Lesson 1

How It All Began

September 6, 2020

Family Theme
God Created Everything

Lesson Objective
Learners understand our world is the creation of the Almighty God and not the result of random chance and happenstance. Therefore we should worship such a mighty God and treat His creation, especially human beings, with respect and value.

Study Text
Genesis 1:1–2:3

Key Truths
- God Is the Designer and Creator of All Things.
- Humans Have a Special Place in Creation.

Bible Basics: Things We All Should Know
Encourage learners to memorize Genesis 1:1 this week and to work with family members to do so as well. Students can find this on the VTE 1-3 student outline you give them today.

How It Fits: Where This Lesson Fits in the Story of the Bible
This is where it all started! This is the beginning of time, space, and matter as the eternal God spoke everything into existence.

The family theme focuses every age using D6 EveryDay Curriculum—kindergarten to grandparents.

The Scripture basis for the lesson. (Read the passage at least once or twice before beginning your lesson preparation.)

You can find each of these in your teaching resources (you will see these items show up in the sidebar when you need them).
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Elegance + Function
Ask a student with an iPhone to show it to the group. Apple executives put a lot of thought into what their products look like and even how the products are packaged. Both sharp looks and function are desired in all Apple products. Ask your students to list other functional devices that are also elegant looking (sports cars, gaming systems, laptop computers, etc.). After some discussion, transition into the lesson by saying something like: Today we will learn that God designed not only an intricate working world, but one of beauty and wonder as well.

It Was an Accident
Use VTE 1-2 (“It Was an Accident!”) to have your students guess some famous accidental inventions. Ask about other inventions, such as Velcro, fidget spinners, or slap bracelets, that may have developed in ways the creator never planned. Transition to the lesson by saying: God is the creator of all things. He never makes mistakes. He never does anything accidentally. In fact, the entire universe shows His miraculous and intricate design. There is no creator who can compare to the Almighty God.

Study the Word

Zoom In: Develop a Biblical Worldview
Help learners develop a biblical worldview by pointing out that an understanding of Genesis 1 and 2, the story of the beginning of the universe and life on earth, is paramount to everything one believes. Once an individual accepts the truths of Genesis 1 and 2, appreciation of the beauty of creation and worship of the Creator follows. Encourage students to discuss with their parents and other family members how the first two chapters of Genesis give the foundation for the rest of Scripture.
Most conservative biblical scholars believe Moses was the author of Genesis, although his name is not mentioned in the book. This belief is due in part to the fact that Moses penned the rest of the Pentateuch (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) and Genesis serves as a precursor to them. Without Genesis, there would be no foundation upon which to build.

God Is the Designer and Creator of All Things
(Genesis 1:1-25)
On the very first page of the Old Testament, the reader is introduced to God, the Bible’s main character, and witnesses His power as displayed in creation. The wording of the text illustrates that God is decisive, purposeful, and fully in command of each creative act. The Hebrew name for God as used here is Elohim, a name which stresses His power and majesty. This name is used over 2000 times in Scripture. It is important to note that the Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God, but merely assumes this truth. After all, according to Romans 1:19-21, all of creation knows this truth but many choose to suppress it. (The next lesson will show us evidences for the existence of God.)

Zoom In: Develop a Biblical Worldview
Point out that Genesis 1:1 states one of the foundational truths of a biblical worldview: God created the universe and everything in it. Encourage learners to use resources such as icr.org, carm.org, and reasonablefaith.org that affirm the Bible’s account of God creating all things, and to discuss and share these resources with family members.

The Hebrew word translated as created is a verb used only in relation to God. This is a much stronger term than could be used for made or formed, emphasizing the fact that only God has the power and ability to create something from nothing. And God did this simply by speaking the words. Scholars refer to this as ex nihilo, a Latin phrase that means “out of nothing” and describes how God created everything out of nothing.

In verse 2, the earth is described as being without form and void or empty. The two terms when used together portray this initial phase of Creation as unformed, uninhabited, and lacking boundary and order. Initially there were no stars or planets, but only the basic elements that would be formed
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into planet earth. This early mass was also characterized by darkness, again referring to the unformed and unfilled status. In the midst of this darkness, God spoke light into existence (verse 3). God saw that it was good, an expression used of His handiwork. It is used six different times in Genesis 1. The word good speaks of that which is desirable or beautiful as opposed to the previous description of empty or void from verse 2. The expression evening and morning is used six times in Genesis 1 as well, the first of which is found in verse 5, after God’s separation of the light from the darkness.

Dig Deeper

Help learners understand that there is much debate over the word day in Genesis 1 and whether or not it actually refers to literal 24-hour periods. Some believe it refers to long periods of time. The original Hebrew word Yôm, translated day in the Old Testament, is most commonly used in reference to a literal day, but can also mean age or period of time. When words have more than one possible meaning, the context of the passage of Scripture they are found in indicates their meaning in that passage. When read within the context of Genesis 1, it seems to refer to literal days. For example, Genesis 1:5 defines the word in the literal sense by acknowledging that God called the light “day” and the evening “night.” The latter part of the verse also indicates that the first day included an evening and a morning. The Hebrew words translated evening and morning in the Old Testament refer to literal evenings and mornings as we use them in reference to literal days. Also, when day is modified by a number (first day, or second day, etc.), it always means a literal day in the Old Testament. Yôm is repeatedly used in the Creation account with a modifying number and with morning and evening.

