

Foundations

OPEN THE CONVERSATION

Take some time to build relationships with the students:

- Ask for each student's high and low from the week.
- Today's RBQ (Relationship Building Question): **If you could choose one skill to master overnight, what would it be and why?**

INTRODUCTION

Let's take a moment to celebrate something you've made lately! Maybe it was a killer sandwich, or a doodle on a napkin, or an epic tower of cards. Whatever it was, it probably felt pretty cool to see your creation come to life. But hold up, let's not forget that we mere mortals can only work with what we have. We can't just say, "Let there be light," and *poof* the sun appears. That power is reserved for the ultimate Creator. There is nothing wrong with our kind of creating, but we need to understand that we can never compete with the creative power of God. He stands alone as the ultimate Creator.

What is something you have created recently? What differences can you identify between your creation and God's work of creation?

READ Genesis 1:1-15

1. **Why does it matter to us that God was the same before creation that he is today? How does this encourage you about who He is? (Gen 1:1-2)**
2. **Where do you see God having a plan and caring about the details in the creation story? Where do you need God's purpose and intentionality in your life today? (Gen 1:3-8)**
3. **What do you think about how God created everything with a plan and a purpose? How does that make you feel about God's plans and purposes for you? (Gen 1:3-8)**
4. **How does it feel to know that God knows exactly what you need and is actively sustaining you in each moment? (Gen 1:9-15)**
5. **What stands out to you most about the character and nature of God from today's study? (Gen 1:9-15)**

WRAP UP

Put today's lesson into action: How can you apply it to your life?

Ask for any prayer requests and pray for one another.

EXTENDED CUT

The first words of Scripture set the tone for the rest of the Bible and give us insight into God. The phrase "God created" sets the foundation for the origin of the world. God is the One who created what is about to be described with greater detail in following verses. The writer of Genesis leaves no confusion or question about how this planet came to be. The first verse of Genesis is direct and straightforward, declaring God as the creator. When you accept and believe what you read about God in Genesis, you will have less trouble believing the rest of the Bible. The God who is big enough and powerful enough to have created the heavens and the earth is big enough and powerful enough to do everything that we read in Scripture. Those who study the details of how our planet functions in relationship to other planets, the sun and moon, often come back to the precision with which it all stays in place. For this galaxy to continue, every little detail matters. This points directly to intelligent design of God as Creator. This universe is right and perfectly ordered in a way that is only explained by God's intelligent design. The word used for "created" in Genesis 1 is the ancient Hebrew word bara. It means to shape or create. God took nothing and formed the earth. Humankind has no ability to create in this same fashion. Artists, sculptors, or builders may fashion a creation, but they must use some type of preexisting material to do so. God formed and created the earth from nothing, which sets Him apart from mankind. Note the way the Bible describes the state of the earth before God began to organize His Creation. Verse two includes a reference to the Spirit of God, pointing to the idea of the Trinity as communicated throughout Scripture.

Why does it matter to us that God was the same before creation that he is today? How does this encourage you about who He is? (Gen 1:1-2)

To bring organization to the chaos of darkness, God created light. The order of creation often reflects the pattern of how God works in your own life. When you need answers or help, God gives light through His Word and the church. Light brings clarity. Light shows the way and God started with light. God alone has the power to speak, and things happen. There was no delay. When God called for light, it was there. God then divided that light and organized days. From the beginning, God gave us rhythms to guide our lives. There was a purpose to everything He did, including the sequence of creation. God is a God of order and brilliance. He started with the foundational aspects of creation before He created animals or people, which only reinforces that the sequence matters just as the design matters. Debates about the length of these first days of creation have always been and will continue. No matter where we land on this debate, this point further emphasizes the order and rhythm of creation. Consider how important days are. All of life as we know it revolves around days. Our lives are subjected to morning and night. We function according to the natural patterns that God set for us from day one. Though the sun and moon had not yet been created, there was day and night. We know from other Scriptures that the new heavens won't have the sun or moon because God's presence will be the light (Revelation 22:5). On that second day, God separated the waters of the land from the waters of the sky. Again, God spoke, and things happened. He continued His work to provide for life in various forms through the creation and order of water. There were bodies of water gathered on the firmament and heavenly waters gathered in the sky, thus creating a system whereby the earth would continually receive the water needed for sustenance.

Where do you see God having a plan and caring about the details in the creation story? Where do you need God's purpose and intentionality in your life today? (Gen 1:3-8)

The gathering of the waters also brought forth the land. Plants began to grow and flourish on the land. God created mature plants and trees that had the ability to continue to produce new vegetation that would further sustain God's creation. The repetition of the phrase "according to their kinds" is an indication that God created things that could vary within its kind but something of one kind would not develop into something of another kind. God knows what is good, and He organized His creation to result further goodness. We further see God's order in that He did not create animals or humans until the earth was habitable and able to sustain life. He knows what is important for life and took care to make sure it was all available before He formed humankind. Though God's creation is familiar and routine to us today, He is no less active in sustaining all things moment by moment. Colossians 1:15-17 reminds us:

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible,
whether thrones or dominions
or rulers or authorities—
all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and by him all things
hold together.*

What do you think about how God created everything with a plan and a purpose? How does that make you feel about God's plans and purposes for you? (Gen 1:3-8)

The creation sets the stage for the rest of Scripture and reveals many characteristics about God. His nature is unchanging. What we see about God at creation is still true of God today. He sees our every need and knows how to provide for every situation we will face. Day three revealed that God's organized approach to creation was the pattern He continued to use. He is a God of order and purpose. We see this in the details of creation as well as in our own lives. After separating the heavens and earth, God created plants equipped for continual reseeded and new vegetation growth. His plans encompassed future needs for life and growth. God then made the sun, moon, and stars. These were organized and set with a purpose to mark and measure time, directions, and seasons. Way before GPS, people were able to use these celestial bodies for guidance and direction. Genesis chapter one makes it clear: the Bible is a story about God. The Christian faith begins and ends with God. Here in the very first verse, God is pulling back the curtain; He's revealing something about Himself, His glory, His majesty, His power, and authority. Our goal and purpose as Christians is to know and love our Creator God.

How does it feel to know that God knows exactly what you need and is actively sustaining you in each moment? (Gen 1:9-15)

What stands out to you most about the character and nature of God from today's study? (Gen 1:9-15)