



GENESIS

a journey through Genesis

Genesis 1 - 11 :: 7 Studies

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Welcome to Genesis, “Beginnings”

If you're using these studies in a **Bible Study Group**, try to make sure you've read the passage and done your preparation before you meet. This will be of great benefit not only to you, but also to the other members of your group.

If you're a **Bible Study Group Leader** please don't feel that your group needs to answer every question in every study. There is no doubt a range of personalities and learning styles represented in your group, so a number of different types of questions are included here, including some which reflect on the same points, just from slightly different perspectives. Please choose the questions most appropriate for your group.

If you're doing these studies **individually**, why not let someone know you are doing so, and arrange a time to meet with them when you've finished (or even before) to let them know how your life is being changed by God's Word.

Always surround your time looking into God's Word with prayer, asking God to change your heart and life so that you - with God's people - might become more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.

Recommended Reading:

Salvation Begins: Reading Genesis Today

Genesis - Tyndale OT Commentary

The Message of Genesis (The Bible Speaks Today)

How to Read Genesis

Andrew Reid

Derek Kidner

David Atkinson

Tremper Longman

Study 1

Genesis 1:1 - 2:3

- 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 major events in Genesis as you can recall.

Read Genesis 1:1 - 2:3

- 5.** What ideas, words or phrases are repeated?

- 6.** Does anything strike you as surprising or strange?
- 7.** What questions does this description raise for you?
- 8.** What do you notice about the pattern of “forming” and “filling” in creation?
Why do you think this pattern is significant?
- 9.** What seems to be the key teaching of this section with regard to:
- God

 - Creation

 - Humans
- 10.** What do you think it means that humans are created in God's image?

11. Do you notice anything significant in the way the woman is spoken of and described in Genesis 1 compared to other aspects of the created order?

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

Read Psalm 104

13. 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

14. Do you notice any similarities with Genesis 1?

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

16. 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?

- 17.** How does Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 help equip you to critique the popular opinions about life and humanity we hear today?
- 18.** How might the truths of the creation story shape our readiness to share the gospel of Jesus with people and also shape the way we share the gospel of Jesus with people?

Study 2

Genesis 1:27 - 31

1. If you could choose your ideal job, what would it be?
2. What aspects of your current “work” (paid, volunteer, work in the home, study, etc) do you find most stimulating or fulfilling?
3. Do you think people in your country or region share a “typical” 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. In Study 4 we'll consider the Fall in more detail. From what you know of it already, how has the fall 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?

Study 3

Genesis 2:18 - 25

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?
What is it that you notice about their marriage?
4. If you asked people you know, "What is the difference between men and women?" what kind of answers do you think you'd hear?

Read Genesis 2:18 - 25

5. 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?
6. 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?

7. What might be the significance of the woman's creation from the man's side rather than from the dust (cf 2:7)?

8. Read verse 23, which records God bringing the newly-created woman to the man. What does the man's response convey?

9. What does this section tell us about the similarities or differences between men and women (think value, purpose, role, etc)?

10. 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

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

12. 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

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

14. What are the marriages that we are a part of or observe supposed to demonstrate to us?

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

16. How does Ephesians 5 show us that modern understandings of multiple genders and fluid sexuality fall short of God's intention in the light of Ephesians 5?

Study 4

Genesis 3:1 - 24

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 are the stages in 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?

- 7.** Does our sin today have these same consequences?
- 8.** What does God say to:
- The serpent
 - The woman
 - The man
- 9.** If you had to define “sin” based only on this incident, what would your definition be?
- 10.** How is this incident (and therefore your definition) typical of all sin?
- 11.** At what points in this episode do you see God’s grace most clearly?

Read Romans 5:12 - 21

- 12.** What is the flow of Paul’s argument in verses 15 - 17?

- 13.** How has Jesus “crushed Satan’s head” - to use the expression from Genesis 3?
- 14.** “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*).
- 15.** In what situations might the same question, “Did God really say ...?” lead people to doubt God’s Word and goodness today?
- 16.** How do we help each other guard against the kinds of temptation we face daily?
- 17.** What hope is there for the Christian who is facing temptation to sin?
- 18.** What hope is there for the Christian who has fallen into sin?

