

UNIT 1 | SESSION 1

GOD CREATED THE WORLD

GENESIS 1-2



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 104:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is God? God is our Creator and the King of everything.

CHRIST CONNECTION: By faith, we believe that God created the whole world by His word. (Hebrews 11:3) Jesus, the Word of God, is Lord over all of creation. Everything was created by Him and for Him. The Son has always existed, and He holds everything together. (Colossians 1:16-17)

STORY POINT: God created everything for His glory.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

In Genesis 1–2, we encounter one of Scripture’s most well-known passages: the creation story. This account is foundational to recognizing God as Creator and King over everything. Yet, as foundational as this account may be, faith is still a necessary component of understanding this biblical account and in trusting the goodness of the triune God—Father, Son, and Spirit—whose good creation makes known His glory and His purposes.

So, how do we find Jesus within the creation account?

To understand Jesus within the context of Genesis 1–2, we must focus on how God chose to create the heavens and the earth. He did not simply point at the formless void and silently fashion it into existence; rather, He used His voice to speak. Hebrews 11:3 declares, “By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.” As God spoke, everything was created out of nothing (*ex nihilo*).

In the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as “the Word” to specifically demonstrate that God has revealed Himself to us through Jesus. Just as God spoke creation into existence, making His glory and will known through His words, so did He also make Himself known by the Word of God coming to earth. In fact, John 1:1 teaches us that “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Jesus is God in flesh who came to dwell in the very creation He created. Within the first three verses of Genesis 1, we read that all three Persons of the Trinity were present and involved in the creation of the world. (Genesis 1:1-3)

The apostle Paul later wrote in Colossians 1:16-17 that everything was created by Jesus, through Jesus, and for Jesus. He was before creation, and by Him all things are held together; the Word is the eternal God of creation.

As you prepare to teach this session, pray that God reveals His glory in the person of Jesus Christ to the kids’ hearts and minds. Ask for clarity in your words as you proclaim His truths. May God grant faith to the hearers of this story, helping them trust the truth of His Word.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "God Rules" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- "Shadow Play" printable, 1 per group
- flashlights, 1 per group



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- flashlights, 1 per group
- index cards, 10

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- dry erase boards, 2
- dry erase markers, 2

Reflection and Prayer

- Journal Page
- "Draw the Days" activity page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "God Created the World" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- dry erase board and marker (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 1, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "All about the Americas" missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Countless (Psalm 104:24)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- world map, 1 per group
- sticky notes, 1 per kid



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ What’s something in creation you find beautiful or amazing? Why does it amaze you? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “God Rules” activity page.

| **SAY** “ When we look at created things, we see design, power, and purpose. This is because God created everything! God, our King and Creator, made the whole world in six days and then rested on the seventh day. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?



Tell kids that God created things with purpose. Lead kids to listen to different purposes you say and determine what in creation serves each purpose. Read the purposes below or consider creating your own. Offer hints as needed.

- It provides warmth, light, and energy. Without it, life would not exist. (sun)
- They provide us with milk, cheese, and meat. (cows or goats)
- This affects the tides of the ocean and gives us light during the night. (moon)
- They produce oxygen, give us fruit, and provide shade. (trees)
- These provide us with drinking water, are home to fish, and play an important role in the water cycle. (rivers or lakes)

| **SAY** “ God created the things of the world to serve specific purposes. But there’s one purpose all of creation has in common: **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY.**

Everything He created shows how great and wonderful He is! Today, we will learn how we can give Him praise as Creator and King. ”

OPTION 2: SHADOW PLAY

Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide each group with a flashlight and a “Shadow Play” printable. Turn off the lights. Then explain that kids will take turns holding the flashlight and trying to make the shadow shapes on a wall. Assist kids who may need help understanding how to position their hands to match the template. Allow several minutes for kids to practice their shadow displays.

| **SAY** “ Using our hands, we were able to create an image of different animals on the wall. The shadows or images weren’t actually a dog or bird, but they did resemble these animals. This reminds me of how we were created to image God or show what God is like. Today, we will learn that when God made the world, He created people as His special creation made in His image. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so excited you are here. Together, we get to study true stories from the Bible. The Bible is God’s Word. By reading our Bibles, we come to know who God is, how He loves us, and how He has made a way to save us through Jesus. The Bible also teaches us how the whole world was made. In fact, today we will be reading from Genesis 1 as we discover how **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY**. [Display the Story Point Poster.]

