

Preface

Believe it or not, the Preface matters. It can be a great tool for setting the tone on this study. With this said, read through the Preface individually as the instructor/group leader, but also read through the last three sections of the Preface as a group.

Here are some discussion questions to ask for each of the last three sections of the Preface:

Personal Bible Study

What is the difference between seeking right answers as we enter into God's Word versus seeking revelation in God's Word?

What's the difference between doing things for God versus being with God?
Where do we tend to place the majority of our focus in this regard... for or with?
What affect does that have on how we view God?

Transformation Group and Discipleship Training

Are you in a group similar to what is described in this section?
If so, what impact has this group and your time in God's Word had on your life?

As you read God's Word, this book prescribes that you pray about it. Why is that important?
How does prayer throughout the reading of Scripture affect studying God's Word?

Final thoughts before we begin

Theology simply means the study of God. It shouldn't be a scary word, but it can be used in a way that can have a very negative impact. Once again, look back at the section on personal Bible study. This isn't about being right or wrong. So, what is the purpose? God's revelation of Himself.

If this is about revealing God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? What is ultimately being revealed? *(As the leader, let them set on this, but the answer I'm directing them to is "identity")*

What are some passages with which you struggle? You don't need to answer that right away, but please take time to write these down this week as part of your homework? *If time allows, give them a few moments to pray about this.*

Italicized words are for leader only.

Underlined words are answers to questions.

Questions to ask

Covenant Introduction - *Read out loud as a group.*

Before you begin reading ask:

What is covenant?

(If you have a bunch of scholars in your circle, ask: How does society typically define covenant?)

After reading the intro:

What does God (the suzerain) offer?

- Protection
- Privilege
- Identity
- Provision (not listed in the intro, but equally important)
- Authority (not listed in the intro, but equally important)

What do we (the vassal) offer in exchange?

- Devotion
- Loyalty
- Identity
- Representation (not listed in the intro, but equally important)

Ask group members to write these down in their book. There is plenty of space on the page at the end of the intro. You may find as you continue through the book and God reveals more to you in His Word that you see other aspects you wish to add to these lists.

As a group leader, these aspects of each party's offering in covenant will be helpful to memorize, as you will find yourself redirecting the group to these often. When you're having difficulty answering questions, return to these to get re-focused.

In America, we live in a contractual society. We tend to lean on contract rather than covenant. This is a little bit pre-mature to ask this question at this point in our study, but based on what we've looked at in the intro, what would be different in our society if we viewed our relationships through the lens of covenant rather than contract?

At the heart of covenant is identity (Everything I am, is yours) and the degree to which we accept and receive this identity will ultimately determine how we relate to others, be they Christ followers or otherwise. We can only give what we've received and to attempt to do otherwise is an empty promise, which will greatly impact our witness and our walk.