

PILGRIM HOME GROUPS

The smaller groups in our church community are inside our homes where we go deeper, build friendships, and walk out the Christian life with each other.

HOME CHURCH/SMALL GROUP/CLASS GUIDE

1. "Breaking the Ice" question: (group facilitator)
2. Check-ins: What's been happening in your week(s) since last meeting? Introduce yourself if new/new people in group, check in with each other
3. Care: Needs in the group; name needs and have sentence prayers (short sentences/open ended, not long-winded) at end of the gathering time
4. Compassion: What compassion work is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbors to join?
5. Group Announcements (church-wide and group-only)
6. Dig in: Any reflections, discernments, disagreements from last week's teaching (or since you last met)? Look at the Bible passage(s) again and read some of them out loud in the group (and other verses that may have been mentioned). What jumps out at you? Discuss some of the questions as a group.
7. End and Homework: Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

DISCUSSION:

1. What is your most memorable learning experience with science as a kid or now as an adult? Why and what?
2. When someone chooses or converts to atheism they are often reacting against something. What are some of those things?
3. Reread Acts 17:10-34, take breaks, and ask:
 - Who is being engaged?
 - How are they being engaged with the message of Jesus?
 - What stands out?
 - How are we similar or different in our ways of sharing Jesus?
4. Paul clearly understood the philosophies of the thinkers of the day. He is engaging them on their terms and going beyond. What does this say about our engagement with the ideas and cultures around us?
5. Paul was a "global" citizen in the ancient sense. What does that mean for us in Vancouver?
6. Have you viewed the world as two-storied or one-storied? What practices would help you see it as "enchanted by the Spirit of God"? (Think spiritual disciplines that keep us "awake" and present to God throughout the normal day).
7. What other big issues come up in this view of reductionist/non-reductionist Naturalisms, Interventionist/non-interventionist Supernaturalisms?
8. End with prayer in smaller groups and finish with this prayer: "O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere and fillest all things; Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life - come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One. Amen"

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

The Thinking Christian FOUR WORLDVIEWS

1. OPENING

+ Scripture

- Acts 17.16-34
- Mark 12.30-31

+ Family and church experiences of the mind

"Pop atheists and Christian fundamentalists read the Bible the same way, and that should be enough to tell it's the wrong way!"

TODAY

+ We will look at how we see the world and share some thoughts adapted and quoted from James KA Smith, professor of philosophy at Calvin College.

- + Crede ut intelligas. "Believe that you may understand"
-Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430)
- + Fides quaerens intellectum. "Faith seeking understanding"
-Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)

Biblical Truth: We are guided and grounded by Jesus as revealed in scripture. We believe that the Bible shapes our understanding of life. We wrestle with doubts and fears, coming to truth through scripture, tradition, reason, and experience.

Scientism

You can, in fact, affirm real science and belief in Jesus. Scientism is a hollowed out view of science forcing it into the Atheist's presuppositions, or articles of faith.

Four ways to view the world:

1. Reductionist Naturalism

2. Nonreductionist Naturalism

3. Enchanted Naturalism or

Noninterventionist Supernaturalism

(Implicit in a well thought out Christian spirituality)

4. **Interventionist Supernaturalism** (often the words we use in our prayers, but, in fact is misleading)

1. Reductionist naturalism: (90) There is nothing but the material or physical and all phenomena can be explained by reference to physical laws and processes.

2. Nonreductionistic naturalism fights reductive physicalism of usual naturalisms (most pop-atheists faith). But are on the other hand very critical of supernaturalism.

Numbers 1 and 2 are reacting against the idea of a being that stands outside of nature - against supernaturalism where something, a god, sticks His finger in here or there.

Any religion is to be understood as a natural development in these views. Some affirm it as a good, others, that we have "outgrown it."

It should be clear that both of these primarily share their opposition to supernaturalism. Naturalism is not quite sure what it really is, only absolutely sure of what it is not.

3. Enchanted naturalism or noninterventionist supernaturalism

4. Interventionist supernaturalism

But we "land" on Number 3 enchanted naturalism or noninterventionist supernaturalism

"God doesn't have to "enter" nature as a visitor and alien; God is already present in the world. Thus creation is primed for the Spirit's action (103)."

A "One-story," not "Two-story" universe. It rejects that the world is autonomous, self-sufficient, simply created either by chance or the modernist evangelical version of a God who is totally other and only interrupts from time to time.

SUMMARY AND TAKE OUTS

+ We affirm an enchanted worldview, against natural/supernatural split

+ We must challenge the foundations of the discussion with atheism-popular or otherwise. It's foundations are as shaky as the flying spaghetti monster is real.

+ We challenge the fundamentalist scientism religion of pop-atheists.

+ We affirm the life of the mind. Let God's people think! There are reasons for belief.

+ Learning to doubt your doubts, asking the next question, the deeper questions, the better questions.

+ Maybe you are ready to say yes to the "faith seeking understanding" way of Christianity today. Jump in the water's fine! The life of the mind is just one aspect of this.