

4. THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB

1. What has been the most special wedding you have ever attended and what made it so special?
2. When God entitles himself “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” he includes us as humans within his very name and identity. In what way is the great Biblical account of the Old Covenant with Abraham and Moses, and New Covenant in Jesus simply the story of God embracing us into himself?
3. Jesus’ incarnation as a human being means that our humanity is forever organically woven into the very essence of God. How do you respond to the statement that God cannot be who he is without the inclusion of us as people?
4. What is the rich meaning of each of us being baptised *into* the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and what might that mean in practice for the way we see ourselves?
5. The grand finale of the Bible is the heavenly wedding of Christ and his Bride, the Church. How should this impact where we, as the Church, draw our life from, the values we exemplify and the way we engage with the world around us?

5. PERICHORESIS

1. Would you describe your family as loosely or closely connected? What are the times when you feel closest to one another?
2. In a number of passages from John’s Gospel (Jn. 5:19-20; 12:49-50; 14:10 and 31) Jesus speaks about his relationship with his Father, then in Jn, 16:13-15 Jesus speaks of his relationship with the Holy Spirit and the Father; how do these passages give us insight into the inner relational dynamics of the Trinity?
3. How can the relationships of the Trinity be characterised by the submission of the Son to the Father and the Spirit to the Son and the Father, yet also express perfect equality and unity? What are the closest analogies in our human experience?
4. How do you respond to this quote from Scottish theologian, Tom Smal:
If we take seriously the divine identity of Jesus a problem arises. Can we talk of divine obedience? Is there in God an ability not just to be first and command, but also to be second and obey? Is there within the one life of God a real subordination of the divine

Son to the divine Father? Can we really say with Karl Barth that “for God it is just as natural to be lowly as it is to be high”?

5. How might we foster this culture of shared equality and submission in our church, homes and workplaces?

6. THE SPIRIT OF FELLOWSHIP

1. What has been your experience of both the gifts and the fruit of the Holy Spirit and how have the two interacted with each other in your life?
2. From birth to the Cross and resurrection, Jesus lived empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit (look at Luke 1:35; Mark 1:9-13; Luke 4:1, 18-19; Hebrews 9:14). How does that encourage and guide us as we seek to live the Christian life?
3. John the Baptist clearly states that the primary mark of the ministry of the coming Messiah is that he will baptize with the Holy Spirit; and this is fulfilled in the culmination of Jesus’ earthly ministry at Pentecost. To what extent do you agree with the assertion that without being filled with the Spirit we cannot live the Christian life?
4. What does it mean for us to be a Spirit-filled church community if, as we see from the following passages, the primary ministry of the Holy Spirit is to gather us into the fellowship of the Triune God and to make that depth of relationship real in our experience? (Romans 5:5; 8:15-16; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 3:17-18; Gal 4:6-7; Titus 3:4-6)
5. If the fellowship of the Spirit is so important, how can we bring more intentionality to our times together before and after worship services and through the week?