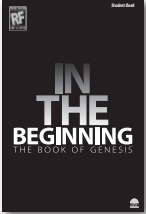


What does Genesis have to do with you?

Genesis is full of exciting accounts and interesting people, but have you ever wondered just how you fit into the scene of Genesis? This quarter's study, *In the Beginning: The Book of Genesis*, will help you see the relevance of Genesis to your life today.



The *Real Faith in Life Devotional Bible Study* is designed to help you dig into God's Word. Each lesson offers devotions for Monday through Saturday, along with an In-Class worksheet to be completed during

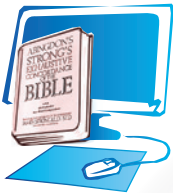
your group study.

In order for you to gain the most out of your devotional time, use the following tools along with your student book.



Journal: Purchase a journal or notebook to record your personal thoughts and prayers. Bring your journal and student book to class each week so that you can take notes during the lesson

or write any special insights you gain from a particular activity. You may also use the journal for sermon notes or for prayer requests.



Bible study tools: In order for you to dig into God's Word, consider using a Bible dictionary and a concordance. If you are not familiar with these helpful guides, ask your pastor or youth leader for a recommendation.

Or visit an online Bible tools Web site, such as www.blueletterbible.org.

This site offers commentaries, maps, and many other tools to help you in your Bible study. (This recommendation does not constitute a blanket endorsement by RBP.)

Worldview Windows

Genesis 1, the opening chapter in the “book of beginnings,” reveals God’s character, mankind’s origin, and our purpose for existence. A person’s understanding of and faith in the account of creation colors his or her outlook on every area of life.

If you say you believe that God created the world, there are certain things that should be true of your life. As you complete your devotions this week, examine your attitude toward creationism. Is your lifestyle consistent with your belief?

Memory Verses




“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:1–3).

Monday

1. Record Genesis 1:1 below.

2. List below three truths about God you can deduce from Genesis 1:1.



God has chosen to reveal certain characteristics and descriptions of Himself in the Bible. We refer to these descriptions of God as “attributes.”

3. Read Genesis 1:1–31. What attributes of God are evident in Genesis 1?

4. Why is it important to know the character of the Creator of the universe?



Memory Verse Activity: Try dividing this verse at the punctuation marks. Then focus on memorizing one phrase daily. (Don't forget to review the previous days' phrases!) By the end of the week, you will have the three verses memorized.

Tuesday

The Gospel of John starts with the same words as Genesis does. Read John 1:1–3 and 14.

1. Who is the Word?
2. What do these verses teach about the Word's eternal existence?
3. What do we learn about the Word's part in creation?
4. What do we know about the Word's relationship with God?
5. Can a person truthfully say he or she believes in Jesus and in evolution? Explain your answer using John 1:1–3.

Wednesday

Read the following verses from Genesis 1 and record the events of each day of creation.

1. Verses 3–5

2. Verses 6–8

3. Verses 9–13

4. Verses 14–19

5. Verses 20–23

6. Verses 24–28

Thursday

Yesterday you listed all that God created. Now study Genesis 1:26–31 to learn more about God’s most valued creation.

1. In whose image are humans made?



The plural pronouns “us” and “our” in Genesis 1:26 refer to the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

2. Look at verse 26 again. What are humans to rule, or have dominion, over?

3. After God created man and woman, He gave them specific tasks. Study verses 28 through 30 and record the tasks below.



Twice in this chapter God commanded mankind to rule over the earth and the animals in the earth. This truth reveals mankind’s priority and responsibility over the earth and all animals.

4. Look at verse 31. What did God say about all He had made?



God’s great statement in verse 31 reveals His love and concern for the world He created. This great Creator found joy in what He had created.

Review what you have studied so far this week.

5. How does a belief in creationism affect you when you’re looking out the window?

6. How does a belief in creationism affect you when you’re looking in a mirror?

Friday

1. Unfortunately, there are many who oppose the truth of Genesis 1. Describe below different theories of how the world came to exist.

2. In your opinion, why are these beliefs so popular among scientists and educators?



Consider this: In order for a person to believe that there is a Creator Who spoke all things in existence, that individual must then admit that the Creator has authority over His creation. Therefore, if humans are created by God, then they are subject to God and must be accountable to their Creator. This truth is a catalyst behind mankind's desire to discredit creationism.

While it may seem intimidating to defend your belief in creationism, Genesis 1 offers proof that God created the world in six literal days.

3. What does the word “day” mean in Genesis 1:1–31? Look up the original definition in a concordance or Bible dictionary.

4. What phrase is repeated in each day's creation verses? See verses 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, and 31.



The use of a number (“first,” “second,” “third,” etc.) in front of “day” requires “day” to be understood as a twenty-four-hour period of time.

Saturday

Creationists' faith in God allows them to understand their lives as part of a much bigger plan. As created beings, their lives and all the events and circumstances around them are the result of a Creator God Who is in all and over all. Creationists rest their faith in almighty God and allow their beliefs to color their views of the world and society around them.

For each of the following, identify how a creationist's belief would differ from an evolutionist's belief.

1. His or her view of God

2. His or her view of mankind

3. His or her value of life

4. His or her opinions about morality

5. If you truly accept the creationist worldview, then how will your attitude be toward God?

other people?

sin and immorality?

**IN
THE
BEGINNING**
THE BOOK OF GENESIS

My belief in creation is very important, because it affects my worldview.



Journal Notes

IN THE BEGINNING

THE BOOK OF GENESIS



BELIEVE

that God, as Creator, is the supreme authority over all.

What in my life proves I believe this?

What in my life is inconsistent with this?

that God created mankind in His image.

What in my life proves I believe this this?

