

***D*ynamic Worship *N*ew Insights *A*ppplied Knowledge**

The DNA of FlagNaz is relatively simple (see above). We believe there is a collective wisdom rising up out of our shared experiences and interaction.

Inspiration lasts for the moment. Application a lifetime...

★Write down one new insight you received today...

★Thinking...

- How do I describe in my own words the relationship of the varied expressions of one God?
- What is revealed about the love of God that the Word, Jesus, “was with God in the beginning?”
- What does it mean to me that the Bible perfectly reveals everything needed for salvation?
- What does it mean that the Holy Spirit lives within me, producing streams of living water?

★Applying...

- Have I accepted that I was created for *purpose*?
- Do I believe that Jesus makes possible the U-turn from my sin?
- Have I taken the U-turn? If not, what does that look like *today*?
- Increase the volume of the Holy Spirit’s navigational voice by committing to one spiritual practice every day – prayer, devotional reading, spiritual conversation...

★Praying...

- Pray for conviction of the Truth despite its mystery
- Pray for clear turn-by-turn directions for your day
- Pray for today’s Bible text that God wants to use to reveal something about Himself to you

FlagNaz

Be Healed and Thrive

June 19th, 2022

Nazarene Faith – Part 1

Who is God?

John 7:28-29, 37-39

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

-The Apostle John (John 1:1-5)

I) **The Great I Am...**

Somewhere early in life we suppress the Truth and pursue our own path. Each unique path ultimately leads to a sense of surrealism. Ignored, resisted, rejected, the Truth is still the Truth. Even subconsciously, we sense it. From this deep place spring philosophy and theology, the intellectual and spiritual quests for this Truth. These concern themselves with the questions: How did all this come to be? and Is all this relevant to the creative cause?

♦ **Creator**: Many take for granted the unbelievable power in our palm when holding a smart device. Likewise automotive technologies like real-time turn-by-turn navigation. Upon reflection we might realize these brilliant technologies are *designed for a purpose*. These are not random accidents – they are creations of visionary inventors addressing the needs of society. The Nazarene Articles of Faith recognize that such inventors are modeled in the image of “one eternally existent, infinite God, Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of the universe.” Awareness of a Creator, who we commonly refer to as God, gives us an entry to our pursuit of the Truth.

♦ **Father**: Is there *purpose* in life? Am I a toy to entertain some god? Am I an accident of random chemical reactions? We ask as our defense against the Truth break down. Once accepting a creative presence, we wrestle with its nature. The cohesion of creation, the commonality of physical and biological entities suggests a single Creator. Our inner drive for *purpose*, the moral compass of our conscience, these point toward a Creator desiring something for and from us. Our Articles of Faith affirm this, writing that God “is holy love and light,” and “holy in nature, attributes, and purpose.” Holy is

to *perfectly fit* God's purpose, love is His *pursuit* to restore us to this purpose, light is the *revelation* of that purpose.

♦ **Scripture References:** Gen 1; Lev 19:2; Deut 6:4-5; Isa 5:16; 6:1-7; 40:18-31; Mt 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:6-27; 1 Cor 8:6; 2 Cor 13:14; Gal 4:4-6; Eph 2:13-18; 1 John 1:5;4:8.

II) The Lamb of God...

A principal mystery of God is the singularity of God expressed variously through the Father, Son, and Spirit. This Truth impinges upon our reason. The fact of our quest for Truth suggests we are outside of it. We recognize our *unholiness*, our being *unfit* for the Creator's purposes. An unchanging and perfectly holy Creator without a ready remedy for our *unholiness* dooms us. But ours is a God of holy *love*.

♦ **Savior:** Today we are familiar with navigational apps providing expert directions to our destination. *In one mile, use the right lane and take the exit...* If we miss the turn? *Recalculating...* What if there were no exits and no way to make a U-turn? What would our expert navigator do? Thankfully, we will never know. The expression of God as Son, Jesus Christ, makes way for our U-turn. We believe Jesus "died for our sins," and is in heaven "engaged in intercession for us." Creator and Savior each express the unity of God's holy love, His unrelenting *pursuit* of us.

♦ **Lord:** The opportunity to make a U-turn is only valuable if we *actually make the turn*. Our navigational app of choice does not lead us randomly – it *purposefully* directs us to a chosen destination. Random drives need no navigation. Before accepting the Truth of God life was a progression from one disconnected experience to another. Having accepted this Truth, we are in desperate need of Jesus as Lord, expertly navigating us toward "perfection of man's nature," the realization of our *perfect fit* for God's purpose.

♦ **Scripture references:** Mt 1:20-25; 16:15-16; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Rom 8:3, 32-34; Gal 4:4-5; Phil 2:5-11; Col 1:12-22; 1 Tim 6:14-16; Heb 1:1-5; 7:22-28; 9:24-28; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:2-3, 15

III) The Holy Spirit...

The mystery builds as we learn that Jesus has ascended to heaven and left us here. There must be some mechanism of communication, some lifeline to empower us to arrive at our ultimate destination of complete Truth. A destination for mind, body, and soul. One that requires the pilgrimage of a lifetime. The *actual turning around* and traveling the chosen path. A silent God leaves us dislocated despite knowing there is A Way. Our God is enlightening and empowering.

♦ **Counselor:** Modern vehicles have embedded navigation apps and Bluetooth connections to our devices. These give image and voice to the navigational instructions. Easily overlooked is that the content does not reside in the vehicle. These are contained in distant computer and satellite

systems that *communicate* with the device, which interprets and present data understandably. The Holy Spirit is our spiritual interpreter and communicator. He "is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin...and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus." He is the voice that foretells our next turn and says *Recalculating...* when we need to correct our course.

♦ **Helper:** A navigational system is not much use for those of us easily distracted while driving or, worse yet, who confuse the distraction with our *purpose* for driving in the first place. Our God is not one leaving us to our minute attention spans and feeble powers of will. The person of the Holy Spirit is active "regenerating those who repent and believe, [and] sanctifying believers." He is the faithful passenger constantly reminding us of the importance of our journey, encouraging us to fuel up when we are on low, washing our windshield so we can see the signs along the road.

♦ **Scripture references:** John 7:39; 14:15-18, 26; 16:7-15; Acts 2:33; 15:8-9; Rom 8:1-27; Gal 3:1-14; 4:6; Eph 3:14-21; 1 Thes 4:7-8; 2 Thes 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 3:24; 4:13

IV) The Word...

Some of us have no curiosity how a vehicle works. Others want to know the specification of the rear differential, the engine, and the mechanics of the transmission. For those of us intent on arriving at our destination, both worldviews are dangerous. The former might neglect to maintain the vehicle and break down along the way. The latter might never begin the journey, always preferring to tinker in the garage. God's holy light shines through His Word, the Scriptures that *reveal* everything it takes to operate and maintain our earthly vehicle sufficiently to arrive at our ultimate destination.

♦ **Revelation:** Men have a reputation for pridefully expecting themselves capable of knowing how to use some technology or machinery without any instructions. Many have spent hours or days trying to get something working before succumbing to the shame of *reading the manual*. The consequences of intuitively discovering how to adjust the mirrors or turn on the wipers are minor. But would you be comfortable as a passenger in a car the transmission of which was recently replaced by a novice who guessed how to do it? Fulfilling our *purpose* by arriving at our eternal destination requires knowing what is required to make the journey. "We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures...given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation."

♦ **Scripture references:** Luke 24:44-47; John 10:35; 1 Cor 15:3-4; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21

♦ **Articles of Faith:** <https://nazarene.org/articles-faith>