

Why God is not like us and why that's a good thing!

Session 2 – Unfathomable, yet wonderfully known

Key verses: Exodus 3:14; Deuteronomy 4:12-19; Isaiah 40:25, 55:8-9; John 1:1-4, 4:24, 5:26, 6:37-40, 14:9; Romans 1:18-21, 8:31-34; Ephesians 3:14, 5:32.

Talk notes:

Application:

- 1) God is the only self-existent being in existence. Only he has life in and from himself (John 1:1-4 and 5:26). So God is the only being who can define who he is without reference to anything else. By contrast, we 'live and move and have our being in him' (Acts 17:28). We are totally dependent on him to be who we are! What does that mean for how we define ourselves and find our identity?

- 2) Read Isaiah 40:12-25. What does this tell you about our ability to understand God by our own reasoning or by comparison with created things?
 - How does this humble you?

- 3) Read Romans 1:18-23. Why *don't* we respond rightly to God's witness in creation, left to ourselves? (See also Ephesians 2:1-3)

- Why do we need the Bible even to interpret the witness of creation rightly?

- 4) God alone has the right to define himself (Ex 3:14). We could say that he is the only fit witness to himself, because he alone is uncreated. What does that mean for the Bible's authority when it comes to knowing God, his works and his will for our lives?

Can science, history or philosophy ultimately prove or disprove the truth of what Scripture says about God?

- 5) Re-read John 1:14 and 1:18 (check out 1 John 1:1-4 too, if you have time). How comforting are these words in light of God's utter difference to us and our inability to know him truly if left to ourselves?

For further reflection:

We can be easily tempted to reshape God in our own image, according to our own reasoning and desires. Since God is who *he* is, not who we *say* he is (Exodus 3:14), this is just as much idolatry as making a statue of gold or silver and worshipping that.

- 1) Where are you most tempted to remake God according to your own image? (N.B. this is often in the areas where the God of the Bible is most offensive to our culture)
- 2) Read Psalm 135:15-18 (and Isaiah 44:9-11 if you have time). What happens to those who worship idols? How might we see this play out in practice?
- 3) Read Colossians 1:15-23 and Hebrews 1:1-3. Why is Jesus the better 'image' for us to worship?