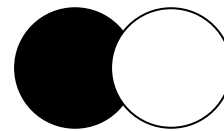


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discover

prog 1:

what if God does exist?



prog 1: what if God does exist?

wk 1: what if God *does* exist?

wk 2: what if God *did* create the universe?

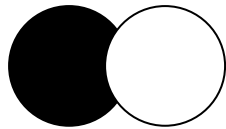
wk 3: what i *am* made in God's image?

wk 4: what if evil exists - in me?

wk 5: what if life *does* have a purpose?

wk 6: what if love is *not* just a feeling?

wk 7: what if i *can* make contact with God?

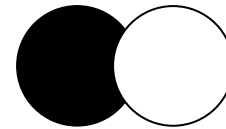


programmes

exist discover programmes are designed to help you explore the christian worldview

we'll never tell you what to think

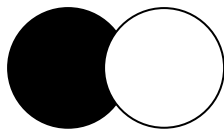
we'll always ask you to think about the words of jesus of nazareth



our mission

exist exists to:

inspire devotion to jesus of nazareth by disseminating his words In innovative formats

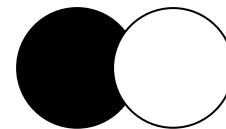


café exist

meet up with people in your area and talk over the issues raised in this discover programme

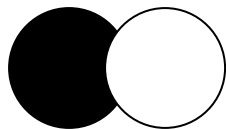
who's running café exist near you?

contact us to find out: info@exist.org.uk



resources

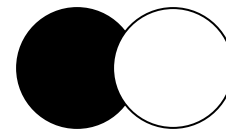
download and share flash and powerpoint presentations relating to this programme @ exist.org.uk/resources



audio

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download 'genesis' audio files



info

further information: [info@ exist.org.uk](mailto:info@exist.org.uk)

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prog 1: what if God does exist?

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wk 6: what if love is *not* just a feeling?

wk 7: what if i *can* make contact with God?

wk 1: what if God *does* exist?

discover:
the existence of God and our responses to God

key qs:
can God's existence be proven?
what evidence is there to 'prove' God exists?
how should we respond?

bible:
genesis 1; hebrews 11:6

audio:
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wk 2: what if God *did* create the universe?

discover:
God as creator

key qs:
can something come from nothing?
does the universe exhibit order and intelligent design
if God made us; who made God?

bible:
genesis 1

audio:
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wk 3: what if i *am* made in God's image?

discover:
human beings as a reflection of God

key qs:
if what ways do am I made in God's image?
What does 'being made in God's image tell me about God'?

bible:
Genesis 1;

audio:
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wk 4: what if evil exists - in me?

discover:
the nature of good and evil

key qs:
what makes something good? or evil?
did God create satan, knowing what would happen?
why does God allow suffering and evil?

bible:
Genesis 3

audio:
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wk 5: what if life *does* have a purpose?

discover:
the purpose of human existence

key qs:
what is God's purpose for me?
how do i fit into God's grand purpose for the human race?
how can we 'work' the earth *and* take care of it?

bible:
Genesis 2:15

audio:
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wk 6: what if love is *not* just a feeling?

discover:
human relationships as part of God's purpose

key qs:
what does 'God is love' really mean?
male; female: complimentary. equal value; different roles?
marriage; family; community - God's plan?

bible:
genesis 2

audio:
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wk 7: what if i *can* make contact with God?

discover:
how to make contact with God

key qs:
what should I talk to God about?
will God listen?
how does God reply?

bible:
matthew 6

wk 1: what if God *does* exist?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
does God exist?

the age old question

life's big question

can science prove the existence of God?
can philosophy?

here's a paradox
to discover God
we first need to believe that God exists
believing is seeing

it's called faith
faith's the key to finding God
faith opens the door to discovering God exists.

jesus of nazareth: if you believe, you'll see God

day 2:
yes

in every culture
in every age
women and men look at themselves
at the world
the sun, the moon, the stars
and agree 'yes' - God exists.

