

6 studies in Genesis 1 - 3
for individuals, groups & 1:1

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BEGINNINGS



1. What part of God's creation fascinates or intrigues you the most?

2. Are you aware of creation stories from any culture or people group? What questions about life do these stories seem to be trying to answer?

3. In 1970 Joni Mitchell sang, "We are stardust. We are billion year-old carbon." What are the implications of that statement for meaning and purpose of our lives?

4. Without opening your Bible list as many of the major characters and the major events in Genesis as you can recall.

Read Genesis 1:1 - 2:3

5. What ideas, words or phrases are repeated? Does anything strike you as surprising or strange? What questions does this description raise for you?

6. What do you notice about the pattern of “forming” and “filling” in creation? Why do you think this pattern is significant?

7. What seems to be the key teaching of this section with regard to:
 - God

 - Creation

 - Humans

8. What do you think it means that humans are created in God’s image?

9. Can you think of anything significant in the way the woman is spoken of and described in Genesis 1?

10. How does this section of Genesis speak to questions about the purpose of our lives?

Read Psalm 104

11. How does the Psalmist's poetic rendering of the creation story help you understand God's creation, and our place in it?

Read John 1:1 - 14

12. Do you notice any similarities with Genesis 1?

13. How do John's words add to our understanding of creation?

14. A friend tells you that humans are no more important or significant than any other animal. Having read Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 and John 1:1 - 14, how do you respond?

15. How does Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 help equip you to critique the popular opinions about life and humanity we hear today?

16. How might the truths of the creation story shape our readiness to share the gospel of Jesus with people and shape the way we share the gospel of Jesus with people?

1. If you got to choose your ideal job, what would it be?
2. What aspects of your current “job” (paid, volunteer, work in the home, study, etc) do you find most stimulating or fulfilling?
3. Is there a “typical” Australian attitude towards work? How would you describe it?

Read Genesis 1:27 - 31

4. In what ways is the account of creation on Day 6 different to the pattern of the earlier days?
5. How are the man and woman unique in creation?
6. Considering the unique responsibilities given to the man and woman and their unique relationship with God, what might it mean that we are created “in the image of God” (v 27)?

7. What do the following verses add to our understanding of the image of God?

- Genesis 5:1 - 3

- Genesis 9:6,

- 2 Corinthians 4:4

Read John 5:16 - 18

8. What does Jesus say in this passage about work?
9. How does Jesus' teaching about work in John 5 shape our understanding of the mandate given to humans in Genesis 1?
10. In what ways might God's command in 28 be misunderstood and therefore misapplied today?

11. From what you know of the fall already, how has it affected:

- The image of God that humans bear

- Our Work

12. How is a Christian person's approach or attitude to work different to that of someone who doesn't know Jesus?

13. How could you use those differences as a starting point for a gospel conversation with your friends?

14. Your friend shows you his new bumper sticker. It reads, "Created to surf, forced to work." In the light of Genesis 1, how do you respond?

1. As a Christian, what is the upside and the downside of being unemployed?

2. What is the advantage of being (or not being) a union member?

3. Why has mankind been unable to keep control over works that should be for the benefit of everyone and protective of Earth's environment?

"Environment" includes all aspects of the surroundings of man, including his social groupings. (Early definition used by the United Nations)

Read Genesis 1:24 – 2: 3

4. Make a list of the unique characteristics that human beings were created with, their responsibilities and God's on-going provision for their care, as described in this passage.

5. In view of the description in v. 2: i that God's creation of mankind has completed the final stage of establishing the Earth in this Universe, what does this indicate about the real purpose and significance of the Universe?
6. What kind of work could be linked with observing the seventh day as "holy"?

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6 – 15

7. Write down your own “Three-Word Summary(s)” of the problem in the Thessalonian church arising from certain believers who were causing disruption by “retiring” from their work. (See also 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-2, ‘dropping out’ through false teaching.)
8. Where does this action take place?
9. Who are the people involved?

10. How does Paul's attitude to work challenge the busybodies' view of work?

11. Can you find:-

- reasons for thanksgiving, worship or praise?

- promises to explore?

- examples to follow?

- errors to avoid?

- 'words of life' to hang on to?

Read Matthew 9: 37

12. Why are the workers “few”?

13. How should we allocate our time and resources to telling others about Jesus?

Read Colossians 3: 23

14. What motivation does this verse provide for our own attitude towards work??

Read 2 Timothy 2: 15

15. How do we win God’s approval as a worker?

1. What is your “go to” place or activity that you find most restful?
2. Are there activities that you would ‘not do’ on a Sunday that you would be happy to do any other day of the week?

