

[**Small Group/ Reflection Notes**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+4%3A9-10&version=NIVUK)

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|  | **15-09-2024** | **Accept no substitutes** |
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| *Icon  Description automatically generated**Start* | * When it comes to online groceries, do you accept or reject substitutions? What examples have you had recently?
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| *Discuss* | * When have you been *moved* or *impacted* by the creative arts, giving you fresh experience or understanding? e.g. a painting, photo, movie… Tell us the *What? Who? Where? When? Why?*
* How can the creative arts help us encounter the Divine/ God?
* Why are creative arts limited in their representation of the Divine/ God?
* How can objects/ icons aid our engagement with God? Do they feature in your spiritual life? How? Why?
* How does Communion involve all five human senses?
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| Read | [**Exodus 20:1-6**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%2020%3A1-6&version=NIVUK) | Listen again | ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Watch |
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| *Icon  Description automatically generated with medium confidence*Explore | * [v.4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%2020%3A4&version=NIVUK): Up to this point in Exodus, the Hebrews had experienced so much of God. Name some of the “only God” moments on their journey. How/ why did they then come to substitute God for bronze/ stone/ wood statues/ idols? What can God do that statues can’t? What psychological/ emotional/ social benefit might the Hebrews have gained from these idols? What are idols today? How do we psychologically/ emotionally/ socially use them? When does ‘religion’ become a substitution for God?
* [v.5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%2020%3A5&version=NIVUK): What is *jealousy?* Can you imagine God being *jealous?* Read [1 Corinthians 13:4-7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2013%3A4-7&version=NIV) & [1 John 4:8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20john%204%3A8&version=NIVUK). How would you feel if your ‘life partner’, who you thought was ‘exclusive’ with you, is being unfaithful? How would bronze/ stone/ wood react to this discovery? If we accept alternatives/ are unfaithful to God, how might that make God, who has gone exclusive with us, *feel?*
* How is our understanding of God shaped by the representation of God we inherit from our upbringing/ culture/ church tradition? What was your religious inheritance?
* [v.6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%2020%3A6&version=NIVUK): Why do some Christians make out God’s anger and love are equal? God might *sometimes* become angry. Angry at what? Who? However, God is always/ permanently/ in all situations.. Love. Why do some Christians emphasis God’s anger/ vengeance, whereas others seek to overlook it? Do the maths of v.5-6: what is the weighting of *anger* to *love?* What wins, anger or love? Why?
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|  See ChesterTThis  |  |
| Go further | * Read [Colossians 1:15-23](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians%201%3A15-23&version=NIVUK).
* How is Jesus the image of the invisible God?
* Why does Jesus provide the perfect representation of God?
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| Reflect | * Which one verse stands out to you? Why do you think it grabs your attention?
* Which verse(s) will you need to think more about? Why?
* What does it mean for *you* to accept no alternatives to God in your life?
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| Do | * Post online something about your faith, church involvement…
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| Pray | Dear God,Thank you that You are \_\_\_\_. Right now, I choose to say\_\_\_ *[YES/ NO]* to You. Help me to turn away from\_\_\_, and to turn towards You, my God. Thank you, Jesus, for continuing to expand my thinking and capacity for God. Lead me in the adventure of faith with You, my One Creator God, without limit, rival, or comparison. Amen. |
| Collection |  |
| Icon  Description automatically generatedMy questions: |  |

*If you’re not yet in a small group, why not join one! Check out:* [*ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/SmallGroups*](http://www.ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/SmallGroups)

*Can’t see a group to suit your availability/interest? Start one!* *SmallGroups@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk**.*