Study 5

Genesis 4:1 - 26

1. Can you think of a time when you took a drastic shortcut with time, effort, or something else?
What was the result?
Did anyone ever find out what you had done?
2. Imagine you were reading the Bible for the very first time. How are you likely to feel after reading the first 4 chapters of Genesis?

Read Genesis 4:1 – 26

3. Besides the obvious murder in this episode, what are the signs that mankind is drifting away from God's intention and pattern?
4. Why do you think God "looked with favour" (v 4) on Abel and his sacrifice, but not on Cain and his offering?
5. Can you see anything in this episode that is typical of sin?
6. What are some of the different ways that sin hurts people today?

- 7.** What have we learned so far in Genesis about sin and its consequences?

- 8.** What is the significance for us of God's words to Cain in verse 7?

- 9.** What do we observe of God's character in this episode?

- 10.** Are there any signs of hope for humanity in these verses?

- 11.** If you were asked, "What are you offering to God?" how would you respond?

- 12.** As Christians, are we our brother's and sister's keeper?

- 13.** What does Galatians 6:1 – 2 add to our understanding of our responsibility to help others "master" sin?

- 14.** How can we pray for people we know and care about that they may "master" sin (v7)?

Study 6

Genesis 6 – 8

1. What are some of the signs you observe that show our world is out of step with its creator?
2. How would you respond to someone who says, “humans are essentially good”?
3. Do you find the idea of God’s judgment a difficult concept to talk about?
Why or why not?
4. What do we know about the state of the world and humanity by the time of the events in Genesis 6?

Read Genesis 6:5 – 22

5. What features of the story stand out for you as you read it?
6. How might your response to the statement in question 2 be shaped by this passage?

7. In 1 Samuel 15:28 - 29 God's prophet Samuel says, "*The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbours - to one better than you. He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.*"

How does this fit with what we're told about God in Genesis 6:6 - 7?

8. How do you feel as you read the description of the state of humanity and God's solution to the problem?

Read Genesis 7:11 - 19

9. What is the significance of the similarities in the language of Genesis 7:10 - 12 and Genesis 1?

10. God preserved people and animals in the ark. Why do you think he didn't just start afresh with a new creation?

Read Genesis 8:13 - 22

11. What new or more specific truths about God do we learn through the events of Genesis 6 - 8?

- 12.** Although you probably identified all sorts of signs that the world is out of step with its creator and plagued by evil, why do you think God promised never again to destroy all living creatures? (8:21)

- 13.** What lessons are there for Christians today in the account of Noah and the flood?

- 14.** On a scale of 1 to 10, how seriously do you take God's judgment?

- 15.** How does your view of judgment shape your life?

- 16.** How does your view of judgment shape your evangelism?

Study 7

Genesis 11:1 - 9

- 1.** Are you the sort of person who always finishes every project that you start, or do you tend to leave things half-finished?
- 2.** What do you think this tendency says about you and your personality?!
- 3.** Winston Churchill's reflections on "the gift of a common tongue" at Harvard University in 1943, "If we are together nothing is impossible..." are applied to any and every human endeavour. Do you think there is any truth to that statement?

Read Genesis 11:1 - 9

- 4.** What is the behaviour or attitude that God judges in this episode?
- 5.** What have we seen already in Genesis that shows the error in the people's thoughts and actions?
- 6.** How do God's actions at Babel show that he is still committed to his original mandate to humanity in Genesis 1?

7. What in the people's behaviour at Babel is typical of the sin we've seen in Genesis so far?

8. What in the people's behaviour at Babel is typical of all sin?

9. Can you think of any other examples in the Scriptures where scattering or confusion are signs of God's judgment?

10. In what ways do we see God himself reversing the judgment of Babel later in salvation history?

11. Do you think there is any possible danger in the idea of people working together towards common goals?

Read Revelation 5:6 - 10

12. What does this scene from John's vision of the throne room in heaven tell us about God's plans for his people after Babel?

- 13.** How would you describe the “journey” of humanity from Genesis 1 to Genesis 11?
What lessons are there in this transition for us?
- 14.** At the point in human history marked by Genesis 11, what hope for humanity do you see?
- 15.** In what ways has your understanding of God changed through studying Genesis 1 - 11?

