

The Creation
1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

WHY ARE

WE HERE?



LEADER GUIDE

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INTRO

Many of us live day to day without considering some really important questions about life. We are so busy going through the motions of our daily routines, we never slow down to ask, “Why am I even here?” People with a completely secular worldview believe we are here by mere chance, but the truth is God designed and created us with a purpose. When we discover God’s intent for our lives, we move from merely existing to truly living—living for His purpose.

This Bible Study Leader Guide is designed to be just that—a guide. It’s something you can customize to fit your group and your own teaching style. The best way to prepare is to study the Scripture and use the lessons as your personal Bible study. As you interact with Scripture and the material in the Guide, take notes and answer the questions yourself. Learn from the lessons before you attempt to teach them. Allow the Holy Spirit to teach you through this study and then use you to teach your students!

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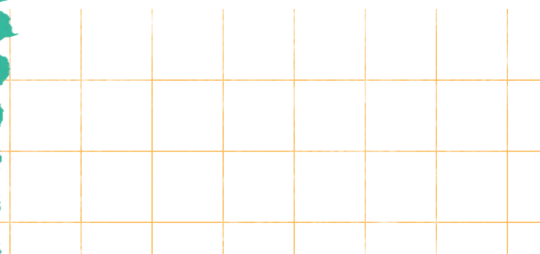
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WHY ARE

WE HERE?

MEMORY VERSE

John 17:3

KEY PASSAGE

Genesis 1:1-5, 26-31

NOTES

THE POINT

God created us to live in fellowship with Him.

ENGAGE

Select one student to come up front. Give that student a list of “boring tasks” that are relatable to most of the students (i.e., homework, laundry, cleaning, taking out the trash, etc.). Have the student act out the list, while the remaining students try to guess as many of the tasks as they can in two minutes.

There are plenty of things in our lives that seem unimportant, but God uses every part of our lives, even the little things, to accomplish His plans for us.

INTRO QUESTION

What is an important “first” you’ve experienced that has had a big impact on you?

THINK

READ GENESIS 1:1-5.

What’s the Bible all about? We find out from the very beginnings of Scripture, and the answer seems pretty clear—it’s about God. Within the first five verses, we read God’s name six times. The Hebrew word Elohim, which is translated “God,” is used to call attention to His greatness and power, which are clearly on display: “God created ... the Spirit of God was hovering ... God said ... God saw ... God separated ... God called.”

Share with students some of the important truths about God found in these opening verses.

- God existed before the universe.
- God created the heavens and earth out of nothing by speaking them into existence.
- God created order, separating light and darkness.
- God showed His authority over creation by naming it.

Early astronomers like Ptolemy and Aristotle believed our world was the center of the universe. Galileo later proved the earth revolves around the sun, and this radical idea went against the thinking of his peers, who believed humanity was the center of the universe. Although science has attempted to explain the origins of the earth and the cosmos, the Bible declares that God is the One who brought everything into existence. And the Bible makes clear that humans were never the center of the universe—God has always been the center of it all!

“CREATED” is translated from the Hebrew word bara, which is used consistently to refer to new activity—and God is always the subject of the new activity. The word for God, Elohim, is very important. It’s a plural noun, but it’s always accompanied by a singular verb. From the very first verse in Scripture, we see the unity and diversity in the nature of God—the Trinity.

VERSES 4-5: The Creator didn’t take existing matter and form it into the creation we see. He created it out of nothing! Psalm 33:6 teaches, “The heavens were made by the word of the Lord, and all the stars, by the breath of his mouth.” Further, in Hebrew culture, naming someone or something was a sign of authority over it (Deut. 3:14; 2 Kings 23:34). In naming the elements of creation (day, night, etc.), God was demonstrating His lordship.



NOTES

How do people today act like they're the center of the universe? How are you tempted to live like this?

What difference does it make that the Creator, not the creation, is at the center of the creation story?

READ GENESIS 1:26-27.

VERSE 26: People are like God in that we are: Rational—we think in a manner that is much more sophisticated than even the most “intelligent” animals; Emotional—we were created with affections and passions that connect us with others, allow us to celebrate God’s goodness, and drive us to live with purpose; Relational—people are distinct in that God created us with the great privilege of living in meaningful relationship with others and Him; Moral—all people are created with a conscience and are responsible for discerning between right and wrong.

