

TEEN BIBLE STUDY

IS GOD REAL TO YOU?

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Instructions: The format of these ministudies is similar to that of the Bible On-Line Study Course. Look up and read in your Bible the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Comments following the questions further explain the scriptures just read. That's all there is to it! (These studies are based on the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise stated.)

Are you like many people who say, "I believe in God, but He seems so far off - so unreal to me"?

They wonder: "Where is God? Has He gone off somewhere? Why doesn't God materialize or reveal Himself in some way? How can an invisible God be real to me?"

But think about it for a moment. These same people believe in what they can't see. Air, wind and electricity simply cannot be seen. Yet these things are very real to them.

God is composed of spirit and therefore cannot be seen by human eyes. But He has definite form and shape, inhabits a specific place and shines as the sun in glory! This study will show there is a way God can become very real to you. You can even know Him personally!

But before you read further, be sure to get your Bible, a pen or pencil, and a notebook. Look up and read in your Bible the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Then write them down in a notebook so you can review your studies later. Writing out the scriptures will also help you to remember what you have learned. Now let's begin.

1. In the first three chapters of Genesis we learn that Adam and Eve sinned against God by partaking of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What did they then do when they heard God coming? Genesis 3:8.

They hid from God! God had been teaching the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. He wanted them to get to know Him and His way of life. But when they rebelled against their Creator, they felt guilty and wanted to hide from Him.

2. What did the Israelites do after God spoke His Ten Commandments to them from Mt. Sinai? Exodus 20:18-19.

When the people saw the thunder and lightning and other evidence of the almighty God "they removed, and stood afar off." Here was man plainly seeking to cut off all personal communication with God. Here was man telling God to get lost!

This is typical of how all mankind has been reacting to the presence of God since that incident in the Garden of Eden. Ever since Adam, the world in general has been playing the game of "hide-and-go-seek" with God.

3. What is God compared to? 1 John 1:5. Is this why men try to hide and even deny the reality of God? John 3:19-20. Has mankind cut itself off from God because of its sins? Isaiah 59:2.

Since Adam and Eve, men have been tricked by Satan into sinning. Sin is breaking God's law (1 John 3:4). Therefore mankind is accustomed to living a way of life the Bible refers to as "darkness". But God never sins. His way of life can be compared to a bright light that shows the way out of darkness, or out of sin.

4. What is one of the reasons Jesus Christ was sent to earth? John 1:18.

Jesus, one of the two eternal members of the God Family, became flesh and blood. He came to earth to reveal the Father to us, as well as to die for the sins of all mankind, opening the way to receiving the Holy Spirit and a full understanding of the reality of God and His purpose for mankind.

5. Besides these many revelations from God that are recorded for us in the Bible, is there a realistic way we can understand the invisible things of God and the absolute reality of His existence? Romans 1:19-20.

Think about the physical universe and all that it contains. Look at the intricacy of nature around you. Think about your marvelous body and the incredible complexity and capabilities of your mind. Here is awesome proof of the reality of the great, all-knowing, universe-ruling Creator!

From the forces that bind atomic nuclei and run gigantic stars, to the laws that sustain incredibly huge galaxies; from your marvelous, life-sustaining earth, to the vastness of space; from the existence of physical laws like gravity and inertia, to the order and harmony they sustain; from the beauty of creation, to a mind that can try to comprehend it - all testify to the presence and power of our almighty Creator and shout the conclusive evidence of his existence!

6. Since the evidence of God is clearly seen everywhere by His creation, why isn't God real to the world today? Has mankind become willingly ignorant of the reality of God? Romans 1:21-25. (Reading the rest of this chapter will show some of the results of this choice.) How does God describe one who refuses to accept such obvious proof of His existence? Romans 1:22, Psalm 14:1.

Yes, the ancient philosophers knew God. They examined the world in which they found themselves and discovered order, harmony, system and design. God was in this sense revealed to them. How? Because the existence of order, harmony, system and design absolutely demand a supreme Architect and designer - a supreme Creator!

But these same men flatly rejected the evidence rather than answer to a higher authority. For if they admitted God exists, they would have to obey Him! And so they held back or suppressed the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). They convinced themselves, against the facts and their own better judgment, that God doesn't exist. Those who reject such obvious evidence indeed look foolish and silly to God.

7. How did God show His incredible greatness, power and wisdom to Job? Job 38:1-6. (God's speech to Job continues though the end of chapter 41.)

Many today are like Job. He thought he knew a lot about God. He was pretty well convinced about the reality of God's existence. But after a long series of eloquent arguments between Job and his friends, God personally spoke to Job from a whirlwind and pointed out a few things he had never considered before.

God focused Job's mind on His material creation by asking him some embarrassing questions.

Before hearing these questions, Job had talked about God, heard about Him and discussed Him at great length. But the real God was not absolutely real to him. This really shook Job up as he finally came to see God in a completely new light (Job 42:1-6).

Now Job came face to face with God through His material creation. He saw for the first time the true picture of the awesome Creator, the almighty God. His conscious mind had not really grasped the reality of this God of whom he spoke. Job was now humbled and deeply convinced of the absolute reality of the great, all-powerful Creator, God!

8. Can those who seek to become personally acquainted with this same God really find Him? Isaiah 55:6-7. But must one put forth effort - stir himself up - to seek Him in a personal way? Isaiah 64:7. Is God not far from anyone who will earnestly seek Him? Acts 17:26-27.

God is not uninterested or unavailable to His human creation. He is not too busy to hear the **prayers of sincere people who really want to know Him**. But one must stir himself up to seek God. God is there - He is real - but He must be sought! We must put forth a concerted effort to seek Him in a personal way.

You definitely can get to know God! God is there in heaven and once real personal contact is established, He will be real to you in an intimate way.

9. Does God promise to bless those who truly seek Him wholeheartedly, and desire to actually do His will? Psalm 119:2, 1 John 3:22

God is as near as the next fervent, sincere prayer. Those who seek God earnestly - with zeal and persistence - will be blessed, both in this life and on into eternity.

Once you come face to face with the reality of God's existence and have a glimpse of our heavenly Father's goodness and power, you can begin to trust Him to bless you (Hebrews 11:6).

10. But do you realize that our conversation with God is not one sided? Do you know God speaks to us today? Read Hebrews 1:1-2 to find out how God speaks to mankind.

God has revealed His will and plan for man through His Son who came down to earth and lived among men. He then inspired various men to record the words of Jesus for us today (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Now we are able to learn of God and His purpose for mankind through His written word.

In a very personal way, God reveals Himself and speaks to us through the pages of the Holy Bible. We become acquainted with God by talking to Him in prayer and reading what He says to us in His written Word.

By reading the Bible, we can come to know the mind of God. We can understand His character and how He thinks. And through His inspired written word, God shows us how we can have happy, productive lives and tells us what He has promised to do for us if we obey Him.

So get acquainted with the great Creator, Ruler and Sustainer of the entire universe. Begin to understand the living God's great love and wisdom. Then you will know how much He takes delight in the youth who will seek to know Him, talk to Him, love and obey Him!