God completed His creative work and rested.

Read Genesis 1:24 – 2:3

3. How are we to understand God's decree that 'mankind' be created in His "image and likeness"? (1:26)
4. What 'Godly' characteristics does 'mankind' enjoy, having been created in His "image and likeness"? (1:28, 2:2,3)
5. How can 'Rest' be considered the "goal of creation"? (1:31, 2:2)

Israel commanded to work and rest.

(‘Sabbath’ is the Hebrew word for rest.)

Read Exodus 23:10 - 12; Leviticus 25:8 - 17

6. What are the ‘Sabbath’ rest’s Israel was commanded to observe?

Read Exodus 31:12 - 17

7. What are the ‘sabbaths’ a sign of?

8. Why was breaking a sabbath such a serious offence?

Read Deuteronomy 12:7 - 11

9. How was the ‘Promise Land’ to be a place of rest for Israel?

Jesus comes to restore “Rest”!

Read Matthew 11:25 - 30

10. Why is Jesus’ revelation of the Father something to ‘rejoice in’ with ‘praise and thanksgiving’? (11:27)

11. Why does Jesus describe people as “weary and burdened”?

12. What is there to learn from Jesus, by ‘taking His yoke upon ourselves’?

13. Why does Jesus describe His “yoke and burden” as “easy and light”?

Christian Rest

Read Hebrews 3:7 – 4:11

14. What prevented Israel from entering their promised rest?

15. How does a person enter Christian rest?

16. Describe the rest we are invited to enjoy?

17. Why can Christian rest be thought of as “now and not yet”?

1. If you're married, what is it about your spouse that makes them the ideal complement for you?

2. If you're single, what characteristics in another person do you think would complement your personality and character?

3. Who among the people you know seems to have the most healthy marriage?

4. What is it about them that makes their marriage appear so healthy?

5. If you asked people in the street, "What is the difference between men and women?" what kind of answers do you think you'd hear?

Read Genesis 2:18 - 25

6. After the repetition of "it was good" in chapter 1, the "it is not good for man to be alone" in 2:18 certainly stands out! Why do you think it was not good for the man to be alone?

7. God is sometimes described as a “helper” ie Exodus 18:4, Psalm 10:14, Hosea 13:9, Hebrews 13:6, etc. How does this help you understand the way the woman is described in Genesis 1:20?
8. What might be the significance of the woman’s creation from the man’s side rather than from the dust (cf 2:7)?
9. Read verse 23, which records God bringing the newly-created woman to the man. What does the man’s response convey?
10. What does this section tell us about the similarities or differences between men and women (think value, purpose, role, etc)?
11. Men and women both express the image of God. Does this mean single people are less able to bear God’s image than married people?

Read Matthew 19:3 - 9

12. What point is Jesus making through his quotation of Genesis 2:24?

13. In our broken world, God's ideal for marriage isn't always realised and people experience separation and divorce. What hope does the gospel of Jesus offer people in those situations?

Read Ephesians 5:22 - 33

14. What does the relationship between a husband and wife tell us about the relationship between Christ and the church?

15. What does Ephesians 5 tell us about the marriage of which we may be a part, or those which we observe?

1. Think of the story in Genesis so far. To this point, how many “beginnings” can you think of? (ie the beginning of the universe, etc)

2. What “beginnings” or “firsts” occur in this section?

Read Genesis 3:1 - 24

3. What strikes you as you read this account of the Fall?

4. What’s the process by which the serpent leads the man and the woman into disobedience?

5. In 2:3 the woman quotes God’s promise of the consequence of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (2:17) “you will surely die”. Yet after eating, the man and the woman are still alive! What does this mean for the consequence of sin?

6. What other consequences of sin are evident in this episode? Does our sin today have these same consequences?

7. What does God say to:

- The serpent

- The woman

- The man

8. If you had to define “sin” based only on this incident, what would your definition be?

9. How is this incident (and therefore your definition) typical of all sin?

10. At what points in this episode do you see God's grace most clearly?

Read Romans 5:12 - 21

11. What is the flow of Paul's argument in verses 15 - 17?

12. How has Jesus "crushed Satan's head" - to use the expression from Genesis 3?

13. "But where sin increased, grace increased all the more" (Romans 5:20). What is Paul saying about God's grace? (Romans 6:1 - 4 may be helpful).

14. In what situations might the same question, "Did God really say ...?" become a stumbling block for people today?

15. How do we help each other guard against the kinds of temptation we face daily?

16. What hope is there for the Christian who is facing temptation to sin?

17. What hope is there for the Christian who has fallen into sin?



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