

# ***life groups study guide***

## ***to you from: Alpha & Omega***



*Small groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for the life application of the CORE 4 elements of worship, grow, serve, and share*

The Alpha and the Omega symbols represent the eternal nature of Jesus Christ and God. Alpha is the first letter in the Greek alphabet and Omega is the last. Together these two letters form a monogram or symbol for one of the names of Jesus Christ, meaning “the Beginning and the End.” The term is found in Revelation 1:8: “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (NIV) Twice more in the book of Revelation we see this name for Jesus:

### **Revelation 21:6**

He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. (NIV)

### **Revelation 22:13**

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. (NIV)

This statement by Jesus is very important to Christianity because it clearly means that Jesus existed before creation and will continue to exist for all eternity. He was with God before anything was created, and therefore, took part in creation. Jesus, like God, was not created. He is eternal. Thus, Alpha and Omega as a Christian symbol signifies the eternal nature of Jesus Christ and God.

*“Among the Jewish Rabbis, it was common to use the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet to denote the whole of anything, from beginning to end” (Barnes).*

Saying Alpha and Omega is like saying A to Z; the whole of everything – from the beginning to the end. The descriptor is all-encompassing in nature.

Q :: While this name bears witness to Jesus’ eternity and sovereignty over all things – time included – what are some **practical** reasons this would be significant and important for our lives today?

I believe Christians can be duped and deceived into thinking that there are some problems we face that are outside of God’s interest or concern. Sometimes we say to ourselves that because others have far more serious problems, that ours are less important. Often, I think, we simply believe that God has bigger fish to fry and our problems are simply too small to show up on His radar.

Q :: Have you ever had a problem that you thought was off of God’s radar, for one reason or another?

Q :: If Jesus is everything for us, from A to Z, how does that impact how we should view our problems or trials.

Let’s look at the context of this name, as it appears in Revelation 22:13. Read verses 12 and 13

Q :: Before He claims being Alpha and Omega, He makes other claims about Himself (v. 12). What are those?

Q :: Now read 14 and 15. How is Jesus being the Alpha and Omega relative to what He says in v. 12 and in v. 14 & 15 – and why does that matter?

Jesus not only attests to His authority and divinity, but to His holiness as well – if we understand holiness as it is meant: set apart. Jesus is further “set apart” from us, or from anything we can adequately get our minds around in that He exists now, in His glorified state, outside the constraints and the boundaries of time itself.

Further, if we look at another instance of this name being used by Jesus about Himself, we see an interesting connection.  
Read Rev. 1:8

Does that sound familiar? You may have heard something like that before. The more well-known version of this phrase is a few pages over in Rev. 4 – Read Rev. 4:2-11

In v. 8, we see these fantastic creatures surrounding the throne of God the Father and continually saying “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.” Pretty darn close to the claim Jesus makes about Himself in 1:8, is it not? In the Hebrew language, repetition meant force. The more something was repeated, the stronger the emphasis. Several places an attribute is repeated twice – but, these are the only places in scripture where we get a three-peat – and only about this attribute: Holiness.

Think of all of the things God could have chosen to have said about Himself in His own presence. He doesn’t go with “loving, loving, loving” or “merciful, merciful, merciful” – though those certainly would have been true. No. What is spoken in His presence – in His very throne room – is “holy, holy, holy.”

Q :: Why do you think God wants to SO emphasize His holiness?

Q :: Do you think we can become so comfortable with God, that we forget His holiness? Explain.

Q :: Is there anything we can infer from Jesus using the same words to describe Himself that the living creatures continually (day and night, never stopping) say about God?

Q :: What is significant about Alpha and Omega being tied to God’s holiness?

## Conclusion

In addition to the A to Z reference and all that entails; In addition to the connection to holiness and further substantiation of Jesus’ claim to be God; There is another thing to learn from the concept of God being the “first and last”. It is found in Isaiah 44:6. The NIV translates it this way: “This is what the LORD says--Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.”

This whole “no other gods” thing is very serious business to God. If you doubt that, just read Deuteronomy 17:1-7. God is indeed a jealous God. He sees the worship of any other god as an evil that must be purged (from the Deut. passage). It’s the first commandment (and really the second as well).

By declaring Himself, the Alpha and Omega, God is telling us, that there is no other god but Him. At a time when we can so easily get caught up in all of the externals about Christmas, may the Alpha and Omega remind us that He is the only thing worthy of our worship and adoration. He should be the beginning of the desires of our heart and the end where we place our hope. Not just at Christmas, but always.