jesus of nazareth invites people from every culture
in every age
to believe.
maybe now's the time to say yes to his invitation

jesus of nazareth:
trust in me

day 3:
no

'no,
God can't exist
'cause i've never seen God
or heard God's voice
and i'm thinking
if God's there, then why's he allow suffering?
and
if God made us - then who made God?

then i consider jesus of nazareth
his death
his resurrection
and ask, what if God does exist?'

jesus of nazareth:
i tell the truth; you do not believe

day 4:
don't know

when we don't know
there's room for maybe
we're open to possibilities
willing to consider what might be
though right now we're still not sure

jesus of nazareth makes knowing God possible

for some, the journey from 'don't know' to faith takes
a lifetime
for others; an instant

for you?

jesus of nazareth:
if you knew me; you'd know God

day 5:
don't care

if God exists
and cares enough to make contact with us
then how should we respond?

a shrug
then get on with life?

if God cares enough to create us
then come fix the mess we create
is a careless shrug good enough?

jesus of nazareth cares for 'don't cares'

jesus of nazareth:
i came to seek and save lost people

day 6:
doubt

'once every t's crossed
and every i dotted
then i'll believe

once i've got proof: q.e.d.

once every question's answered
and every unknown's known

then i'll be able to say, 'yes, i believe'

once i've seen God face to face
and seen a man come back from death
maybe then'

jesus of nazareth:
stop doubting and believe

day 7:
faith

faith's being sure of things we can't see
but that doesn't mean it's blind
that doesn't mean it takes a leap into the dark
hoping

faith's strong when it's placed in something reliable
in someone trustworthy

faith in jesus of nazareth is faith that'll never be let down
not ever

jesus of nazareth:
you believe at last

wk 2: what if God *did* create the universe?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
beginning

'i am
i exist
uncreated
without beginning
or end.'

that's quite a claim for anyone to make
but when jesus of nazareth makes it
and makes it about himself
well, that makes people sit up and take notice

why?
'cause that's what God says about himself too.
what's jesus saying?

jesus of nazareth:
i am

day 2:
word

'and God said...'

what if we could just speak our thoughts into existence
'let there be light'
and there was light

imagine
if God were to speak his thoughts into existence
his love for us into being
imagine if his words became flesh and lived among us

a living word

jesus of nazareth:
the words i speak are life

day 3:
dark

sometimes the world's a dark place
hatred; greed; jealousy

sometimes it feels like life's dark too
empty; hopeless; desperate

jesus of nazareth brings people who're living in
darkness
into the light
a light so radiant, so bright
that you'll want to just bathe in it forever

let there be light

jesus of nazareth:
i am the light of the world

day 4:
life

can something come from nothing?
more than that, can living, thinking, moral beings
come from inanimate
unthinking
amoral matter?
from star dust?

that's not possible
only life can produce life

jesus of nazareth speaks
and his words bring life into existence
living words
words that bring an end to death

jesus of nazareth:
i am the life

day 5:
planet

the world hangs in space
a spinning, sparkling, blue-green jewel
set in a billion-star diamond cluster

a paradise - perfect for all our needs.

looking in from outside
you'd think everything's good
who'd guess our turmoil?

someone from outside to come with solutions
that'd be good
that'd be a God send

jesus of nazareth:
i am not of this world

day 6:
people

6 billion people
and more every second
of every day
of every year

no surprise then that life's cheap: dispensable

am i just a face in the crowd?
anonymous?
worthless?

jesus of nazareth says otherwise
he's come for people
come so's we can know what it is to truly live

jesus of nazareth:
i give life in all its fullness

day 7:
weary

24/7
365
quicker, faster, busier
inside i know there's more to life than that

i'm longing for work/life balance
for rhythms of living

jesus of nazareth offers rest to the weary
respite to the stressed
he presents a new, fresh kind of worldview
that puts everything in it's proper place.

