

# Genesis



GOD'S PLAN BEGINS

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Genesis: God's Plan Begins

Adult Bible Study Leader's Guide

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# Contents



Lesson 1	<b>God's Self-Revelation through Creation</b>	9
Lesson 2	<b>The Only Solution</b>	18
Lesson 3	<b>God's Deep Grace</b>	26
Lesson 4	<b>Two Plans, Two Results</b>	34
Lesson 5	<b>God's Unconditional Promises</b>	43
Lesson 6	<b>God, the Possessor of All</b>	51
Lesson 7	<b>Stars for the Nighttime Fears and Doubts</b>	58
Lesson 8	<b>No Laughing Matter</b>	67
Lesson 9	<b>Tests of Faith</b>	76
Lesson 10	<b>Will vs. Will</b>	85
Lesson 11	<b>From Stairway to Altar</b>	94
Lesson 12	<b>Hard Times</b>	102
Lesson 13	<b>Part of God's Plan</b>	111



# How to Use *Truth for Living*

## Truth for Living:

A comprehensive, trustworthy curriculum that presents the truth of God's Word without compromise. The curriculum plan includes through-the-Bible courses as well as topical courses. Perfect for adults who want a guide in using all of God's Word as God intended.

As you prepare to teach these lessons, keep these two factors in mind:

- The FOCUS of productive adult Bible learning is the learner. The intent of teaching is not teaching, but learning—the learner's learning.
- The GOAL of productive adult Bible learning is an appropriate life-response to Biblical truth. You do not teach simply to impart information; you teach so that the Holy Spirit of God can use the truths of the Word of God to change the child of God into the image of the Son of God.

## The Lesson Plan

Each *Truth for Living* lesson has three distinct parts. GETTING STARTED is the attention-getter. The questions and activities “set the table,” as it were, for the study. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES is the heart of the lesson. A series of study questions leads the teacher and learners through the Biblical text. MAKING IT PERSONAL applies the truth to life.

As is true of any teaching experience, you can adapt the parts of the lesson to fit your particular class. You may choose to alter the beginning activities or change the focus of the application. You will find more material in the study than you can probably cover in one class session.

## The Study Book

This leader's guide is designed to accompany the Bible study book. We encourage you to distribute Bible study books to your learners. Urge them to complete the study before class. The more your learners have studied on their own, the better the class discussions will be. Most of the questions in the leader's guide are picked up from the Bible study book. You will notice the question numbers in parentheses after the questions. The answers to the questions are in italics following the questions.

## Other Resources

The resource CD has PowerPoint presentations for every lesson. They incorporate the resource visuals and provide a good way for teachers and learners to track the lesson. The resource CD also has Prezi presentations for some of the lessons. Instructions for using the Prezi presentations are on the CD. Other resources include lesson outlines, case studies, and verse cards.



# Preface

God's plan is from eternity past. We are first introduced to it in the book of Genesis. It begins well with a perfect creation, including man, God's crowning creation. But almost immediately sin enters the world. Along with sin comes the need for humanity's redemption.

God planned for redemption. He didn't have to scramble and hold a meeting to figure out what to do next. His plan continued exactly as He knew it would.

So Genesis is not so much a book about how good or bad the characters were as it is about our great God. It records how He began to work out His plan that would one day lead to providing redemption for humanity through Jesus Christ. That is the focus of this course.

God's faithfulness is the underlying theme throughout this course. His faithfulness shines brightly against human failures. Other themes include God's infinite power, all-encompassing knowledge, unfathomable grace, comforting presence, generous mercy, and sovereignty.

As you guide your learners through the characters and accounts of Genesis, help them see God so they might grow in their understanding of Him. Challenge them to respond to God's revelation of Himself with humility.

And be ready to be challenged yourself as you study *Genesis: God's Plan Begins*.







# God's Self-Revelation through Creation



## Topic

Creation

## Theme

Our Creator God deserves our gratitude and devoted worship.

## Desired Learner Response

The learner will show his appreciation to God for creation and will seek to know God better.

## Materials

- Resources 1–3
- Personal childhood pictures (optional)

## Scripture Focus

Genesis 1; 2

## Summary

The Bible begins with the narrative of God's creation of the universe in six literal 24-hour days. Far from being a peripheral or extraneous issue, the teaching of creation is ultimately foundational—both to the message of Bible and to our ability to relate to the Creator God. In fact, it was specifically Christ our Savior Who was actively involved in the work of creation. This lesson will provide information about the events of creation and motivation for the learner to respond in faith.

