



Aim of lesson

To understand the nature of God and how it was revealed throughout scripture.

Bible background

See references below

Preparation required

If you are working as a group you may want to write the Bible references onto individual cards so they can be shared out, and have a large sheet of paper for recording ideas.

Outline of lesson

Lessons 4-10 all arise from the Creation account of Genesis. The purpose of this lesson is to help the class develop an understanding of the character of God, how this is evident in his role as creator and sustainer of the universe, and how this character is manifested in Jesus.

The references below provide a starting point for discussion. They can be worked through as a class (maybe picking out a few examples from each group) or shared among the members of the class and findings brought back to the group. If the ideas are recorded on a large sheet of paper or on the timeline in the students' books the class can see a picture building up. Also, as some of the references have overlapping meanings this can then be highlighted. Emphasise that God doesn't change and that the Bible is consistent throughout. This will be a recurring theme throughout the coming lessons.

The section about God's character in Jesus contains some difficult passages so try not to get bogged down in trying to explain them in detail. It should be clear that Jesus has all the characteristics of God even though we can't always appreciate how this can be so. The point is that Jesus' life helps us to see what God is like. A less mature class may like just to think of things from Jesus' ministry that demonstrate this.

God the creator & sustainer of the universe	
Genesis 1	God created everything and it was all good
Job 26:7-14	He is supremely powerful and does more than we can imagine
Psalms 19:1-6	We can see God's work by just looking
Psalms 104:29-31	He sustains his creation
Psalms 139:1-12	He made us, knows us and is everywhere
Isaiah 45:12,7	He created man, the heavens, good and evil
Matthew 6:26-30	He looks after his creation
1 Timothy 1:17	He is immortal, invisible and wise
God's character	
Exodus 34:6-7	He is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love, and faithfulness to thousands, and forgiving wickedness and sin
2 Kings 13:22-23	He is long-suffering and keeps his covenant
Psalms 103:8-11	He is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and doesn't stay angry for ever
Isaiah 40:28	He is everlasting, creator for ever, untiring, with understanding we cannot appreciate
Daniel 2:20-21	He has wisdom and reveals knowledge to mankind
1 John 4:7-11	He is love
God's character in Jesus	
Isaiah 9:6-7	Reigning for ever with justice and righteousness
John 14:8-10	The way to know and see God is to know and see Jesus
John 15:9-14	Jesus loves as God loves

Colossians 1:15-19	The fullness of God in every aspect dwells in Jesus
Hebrews 1:2-5, 8-9	Jesus is an exact representation of God's being. His throne will last for ever with righteousness
1 Peter 2:21-23	He is long suffering and righteous

Using the list of the characteristics of God, see if the class can think of specific examples of when we see these in action. For example, God's love in allowing his son to die for us; forgiving King David. This can also include Jesus' life - the many examples of his kindness and love, but also his sternness at times - think of him repeating his Father's words when he drove the money changers out of the temple - Matthew 21:13, quoting from Isaiah 5:6,7.

God's spirit

We know God created the earth through his spirit and we know that God's spirit maintains creation. Talk about how God's spirit is manifested in all his characteristics.

Relevance to our lives

As mortal beings it is difficult for us to comprehend the full extent of God's power and being. Through his word God has provided us with an insight which is within our understanding. Throughout the Bible we see the constancy of God both in his dealings with humankind and as sustainer of the universe.

Extension activities

Examine the Psalms to find examples of God as creator, his character and his power.