jesus of nazareth:
i will give you rest

wk 3: what if i *am* made in God's image?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
image

i'm looking in the mirror
it's my father looking back
i'm his image.

i bear God's image too:
thinking; creative; moral

only thing is, that image's tarnished
i'm imperfect, whereas God's perfect

what would i look like if i were truly like God?
like jesus of nazareth?
God's exact image

jesus of nazareth:
if you've seen me; you've seen God

day 2:
community

singles; couples;
families, tribes, clans, nations
we're social creatures
made to commune with other people

made to connect and interact;
to share ideas; experiences
to share love

why so?
'cause we're made like God
God's like that too
one God - but a community within himself
three: father-spirit-son
in one

jesus of nazareth: i am one with God

day 3:
justice

built into each of us
there's a sense
an instinct
that tells us what's right
and what's wrong

we know what's fair and what isn't
we cry out at injustice

where does that come from?
it comes from God
who's just

jesus of nazareth comes to establish justice on earth

jesus of nazareth: i'll lead justice to victory

day 4:
mercy

when *you* do something wrong
i shout for justice
for just desserts

but when i'm guilty?
well, i'm not shouting 'justice' now
no way
now i'm looking for a second chance
i'm praying -
pleading for mercy

jesus of nazareth shows what mercy is
he offers forgiveness.

to forgive's divine

jesus of nazareth: i forgive sins

day 5:
good

God created the world: 'it's good'

he made women and men
'it's very good'
that's to say, it's perfect.

but something's wrong
it's not perfect now

can paradise be restored?
the image repaired?
well, not by me

maybe someone who's perfect could help
but where to find someone like that?

jesus of nazareth: seek me; you'll find me

day 6:
gender

men: mars
women: venus
worlds apart

at least that's what some people say - but is it true?

there's more, much more that unites than divides
like a need for:
love; companionship; worth
a need for God

in God's image - male and female
jesus of nazareth demonstrates love without distinctions

jesus of nazareth:
anyone who believes in me has eternal life

day 7:
creative

our creativity's designed in
not only music and art
not just literature; dance; drama

we create ideas that become reality.
plans, conceived in the mind, find physical expression

we create new life
from a human union

our creativity's a reflection of God
of the un-created one -
jesus of nazareth

jesus of nazareth: i am making everything new

wk 4: what if evil exists - in me?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
evil

imperfect. distorted. broken-down world
things out of place, out of context, out of time

why's it all gone awry? why's it not as intended?

granted carte-blanche over our lives
propensity to choose what's wrong,
prone to depravity
equals
chaos. disaster. pain. tragedy.

is the blue planet destined for destruction?
can the tide be turned?
the bad worked for the greater good?

jesus of nazareth: in this world you'll have trouble
but i've overcome the world

day 2:
good

law abiding citizen. hard working employee.
faithful spouse. dedicated parent. loving child.
charitable. respectable member of the community.
attend church
- periodically.

'i'm not perfect but i'm a good person.
nothing dysfunctional about my life.
i'm more good than bad.'

but what if that's not enough?
what happens then?

how good is good enough?

jesus of nazareth:
no one is good but God alone

day 3:
sin

blown it
missed the mark
failed to make the grade
on the wane. found wanting. fallen short again
inadequate. weak. caught red-handed. red-faced

second chances?
nine lives?
if only!
a thousand-time failure and still counting.

striving for perfection?
things not working out as intended?
frustrated? hurting? broken? tired?

jesus of nazareth:
i've come for sinners; not saints.

day 4:
tempt

just one glance, one touch; one bite; one try
it won't harm anyone

forbidden fruit

why do we give into temptation?
is it really worth it?

keep getting burned by bad decisions?
taking things into your own hands?

is it lack of self control
or
lack of trust in God?

jesus of nazareth:
don't listen to the world; just trust me

day 5:
lies

just a fib;
a little white lie;
a tall story;
a secret
a half-truth
twisted truth

living a lie?
are we just deceiving ourselves?
what if we get found out?