What in my life is inconsistent with this?

that God values all life.

What in my life proves I believe this?

What in my life is inconsistent with this?



THE VITAL VERSE

BY RICK BARRY

If you had to pick one Bible verse on which all the rest of Scripture depends, which one would you choose?

- Deuteronomy 6:5? (“And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”)
- John 3:16? (“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”)
- Romans 3:23? (“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”)

Try Genesis 1:1. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Think about it: If that verse is true, there exists an infinitely

powerful Being Who is knowledgeable beyond comprehension. Using His vast power and intelligence, He designed not just our planet, but all that exists, right down to the last sub-atomic particle. So if the verse is accurate, we humans would be insane to ignore such a mighty Being and His words to us.

On the other hand, if Genesis 1:1 were *not* true, you could toss your Bible out the window. In that case, nothing Moses and the prophets wrote would matter. The history of Israel would be a trifle. The Psalms’ praise to God? Hollow words. Even the very ministry of Jesus Christ would be futile if there isn’t a God Who is the author of creation.

Genesis 1:1 is the crucial “peg” from which all other Scriptures hang. That being true, this first verse in the Bible deserves more consideration than we often give it.

IT'S ABOUT TIME

Without any introduction, the Bible starts simply: “In the beginning.” The beginning of what? Of God? Clearly not. Even apart from other Scriptures, the context makes clear that God was already on stage prior to this moment when the curtains were drawn aside to present Act 1: Creation.

all the stars, all the planets and asteroids, each comet, every particle, light, the angels, plus the mysterious dark matter and dark energy that theorists struggle to understand? Answer: Without all those created details, all you have left is God, a Spirit self-existent in His own eternity. Apart from His act of creation, the concept of time loses meaning.



An artist's interpretation of the building blocks of life.

So this “beginning” is the origin of physical matter, the heavens and the earth. The case can also be made that God simultaneously created time. Consider: For us humans, time is always defined in terms of physical objects. A **year** is the time it takes earth to complete one revolution around the sun. A **day** is one rotation of our planet on its axis. Dividing that rotation into twenty-four segments provides units we call **hours**. Subdividing an hour into sixty equal parts yields **minutes**, still a derivative of the earth's rotation. Even the Standard International definition of **second**—9,192,631,770 oscillations of the radiation produced by the transition between two levels of an atom of cesium-133¹—depends on a created object.

Interesting, what would happen to time if it were possible to reverse Creation? That is, what would remain if we could un-create

PONDERING THE CREATOR

How appropriate it is that no human or other created creature stars in verse 1 of the Bible. The subject of that sentence is none other than God Himself!

People often voice questions that demonstrate our inability to comprehend the Almighty:

“How can God know all of our thoughts at once?”

“I don't understand where God came from.”

“Why doesn't the Bible explain God in detail so I can fully understand Him?”

Sure, we have questions. We humans—who are conceived and born on earth, live out our lives on this planet, then die here—have absolutely no frame of reference to understand fully any spirit being, let alone the Almighty God, Who is not from this physical universe nor dependent on it, but rather is the Creator of it.

To illustrate the futility of trying to understand God, let's picture an ant that happens to crawl up one of SpaceX's new Falcon 9 rockets as it stands on a launch pad. What would the ant conclude about this gigantic object? Obviously it's not soil or grass or water, the common encounters in an ant's daily life. But could the ant comprehend the nature of aluminum-lithium alloy? Could it imagine the enormous thrust the nine first-stage Merlin engines will generate to blast the incredibly heavy vehicle into the sky?² Could that ant gain the slightest inkling of the thousands of interconnected parts compacted inside that shell? And could the ant perceive even a vague notion of outer space, orbits, satellites, and this object's mission?

The reply to each question is no. Such a feat of engineering is so far beyond an ant's miniscule intellect that it could never fathom a Falcon 9, not even while in contact with it.

Human pride might resist the analogy, but when it comes to comprehending God, we might as well be ants. He is too mighty, too lofty, too majestic, too holy for our finite minds to stretch around Him.

THE FIRST VERB

How easy it is to gloss over that first verb in Genesis 1:1—"created"—without pausing to reflect on it. Why did God create the earth and all that is in the universe? After all, He isn't dependent on anything. He doesn't require oxygen, food, or water to stay alive, as we do. Neither does He need light, but He added that touch for the sake of His creation.

"He had to create earth so that we people would have a place to dwell," some would venture. However, while it is true that if flesh-and-blood people are going to exist at all, they need a suitable environment, only human egotism would conclude God was forced into creating the earth because He needed people so much. The fact is people need God but He

does not need us. Yes, He loves us (John 3:16), but He does not actually need us.

So why did God create the heavens and the earth? Often Scripture is clearer in stating *what* God has done than *why* He has done it. Perhaps in this case the simplest answer is to say it pleased Him to do so. God has in mind His own eternal intentions, and those included creating the universe and fashioning human beings in His own image.

SHEDDING MORE LIGHT

Yet God's master plan is not simply a sterile blueprint. To learn more details, we must look elsewhere in Scripture. There we learn that God's design is awash with His affection: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3).

First Peter 1:20 reveals that Jesus' coming to this world was not Plan B, but always part of God's intent: "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

Also, the plan made provision for His people: "We are [God's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Yes, Genesis 1:1 is a vital verse. In it, God kicked off a plan that is still unfolding. Some people recognize His hand in Creation and embrace the plan by faith in Christ. Others reject the Creator and live for self—a decision they will regret. Which path will you take? ■

Rick Barry is a regular contributor to Regular Baptist Press. His third novel, a Christian suspense story entitled The Methuselah Project, was released in September 2015 by Kregel Books.

1. <http://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Units/second.html>

2. <http://www.spacex.com/falcon9>