Did you bring your Bible with you? If so, please hold it up. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, as we learn about how God created the world, let’s prepare our hearts to hear from God’s Word. Pray with me: ‘Dear God, please open our ears to listen and our eyes to see the truth from your Word. Give us hearts to believe. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Each week, we will have a big picture question and answer we will learn together. These questions help us learn truths about God, people, and the world. Over the next few weeks, we will ask the question **Who is God?** Who do you think God is? [Allow responses.] The answer we will learn is, **God is our Creator and the King of everything**.

God has always existed. Before the world was created, there was God. He is the Creator because He made the world and everything in it. He is King because everything is made for Him, and He rules over it all. As Creator and King, **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY**. This means that all of creation was made to show how great, beautiful, good, and perfect God is. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ This week we start at the beginning of our timeline. [Point to the timeline.] Our timeline helps us understand how all the stories of the Bible fit together into one big story. As we read these stories, we’ll learn how all people have sinned or disobeyed God. But the timeline also reminds us of God’s promise to save people from sin and how He has been faithful to this promise.

The Bible says in Genesis 1:1, ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’ The beginning starts with God because He has always existed. Everything that was made was created by Him. Today, as we hear our Bible story, we can remember that we can trust that the world and everything in it was created by God. (Hebrews 11:3) ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 1:1–2:7,18-25. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Created the World.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD CREATED THE WORLD

“**In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.** The earth was formless and empty. Darkness covered the ocean, and the Spirit of God hovered over the surface of the water. Then **God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and He called the darkness “night.”** There was an evening, and there was a morning. **That was the first day.**

God separated the waters that were on the surface of the earth from the waters that were above the earth. He called the space above the earth “sky.” Evening came and then morning: **that was the second day.**

God created dry land on the earth. He gathered the waters and called them “seas.” God commanded the earth to grow plants and trees. God saw that His creation was good. **That was the third day.**

Next, God put lights in the sky—a sun to shine during the day and the moon and stars to shine at night. God saw that His creation was good. Evening came and then morning: **that was the fourth day.**

God created sea creatures and birds. This creation was good, too. **God commanded them to multiply, to fill the seas and the earth.** Evening came and then morning: **that was the fifth day.**

Then God created animals like livestock and wildlife. God saw that His creation was good.

Finally, God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.” God created people differently from everything else He created. People were God’s special creation because they were made in His image. **God took dust from the ground and made a man. God breathed His very own breath into the man, and the man became alive. God made a garden and put the man there. He grew trees to give food for the man, and He told the man to work in the garden and take care of it.**

Then God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper for him.” God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. **God took a rib from the man and created a woman to be the man’s helper and wife. God named the man and woman Adam and Eve.** He blessed them and commanded them to multiply, fill the earth, and rule over creation.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use pictures: On a dry erase board, write days one through seven. Then under each day, draw a picture of what God created on that day or that He rested. Review the days after you’ve finished the Bible story.

Repeat it: Lead kids to repeat that the creation God made was good by inviting them to say, “It was good!” after you say it in the Bible story.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. Evening came and then morning: that was the sixth day. Creation was complete, so God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy. On that seventh day, God rested.

Christ Connection: By faith, we believe that God created the whole world by His word. (Hebrews 11:3) Jesus, the Word of God, is Lord over all of creation. Everything was created by Him and for Him. The Son has always existed, and He holds everything together. (Colossians 1:16-17) ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The beginning starts with God because He has always existed. God was not created because He is eternal, and He alone has the power to create. In fact, God is so powerful that He created the world from nothing. He spoke and there it was—light, land, seas, plants, and all created things. As Creator, God is also King. Why is God the King over all creation? [Allow responses.] A king is someone who holds all authority and power. God is King because He alone has the authority and power to not only create something but also to say why it is created. Like a great Artist, God designed the world and gave it order and purpose.

Who were the special creations God made? [Allow responses.] God made people—male and female—as His special creations. People are different from all other created things because they are made in the image of God. What does it mean to be made in God’s image? [Allow responses.] People were made to know, love, and reflect God. They were created to show others what God is like. People were also made to rule like God. He gave them a special job of taking care of creation and living to display God’s glory. **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY.**

Then on the seventh day of creation, God rested. The seventh day was a special day for people to remember that God made everything and to focus their attention on Him. It’s a holy day, set apart by God to remember that He is who we need to trust in and rest in for all we need. Everything God made was very good and displayed His glory.

