and we are separated from Him (spiritual death).
* Instead of honoring one another and valuating each other as images of God, in the exchange we now dishonor one another. We practice uncleanliness, vile passions, and shameful things with each other. Worst of all, we worship one another and ourselves instead of God.
* Instead of ruling and stewarding nature, we now worship and serve nature.

5. Using our definition of Imago Dei and what we've studied in Genesis 1-2, how would you address each of these topics with the Imago Dei in mind?

This question is designed to get people thinking about these topics and how to frame them with the reality that God created with purpose and design and our purpose is to be His image bearers. Hopefully, some good conversations will result.

Gender Roles & Equality

Sexuality

Marriage

Race

Rights

Abortion