corporations, media, politicians: pinocchios?
reputations to maintain, profits to gain
in a world full of corruption, spin and hidden agendas
who can be believed?

jesus of nazareth: i am the truth

day 6:
slave

stuck in rut?
chained to the desk. cubicle prison. glass ceiling.

same relationships.
over familiar. nothing to offer. no longer fun to be around.

same you.
addictions. vice. cravings. old habits die hard.
same old same old.

more than just new year resolutions,
behaviour modification and therapy.

locked in. bound. tied. captive. hopeless.
no longer in control?

jesus of nazareth: i set prisoners free

day 7:
death

ultimately unavoidable; absolutely certain
inevitably final; game over
the end. period.
grief. mourning. loss.

is death the final outcome? the full stop on existence?

surely there's more.
what of eternity? of life everlasting? life beyond the grave?

yes. yes. yes.
death's not the final verdict.
death doesn't win.
it's only the beginning
jesus of nazareth conquered the grave

jesus of nazareth: i am resurrection and life

wk 5: what if life *does* have a purpose?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
if

if.
all the best words are small ones
single syllables that punch above their weight

if this...then that
'if' has consequences

if something's true then you should act
if not then no

but know thisifs.... are things you can't ignore
so don't ignore this one
'if'

jesus of nazareth
what good is it to have everything you want on earth
'if' it costs you heaven

day 2:
purpose

things have purposes,
even animals have purposes,

a toaster for toasting
a sheep for wool

so what are you for?
you're the toaster's owner
you provide it with bread and it performs its function

what provides you with a function?
what gives you purpose?

a reason for existing?

jesus of nazareth
the very reason i came was to die and glorify god

day 3:
death &
taxes

they say the only certainties in life are these:
death
taxes

the inevitability of one
and the life's burden of the other

is that it?
does that constitute our life's purpose?
purposed to die
purposed to pay taxes

there must be more fulfilment to be had
in the here and now

jesus of nazareth
i've come that you might have life to the full

day 4:
satisfaction

satisfied?
mick, keith, charlie and bill
couldn't get none

"demanding satisfaction" only left 1 of you dead in times of
duelling

and what did the 2 remaining cats get satisfaction in if it
wasn't 'whiskas™'?

sure, we can listen to some good music
get one over on someone
and have some good food
satisfied yet?

jesus of nazareth:
hunger and thirst for righteousness then you'll be satisfied

day 5:
hunger &
thirst

food and water are pretty basic needs

a couple of days without one
a couple of weeks without the other
and you won't be hungry or thirsty anymore

you'll be dead
food for the worms

is righteousness, being good, really in the same
league?
before food and water?

it would seem so

jesus of nazareth: seek first righteousness

day 6:
lost &
found

'it'll be in the last place you look' said usefully,
(not!)
as the great car key hunt begins again

when you know you've lost something
you look for it
especially if it's of value

but you need to know it's lost first

you
your purpose
your satisfaction

lost anything?

jesus of nazareth: i came to find what was lost

day 7:
questions

who, what, why, where, when
good questions
but where's the how?

it's all very well knowing facts:
the fastest land mammal
the tallest building
the oldest man

but for a purpose you need to know how to
find it
fulfil it
and be satisfied with it

jesus of nazareth:
love God and each other with everything you've got
then you'll really live

wk 6: what if love is *not* just a feeling?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
love

'all you need is love' the song goes.
funny how often it seems in short supply;
easier to sing than to do.

'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'
- is this going to get us anywhere?

jesus of nazareth said let your enemies bring out the best
in you
not the worst.

**jesus of nazareth
love your enemies**

day 2:
one

know that feeling you get
when you just click with someone?

when you share the same wavelength?

when you both say the same words
out loud - at the same time?

when you both find the same things funny
that no one else would?

how much more would you connect
with one who created you?