## Outline

### I. God Deserves Our Worship for Creating the Universe (1:1–2:3)

- Days of forming (1:1–13)
- Days of filling (1:14–31)
- Day of rest (2:1–3)

### II. God Deserves Our Worship for Relating to His Creation (2:4–25)

- God sustains the earth (2:4–6)
- God gives Adam life (2:7–17)
- God makes Eve (2:18–25)

## Memory Verses

*“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast”*  
(Psalm 33:6, 8, 9).

## GETTING STARTED

### Earliest Memories

If possible, bring in some pictures of when you were very young. Pictures of you in places and doing activities you actually remember would be best. Display the pictures or pass them around to your learners. Talk about your earliest memories.

**ASK: What is your earliest memory? (Q1)**

**ASK: What do you know about the day you were born? (Q2)**

**ASK: When did God first know you? *In eternity past. God has always known about each one of us because we are part of His eternal plan.***

It is mindboggling to think that God's plan is from eternity past and that each of us was part of that plan. This lesson focuses on the first seven days of God's plan and the tremendous truths we learn about God as He began to enact His plan by creating the universe.

### Getting Ready for Open House

**ASK: How long do you prepare for an open house or for company?**

**ASK: What types of things do you do to get ready to have people in your house?**

God took nearly six full days to prepare the universe for mankind. On the sixth day, He hosted an open house for the first man and woman. How thrilled He must have been to introduce them to the world and universe He had created just for them.

This lesson is a look back at that first week. Our focus is on God's revelation of Himself in the way He prepared for and interacted with man.

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

This lesson focuses on God's revelation of Himself through His work of creation. Historically this has been known in theology as general revelation (Rom. 1:20), whereas God's revelation of Himself in Scripture is known as special revelation (2 Tim. 3:16). It is important that we understand and maintain these distinctions in a culture that is becoming increasingly Biblically illiterate. Furthermore, the doctrinal errors of the charismatic movement and the careless use of terminology in songs and everyday speech may pull us away from the proper understanding of these basic categories of God's revelation.

### I. God Deserves Our Worship for Creating the Universe (Gen. 1:1–2:3)

What a wonderful opportunity we have to know the Creator of all things. This brings understanding of the past and gives meaning and order to life in the

Genesis is the first of five books of the Law, commonly referred to as the Pentateuch, which were written by Moses (cf. Matt. 19:7; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; 24:27, 44; John 1:17, 45; 5:46).

present and the future. The person who does not believe in the Creator God but trusts in mysterious, unknowable forces as the source of all things has no certainty about the past, no stability in the present, and no expectancy for the future.

**READ: Genesis 1:1–5** **ASK: What does God expect us to believe about His work of creation? (Q3)** *He expects us to take His Word in its normal, plain sense and trust what He has revealed.*

## A. Days of forming (1:1–13)

**RESOURCE: Display resource 2 to track the days of creation.**

Genesis 1 opens without any hint of an alternative to the revealed testimony of God’s creative work. Instead, God condescended to share with Moses how He made the universe (cf. Luke 16:31). The details are presented as real, factual history in which Moses denoted days, events, and the specific evidence of God’s creation.

**ASK: Try to comprehend eternity past when the Father, Son, and Spirit communed together without any created object or being. What are your thoughts about such an exercise? (Q4)**

The human mind cannot comprehend the nature of reality before God began to create. Suffice it to say that His creation of the universe was the beginning of history—the origin of time, space, and matter.

On the **first day** of creation, we see the beginning of the universe, including a formless, empty, and still darkened earth (1:1). God was present and active in His creation through the activity of His Spirit (1:2).

God also created light (1:3–5), thus revealing the character of darkness and beginning the cycle of evenings and mornings. The fact that these were normal, literal days is clearly seen from this evening and morning formula used to define them. In addition, the numerical adjectives describing the days, for example the *first* day (1:5), mean the days must be literal 24-hour days. To say the days are long ages breaks consistent, strict rules of grammar. Furthermore, there is no hint in this text of long ages of time either before, during, or between the days. Even if long ages of time could be found in the text, the explanation and order of the text would still not be compatible with evolutionary geology. Evolutionary geology includes death taking place long before man came onto the scene. The Scriptures are unified on death entering the world after the fall of man (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12).