By faith, we believe that God created the whole world by His word. (Hebrews 11:3) Jesus, the Word of God, is Lord over all of creation. Everything was created by Him and for Him. The Son has always existed, and He holds everything together. (Colossians 1:16-17) ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ The Bible tells us that Jesus, the Word of God, created all things for His glory. Jesus is also the King who rules over creation. Jesus is a good King who loves us and who laid down His life to save us. Has Jesus become the King of your life? Why or why not? [Allow responses.] I’d be happy to share more about how to trust in Jesus and how He can become your Lord and Savior. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 1, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can one God make the whole world?
2. How does creation show us God’s glory?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “**GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY.** He made people in His own image, and He wants everyone to know and love Him. That’s why Eric and Ramona Reese are serving as missionaries in Brazil. A missionary is a Christian chosen by God who goes to tell another group of people about Jesus. The Reeses tell others about God even when it is difficult.”

Show the “All about the Americas” missions video. Then pray for Eric, Ramona, and their daughters—Gloria and Alicia. Ask God to bless their relationships in Brazil and to open the hearts of everyone who hears the good news about Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 104:24 together.

SAY “**[Point to a world map.]** Every part of creation is ruled by God because He created it all. Everything exists to bring Him glory.”

Form kids into two large groups. Provide each kid with a sticky note and a Bible. Assist kids in finding Psalm 104:24 in their Bibles. Assign kids in each group a few words of the key passage. Then line up groups and explain that each team will race to a world map, place their sticky note on it, and run back to their team. Tell kids to place their sticky notes on their team’s map in the correct order of the verse. The first team to complete their verse wins.

Lead kids to sing “Countless (Psalm 104:24).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “Dear God, You are our Creator and King. We praise You for all You have made. Thank You for creating us to know and love You. Help us reflect Your goodness to others and tell them about Your Son, Jesus. Amen.”





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 1. Explain that the Bible is God’s Word to us, and it helps us know Him. Remind kids that we were created to know God and bring Him glory. Spend some time reviewing the two major divisions of the Bible: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Invite kids to share some of the books from each division. Encourage kids to learn the books of the Bible.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where this story took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Euphrates River.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 1:1 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ The first words of the Bible tell us something very important: God is God. In the beginning, only God existed because He is eternal. His words made the whole world. In fact, Jesus—the Word of God—is Lord of creation. John 1:1 says, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ The Bible reminds us that everything was made by Jesus and for Him. And He made people in His image so we can have fellowship or a relationship with Him. Through faith in Jesus, we can know and love the God who made us. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Everything God created was good. What does this tell us about God? ”

Point out that God is good and all He does is good. Explain that God’s world had nothing that was bad. Tell kids that He created a garden for Adam and Eve as a place where they could be with Him and enjoy the good world He made. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 119:68.)

SAY “ How did God create Adam and Eve, and all people, different than the rest of creation? ”

Emphasize how God created people in His image. Remind kids that people have worth, value, and dignity because they are created in the likeness of God. Discuss some of the practical implications of being made in God’s image such as being able to commune with God, the ability to know right from wrong, and fellowship. Point out that being made in God’s image means we reflect Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Gen. 1:26.)

SAY “ How does creation show us the greatness of God? ”

Remind kids that **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY**. Discuss how we can see God’s power, creativity, kindness, beauty, and goodness in creation. Allow kids to share some created things that help them see how great God is. Share how seeing the greatness of God in creation should lead us to worship and praise Him alone as Creator and King. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 19:1.)





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: SHINE THE LIGHT

Before the session, write the following words on 10 separate index cards: good, wise, great, powerful, beautiful, Creator, King, eternal, truthful, generous. Hide the cards around the room by taping them to walls or the floor. Form groups of three or four kids. Provide each group with a flashlight. Turn off the lights and tell kids that you have hidden 10 cards around the room. Instruct kids to take turns using their flashlights to shine the light on the hidden cards. Consider providing groups with paper and a pencil to write down the words they find.

SAY “ These words all describe God—our Creator and King. **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING FOR HIS GLORY**, and He alone deserves the glory because of who He is. Shining the flashlight on the cards made the words visible. The light made the words stand out. When we give God glory, it is like shining a light on Him to show how great He is. God is most valuable and deserving of our worship. ”

OPTION 2: CREATION DRAW



Form kids into two teams. Choose one kid from each team to stand in front of the dry erase board. Lead kids to draw something God created such as the sun, a tree, a fish, etc. Direct the remaining kids from each team to call out the day of creation God made the image drawn. The first team to answer correctly receives a point. Continue playing until all kids have had an opportunity to draw. The team with the most points wins.

SAY “ In six days, God created the whole world by the power of His word. God has always existed and Jesus, God’s Son, is the Lord of all creation. He made the world for His glory and to display the greatness of God. We can praise Him for all He has made and remember that through faith in Jesus, we can know the God who made us. ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, praising God for His greatness and goodness, knowing He is Creator and King. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Draw the Days” on the activity page.