

HIS STORY

God created everything.

The original audience of the Book of Genesis was the ancient Israelites on their way to the promised land. They would not have asked some of the questions that pique our interest, such as the age of the earth or the science behind the creation. So what, then, was the original purpose for the creation account in Genesis?

The Israelites would have wrestled with questions such as: *Is our God the real God? Is He the best God? Is He the most powerful God?* Having lived so long among the gods of the Egyptians and those of other foreign nations, the Israelites struggled to believe that their God was the God.

To remedy such wandering hearts, God wrote Genesis 1:1 to help His people understand that the God of their bedtime stories—the God of their fathers—was the very same God who created the world. The God of Israel, not the gods of the Canaanites or the Philistines, was the Creator of everything. “For the Lord is great and is highly praised; He is feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens” (Ps. 96:4-5).

God created everything good

The next critical point from the creation account is that God created everything good. Starting in verse 3 and going all the way through verse 25, God declares that each part of His creation is good.

Good. What does that mean? Why does God call each step of His creation good?

► Is it morally good?

► Is it beautiful and pleasant to the eyes?

► Is it usable?

The purpose and design of creation is to declare God’s glory and proclaim the work of His hands (Ps. 19:1) and to reveal things about God that are invisible to us, such as His eternal power and divine nature (Rom. 1:20). Because of creation, we can clearly see and understand these things.

It is quite stunning that we get to see the God of this universe begin the good work of revealing Himself. He reveals Himself in His creation, allowing humanity to know things about the Creator just by looking at creation—much like an artist leaves fingerprints on a work of art.

Essential Doctrines

Creation Out of Nothing: *The Bible requires us to believe that God created the universe—everything both visible and invisible—out of nothing (sometimes said, “creation ex nihilo”). This means that before God created anything, nothing else existed except God Himself. Nothing in creation is eternal; every created thing has a beginning.*

The Goodness of Creation: *In Genesis 1, God repeatedly affirmed that all of His creation was good, even “very good” (1:31). It is good, in God’s judgment, because He created it for a purpose that it fulfilled—to reflect and display the good character of the Creator.*

Leader Note: Because some content from the Personal Study Guide will not be available on the One Sheet, make sure to adapt the session based on how you use the material with your group.

YOUR STORY

- ▶ **When have you experienced the goodness of God's creation? What was your response in that moment?**
- ▶ **Why do you think people are astounded when they see places like Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon? What do these experiences tell you about God?**
- ▶ **How are these created things good (moral, beautiful, usable)?**
- ▶ **Why is belief in creation important? What are the implications if God didn't create?**

YOUR MISSION

Head

From the very beginning, we see that God created everything. This means, among other things, that the entire cosmos is in His hands. It's all in His hands. Even in its broken state, He is in control of everything.

- ▶ **How does knowledge of God's sovereignty over all creation influence the way you think about your circumstances?**
- ▶ **Why should belief in the sovereignty of God change the way we handle stress and anxiety?**

Heart

Creation, though corrupted because of sin, was created good. This means that sunsets, waterfalls, stars, mountains, oceans, plants, animals, food, relationships, and a billion other things were all created good for both God's glory and our enjoyment.

- ▶ **In light of this truth, how should we feel toward creation in general? What are some parts of creation you particularly enjoy?**
- ▶ **Is it possible for our hearts to idolize parts of creation? If so, how? In what ways can we avoid this happening to us?**

Hands

Making much of Jesus means that we not merely shine God's glory to those around us with our actions, but with our words as well. No matter how many "good" actions people witness from us, actions alone will never lead someone to a saving knowledge of God. Think of it this way: trees are good, but no matter how long you stare at a tree and observe its beauty, the tree will never be able to tell you the gospel. For that, you need words.

- ▶ **Read Matthew 28:18-20. How will fulfilling the Great Commission require both action and speech?**
- ▶ **How will this truth challenge you in your conversations with others?**