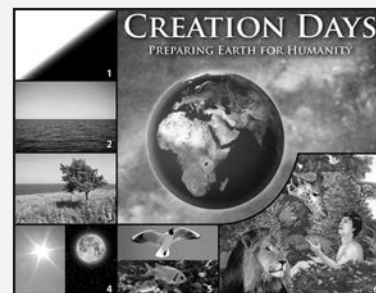
The **second day** of creation was marked by the division of water in the atmosphere from water on the earth through the creation of a *firmament* and the naming of the firmament as *Heaven* (1:6–8).

Many believe that the firmament was a water vapor canopy that rested in the earth’s sky. Dense moisture covered the entire globe.

On the **third day**, God separated the water on the earth, which was now distinct from the water in the atmosphere, into specific bodies called *Seas*, leaving dry land where creatures designed for the earth could function beginning on the sixth day (cf. Job 38:8–11).

God also created grass, trees, and vegetation—the first elements of creation

The PowerPoint presentation for this lesson has several photos of God’s creation to help communicate how varied and amazing it is.



The timing of the creation of the angels is a mystery that Genesis 1 does not address. We may infer from Job 38:4–7 that they were created on the first day—taking “morning stars” and “sons of God” (v. 7) to be references to types of angels.

that had the ability to reproduce. The earth was starting to take the shape necessary to fulfill the purposes for which it was created.

**ASK: What aspects of God's creation do you enjoy? (Q5)**

**ASK: What plants cause you to scratch your head and wonder what God was thinking when He created them? (Q6)**

**ASK: When observing the many variations of plants, what must you conclude about their origin? (Q7)** *That they must have been designed by an intelligent, infinite being; that being has to be God. That God is incredibly creative, and that He wanted to create a place we would enjoy with wonder and amazement.*

## **B. Days of filling (1:14–31)**

Having engineered the world and prepared it according to His perfect plan, God worked to fill it in harmony with His wise design (cf. Isa. 45:18).

On the **fourth day**, God placed *two great lights* (the sun and the moon) and an innumerable host of others in the sky (1:16–18), which He had distinguished on the second day. He thus illuminated the heavens that He created on Day 1 and installed the permanent light of the sun to replace the temporary light (1:3).

Beyond providing light for the earth on a continuous basis, these lights would separate light from darkness, day from night, and one day from another. They would also be instrumental in the seasons and the marking of time in years (1:14).

As if to emphasize the magnitude of God's infinite creative power by means of brevity, Moses recorded simply that God *made the stars also* (1:16; cf. Gen. 15:5; Jer. 31:37; 33:22). If you started counting stars at three per second, you would not even get through all the stars in one galaxy in one thousand years! And the number of galaxies is in the billions!

**READ: Psalm 147:4, 5. ASK: How would you describe God's abilities based on this passage? (Q8)** *Perhaps incomprehensibly awesome.*

Often those who reject the record of creation in six literal days point to the creation of the sun on the fourth day for support that at least the first three days could not have been measured by normal means. However, the light source that God created on the first day apparently functioned in a similar manner to the sun for the first three days—showing from the beginning of God's revelation that the sun is neither the source of life, as evolution and many other pagan systems have taught, nor will it be essential to life on the new earth in eternity (Rev. 21:23; 22:5).

Just as God had divided the water in the atmosphere from the water on the earth on the second day, on the **fifth day** He filled both the sky and the seas with the very first moving creatures (1:20). God created birds to *fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven*, and He made sea animals to *fill the waters in the seas* (1:22).

Three days after gathering the water to create dry land, God filled that land on the **sixth day** with cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth (1:24). This would include all animals designed to live primarily on land. Like the sea crea-

tures, these animals would have the ability to reproduce *after their kind*.

We can be certain that dinosaurs were among the various types of beasts of the earth created on the sixth day. Scripture makes this point clear in recording how God challenged Job to consider the awesome spectacle of *behemoth, which I made with thee* (Job 40:15–24). This impressive animal fits the description of a dinosaur.

Furthermore, Job 41:1–34 records God’s description of the *leviathan* (cf. Ps. 74:13, 14; 104:26; Isa. 27:1). It is unclear whether this creature was created on Day 5 or Day 6, but one thing is certain, *he is a king over all the children of pride* (Job 41:34). No more prideful assertion was ever conceived than the idea that all things came into existence apart from the Creator God. The Bible’s forthright presentation of the creation of dinosaurs stands as an affront to the unbelief of our skeptical age.