Ask students to share some of the ridiculous perspectives that our culture has come up with about creation and the beginnings of life on earth. Explain that Scripture teaches that people naturally, because of our unrighteous hearts and minds, suppress the truth. The simple fact is the universe didn’t evolve over millions of years from single cell organisms. Human life was created by God, and it happened instantaneously.

Take it a step further by discussing the order of creation. God created less complex forms of life first and prepared a place where people would live. Then He created people to be different from the rest of the created order—we are the only creatures made in God’s image. This means we are spiritual creatures made to live in relationship with God, and, further, to serve as images of His character throughout the earth.

God, in His infinite wisdom, had a plan for spreading His image and His glory throughout the world. All people are created with equal value, but God made men and women to have very different roles, and each responsibility serves an essentially important function in bringing glory to God. Every aspect of creation—including who we are as males and females made in the image of God—is not merely good. God concluded “it was very good indeed” (Gen. 1:31).

VERSE 27: The terms male and female refer specifically to human sexuality. When expressed appropriately and according to God’s design, even physical intimacy, as Paul revealed in Ephesians 5:31-32, serves as a picture of God’s glory and Jesus’ love for the church.

How does knowing you’re created in the image of God affect the way you see yourself and others?

What does it mean that God created both male and female in His image?

READ GENESIS 1:28-31.

VERSE 28: Throughout the Old Testament, it’s common that a blessing from God was associated with relationships He established. God’s blessing includes favor and provision. Without His blessing, people would not be able to fulfill His commands, including being fruitful, multiplying, and filling the earth.

All people are created with the desire to know God. Today many pursue God—wrongly—through different paths, but from the very beginning, God made it clear how we are to follow Him. After pronouncing a blessing over the newly created Adam and Eve, God gave them five commands to obey. 1) Be fruitful. 2) Multiply. 3) Fill the earth. 4) Subdue the earth. 5) Rule over the earth.

Share with your group that the first three commands speak into the reality of marriage and family. God wove into the deepest parts of every person a longing for relationships—first with Him, and also with others as a picture of our connection with Him. Family is the first institution ordained by God, and it’s precious to Him. God didn’t just create us, tell us what to do, and then leave us to figure it out on our own—He also provided for us. God created family as the way to meet our deepest needs. He also provided resources through the earth to help us live and exercise oversight well.

NOTES

PHILIPPIANS 4:19: God owns it all and He provides for His people out of His abundance. However, this doesn't mean Christians will have an easy and comfortable life where all our earthly needs are filled. Rather, it's likely that, on earth, we will face difficult times and find ourselves lacking. However, Jesus will unquestionably meet the eternal spiritual needs of every one of God's children.

Today, the world we live in is affected by sin's curse, and people fail to follow God's commands. Because of this, relationships are strained and needs often go unmet. But the truth is that God has promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in Christ (Phil. 4:19). God our Creator is also God our Provider, and from the very beginning, He has proven over and over that He is faithful.

How would you describe our responsibility for taking care of the world God created?

Based on this passage, what is the purpose of our lives?

LIVE IT OUT

CHRIST

God's power was on full display through creation (Ps. 19:1-4; Rom. 1:20). However, many times we not only fail to live in wonder and admiration toward God, but we relate to Him with an utterly unhealthy familiarity.

What activities will you engage in this week to help you cultivate a sense of wonder in response to God's majesty?

What do you know about God which should cause you to live in continual awe?

COMMUNITY

In the creation story, the name for God that's in Scripture—Elohim—is plural and points to the diversity of our one God. For eternity, the Father, Son, and Spirit have lived in perfect relationship with one another, and God created us to live in relationships as well.

What characteristics do you see in the relationship within the Trinity?

What will you do this week to cultivate those characteristics in your relationships?

CULTURE

Culture buys into evolution, but we know from Scripture that these worldly views aren't just inaccurate—they're blasphemous because they rob God of His creative power and authority over creation.

What steps will you take to help someone understand more clearly the beauties of God on display through creation?

How will you make sure to be sensitive to their perspectives and avoid coming across as arrogant and judgmental, while boldly holding to the truth?