**jesus of nazareth
i am with you always**

day 3:
give

upgrade the telly -
new 52" LCD.
decking for the garden and patio doors.

need to change the car;
you should see Jim's new one.

and have you seen that new extension at No.42?
we should think about that too'.

but do these things last?
do they bring real joy?

to love is to give

**jesus of nazareth:
it's better to give than to get**

day 4:
alone

email and internet
mobile phones and PDAs
blogs and wikis
facebook and skype
instant messengers and web chat rooms
and still the humble second class stamp

we've never been so connected to one another
or have we?

who can you really talk to?
who really knows you?
who's really there 24/7?
who really loves you?

**jesus of nazareth:
i am with you always**

day 5:
first

so you've fought your way up,
you've overcome life's obstacles
you're sitting pretty.
those around you commend your achievements.

pat yourself on the back.

but can you get yourself to heaven?
jesus of nazareth says you've no chance by yourself
but every chance if you humble yourself
and trust him.

love puts other people first

**jesus of nazareth
the first will be last**

day 6:
last

in many people's eyes,
you've not got much to sing about.

life hasn't amounted to much.
you feel like just a small cog
in life's very large wheel.

you've taken the punches
but can't face another round.

jesus of nazareth says 'my yolk' easy
my burden's light'.

love lifts up the 'last-in-lines'

**jesus of nazareth:
the last will be first**

day 7:
influence

is love more than a feeling?

when you refuse to bend the rules
to make profit at someone else's expense?

when you seek justice
for those who can't speak up for themselves?

when you persist in going the extra mile
to look out for the awkward chap no one else really has the
patience for?

**jesus of nazareth:
you are the light of the world**

wk 7: what if i *can* make contact with God?

notes:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

day 1:
father

fathers come in all varieties:
good
bad
indifferent

jesus of nazareth compares God to a father
not just any father
but the best father - ever

he encourages us to talk to him
and to call him 'father' when we do

more that that though
we've to call him 'dad'

jesus of nazareth
when you pray; say: our father in heaven

day 2:
name

my good name's important
at least it is to me
it's my reputation

if you insult my good name
then you slander me
and i'm not happy

makes me wonder how God feels when his name's abused
when his reputation's assaulted
jesus of nazareth says: respect God's name
honour God

jesus of nazareth
when you pray; say: your name is holy

day 3:
kingdom

whatever we're building:
our own personal kingdom
or a world empire
there's a drive in us all for power
authority
control.
it's a human blight

we want to run our own lives
our way

jesus of nazareth says 'no'.
that's not the way if we want to live God's way.

jesus of nazareth
when you pray; say: make *your* kingdom come

day 4:
bread

we're physical beings
made of the same raw materials as the earth.
we live in a physical world
part of it

we need fuel to live
daily bread
God made it this way

we're spiritual too
we need spiritual food to live
we need jesus of nazareth
the bread of life

jesus of nazareth
when you pray; say: give us the bread we need today

day 5:
forgive

there's something about harbouring grudges
that's poisonous

that bitterness;
it infects the heart
the mind, the soul

better to let the issue go
to forgive the person who's wronged me

jesus of nazareth explains that's the key to being forgiven
myself
after all
how many times has God forgiven me?

jesus of nazareth
when you pray; say: forgive us just as we forgive others

day 6:
trials

no-one looks for hard times
but they come
to us all
and God permits it

no-one's immune from tears and heartache
no force-field bouncing bad times back

so jesus of nazareth says we should ask God:
'protect us from things we can't endure
from trials too hard for our faith'

jesus of nazareth:
when you pray; say: don't put us through hard testing

day 7:
protect

if God exists
and God's good
then where's evil come from?

is there a being
who's the enemy of God?
active in opposing God?

jesus of nazareth says there is
he says the evil one is the father of lies

i think i'll need all the protection i can get

jesus of nazareth
when you pray; say: protect us from the evil one