Later on the sixth day God created the crowning inhabitant for His world when He made man in His own *image* and *likeness* (1:26, 27). The *image* and *likeness* of God relate to man being moral and designed to live forever (Gen. 5:1–3; James 3:9; cf. Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). In distinction from animals, humans also have personality, including intellect, emotion, and will. All of these characteristics are derived from God, their source, Who possesses them in infinite perfection. Understanding this leads us to consider the inestimable value of every human life (cf. Gen. 9:6).

The creation of man on the sixth day includes both male and female (1:27), showing that Genesis 2:18–25 is an expansion on this text, not an account of later events.

The man and woman, as moral beings, were commanded not only to reproduce and pervade the earth but to take dominion over the creation, showing the complete distinction between them and all other kinds of life (1:28). Underneath man, the animals exercise a limited form of this dominion over the vegetation (1:30).

Ten times in this chapter God limits the procreation of plants, animals—and by implication, man—to *their kind* (cf. Gen. 6:20; 7:14). While the exact definition of a kind may be debatable, it is ultimately restricted by the ability to reproduce. This strikes a fatal blow to the theory that animals evolved.

Creation was entirely perfect at the end of the sixth day. There was no sin and no death.

### C. Day of rest (2:1–3)

On the seventh day God rested both to mark the completion of His unique work of creating the world and to establish a pattern that would later be incorporated into the law of Moses regarding the Sabbath Day (cf. Exod. 20:10, 11; Heb. 4:4, 10).

**READ: Psalm 33:1–5. ASK: Give some examples of the goodness of the Lord that you see in creation. (Q9)**

**READ: Psalm 33:6–9. ASK: How should we respond to God, our Creator? (Q10) We should fear (respect) the Lord and stand in awe of Him. Earlier in the passage, praise and singing are listed as proper responses too.**

*Replenish* in Genesis 1:28 simply means *fill*. The verse does not imply that some type of pre-Adamic race of people previously inhabited the earth.

## II. God Deserves Our Worship because He Relates to Us (2:4–25)

The remainder of Genesis 2 offers insights that shed further light on Genesis 1, including details that remained in effect until the Fall in Genesis 3.

While this chapter is sometimes criticized as offering an alternative or even contradictory account of creation, nothing could be further from the truth. This is the first of many times that the Old Testament goes back to retell a portion of an account with additional details. We learn much more about God through His expanded revelation of Himself.

### A. God sustains the earth (2:4–6)

Apparently the water canopy over the earth kept the earth at a warm temperature and kept rain from forming. God caused a mist to water the earth instead (2:4–6). He took care of the earth because it was where He planned for man to live. It was beautiful, pleasant, self-sustaining, and abundant with opportunities for creativity. It also was completely inhabitable. Not something we could say about our sin-cursed earth today.

**RESOURCE:** Display resource 3 to show an example of the opportunity man had to be creative with the plant life God made.

**ASK:** Would you want the responsibility to care for a multi-acre garden like the one in the picture? Explain. (Q11) *Most learners will probably say no because of the constant attention and hard work it takes to care for a garden.*

The earth was not yet cursed. Man could be creative with plants, flowers, trees, and shrubs without having to worry about weeds, diseases, destructive insects, floods, storms, or droughts. God took care of the earth perfectly so it would be the perfect place for man to live.

### B. God gives Adam life (2:7–17)

All life comes from God because life cannot come from non-life. God gave Adam life after He created him from the dust of the ground. God simply breathed into Adam's lifeless body the breath of life (2:7). Adam immediately became a living, eternal being. God's breath gave animals life too (7:22), but God did not create them in His image. Only man is in God's image and therefore answerable to God.

**ASK:** Imagine you are Adam and you've just come to life. What do you suppose you would think, do, and say first? (Q12)

Not only did God give Adam life, but He also planted a special garden for Adam called Eden (2:8). Eden had lots of fruit trees and rivers. The fruit trees were for Adam's enjoyment. No doubt the fruit was particularly delicious in the perfect growing environment.

**READ:** Genesis 2:15. **ASK:** What did God reveal about Himself to Adam by



**planting the Garden of Eden to take care of Adam's needs? (Q13) *That He loved Adam and cared for him.***

It is likely that Adam actually watched God plant the Garden of Eden. Perhaps nothing sends a message of love and care more to someone than laboring on behalf of that person. No doubt Adam would have sensed how special he was to God.

God then gave Adam the *keys* to the Garden of Eden. God told him to tend it and keep it. This was Adam's first job. As mentioned already, Adam didn't have to worry about the curse on the earth. So his work was thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding. Perhaps God would come by frequently to see what Adam had done with the place and what choices he had made in tending the Garden.

*Choice* was actually an important concept for Adam to learn. For God built into the Garden of Eden an opportunity for Adam to choose to obey Him. He planted two trees in particular among the many fruit trees: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:9). God offered to Adam the choice to eat of any tree in the Garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16, 17). In fact, God never told Adam which fruit He wanted Adam to eat at any particular meal. His only restriction was not eating the forbidden fruit.

God did not create people as robots that were preprogrammed to obey. Robots can neither give nor receive love. There has to be a choice in order for love to be real. Adam had real choices to make in the Garden. The next lesson deals with Adam's fateful choice to disobey and the terrible consequences it brought on all of humanity. It also considers the tree of life and what the solution to Adam's sin is.

### **C. God makes Eve (2:18–25)**

God gave Adam another great opportunity to be creative. He brought Adam *every beast of the field and every fowl of the air* for Adam to name (2:19). What a privilege for Adam!

**READ: Genesis 2:19. ASK: What character qualities did God model by having Adam name all the animals and birds instead of naming them all Himself? (Q14) *God modeled humility, preferring others above oneself, and sharing.***

Most artists name their own works of art. God allowed Adam to have the final say on what to name the animals, God's living works of art (2:19).

In the process of naming the animals and birds, Adam realized that he had no female counterpart. Adam felt the need for a wife to complete who he was (2:20). God actually intended for Adam to come to that realization. He even said it was not good for Adam to be alone (2:18).

God, of course, had always planned to create a female (cf. Gen. 1:27; Mark 10:6). The Lord created her in the most amazing way: directly from one of Adam's ribs, rather than from the dust as He had made Adam and all the animals.

**READ: Genesis 2:21, 22. ASK: Why would God create Eve in such a unique way? (Q15) *To reveal lessons about His plan for marriage and the family—including the loving headship of the husband and the permanence of marriage.***

The strong connection between Adam and Eve made them one flesh (2:24; cf. Eph. 5:28–31). Adam was to love Eve as he would his own body.

God gave Adam the authority to name the woman, though he surely did so with much greater loving care than he showed even in naming the animals. With his sinless mind, he fully realized the magnitude of this event and the implications it had for future generations (Gen. 2:23). Adam named her *woman* because God had taken her out of man.

This is the end of the perfect beginning of all things. God had revealed Himself to and through the first human family, who were living in unbroken fellowship with Him in the beautiful Garden He had planted for them. Adam and Eve were living unashamed and apart from any sin (2:25). Life was as God intended it to be.

## MAKING IT PERSONAL

### Gratitude for Creation

Thousands of years removed from the creation of the world, we tend to live as if the world has always been. We forget that God created this world for us and that the universe has some loud and clear messages about God's greatness despite being under a curse.

**ASK: When was the last time you showed appreciation to God for His creation? (Q16)**

**ASK: What could you do to keep your appreciation for creation fresh? (Q17)**

*Take time to observe it; thank God when you see its beauty; praise God when you experience its benefits; respect God when you witness its power and vastness.*

### Gratitude for Relationship

Genesis 1 and 2 remind us that everything we have in life is provided by our Creator God Who made all things to reveal both His Person and His goodness. He wants us to know Him and have a relationship with Him.

**ASK: How might we learn more about God? (Q18)** *By studying His special revelation (the Bible) and reflecting on His general revelation (the created world).*

**ASK: What is one truth you learned or were reminded of through your study of Genesis 1 and 2? Focus on that truth this coming week. (Q19)**

Encourage your learners to read Psalm 135–150 for additional help in getting started in their worship of God. (Q20)



## Summary and Memory Verses

**RESOURCE:** Display resource 1. Add a summary statement for lesson 1 or use the following: **Understand and enjoy God's revelation of Himself through creation.**

Encourage learners to memorize Psalm 33:6, 8, and 9. Give them an opportunity to say the verses in class next week.