On day two, described in verses 6-8, God again displayed His power by establishing boundaries for the waters that had covered the earth. As a result of this expanse, some waters were confined to the sea while the rest were confined beyond the expanse. On the third day (verses 9-13), God created the land mass on which man could live and vegetation which could sustain human life. On day four (verses 14-19), God created the sun, the moon, and the stars. These created lights would regulate and establish time frames (days and nights, seasons) for life to exist. On day five, God filled the air with birds and the seas with fish (verses 20-23). Verses 24-25
portray more of God’s creative genius on day six when He created the land animals.

Just as a new building has a blueprint by which the structure is built, creation has a “divine blueprint,” a grand design established in the mind and heart of an all-powerful, all-knowing God. The details of the Creation account and the intricate design that continues to baffle doctors, scientists, and astronomers illustrate the amazing creativity and work of the hand of God.

Appreciate the wonder, beauty, and majesty of our world and worship the magnificent God who designed and created it.

• In what ways do you see beauty, design, and creativity in the world around us? (The complexity of the human eye or hand, the variety and color of various animals; etc.)
• What do these things tell you about God?

Apply It helps learners see how the biblical truths they have just heard fit into everyday life. Each Apply It section includes at least one thought-provoking question to help spark a meaningful discussion.

Humans Have a Special Place in Creation

(Genesis 1:26—2:3)

In verse 26, the Creation account reaches its climax. It is here that God created human life and set it apart from the rest of creation. After all, unlike the rest of creation, man is made in God’s image, an expression used of no other part of creation. While the concept of being made in God’s image calls forth a number of possibilities, it seems that at its very core, being made in the image of God includes a moral consciousness, the capacity for a relationship with God, and an understanding of emotion and beauty. Some scholars, however, merely summarize the expression as meaning that man is an image-bearer of God. After all, it is through man that the likeness of God is most clearly seen. Others have seen the image of God as relating to man’s spiritual capacities to pray, believe in God, and
discern right from wrong. Still others have taught that this simply refers to the fact that man possesses both a soul and spirit, distinguishing him from the rest of creation. Search image of God at carm.org for more on this.

**Zoom In: Develop a Biblical Worldview**

Point out that the first chapter of Genesis lays the foundation for a biblical worldview of mankind: *We are special creations of God, with eternal souls. We are not random accidents of nature.* Encourage students to discuss with their parents and family members the value this gives to all human beings.

Humanity’s assigned role is twofold: Men and women are to have dominion or rule over the rest of creation (verse 26) and are to fill the earth (verse 28). In essence, humanity was created to represent God on the earth and to rule over all things in His name. That is, humans, as representatives of God, must rule over the creation just as God would. This is not a license for abuse and destruction of creation, but instead is our first responsibility as stewards of what the Lord has entrusted to us. Further, apart from the animals, the created earth had only two inhabitants, Adam and Eve. They were assigned the responsibility of “filling” the earth.

After a detailed explanation of the roles of mankind (1:28-30), God stepped back from His creation and stated that it was all “very good” (1:31). This expression indicated that all of creation met His expectations and brought Him great pleasure. At the completion of the task of creating, God rested on the seventh day (2:2). A six-day Creation is also attested in Exodus 20:11 and 31:17. This rest was not from exhaustion as God never wearies, but instead was to establish a pattern that man would be introduced to officially in Exodus 20:8. This pattern should be an essential part of each week as we worship God, dig into His truth, and rest. Each of these tasks better equips us to reflect God’s image to the world.

We have an almighty God who has formed a majestic creation and who designed us to be like Him in character and purpose. As we survey creation and we consider the goodness of God, we should be driven to worship.
FOR FURTHER STUDY: Read Genesis 2:4-24 for a closer look at the creation of Adam and Eve. While chapter 1 gives an overview of the entire creation, chapter 2 zooms in on the sixth day of Creation. It focuses on God’s design for Adam and Eve and their relationship with Him and with each other.

Use one or more of the following options to help your group members put the truths of this lesson into practice.

**Apply It**

Because we are created in God’s image, we are highly valued, loved, and provided for. We are to worship our great Creator, represent Him on earth, and value all human beings.

- In what ways has God demonstrated to you that He values you highly? (Salvation in Christ, answered prayer, provision for daily needs, etc.)
- How can we demonstrate that we value all people? (Treat everyone with love and respect.)

**Live It**

Praise God as the Great Creative Artist

As we have seen today, the universe has a maker: God Almighty. For that reason, we can appreciate every flower, creature, sunny day, and natural process because we know they have a majestic designer. Encourage your learners to praise God each day this week for the majestic creation around them. Suggest they carve out some time and find a place where they can walk and enjoy the beauty of creation. They can take a journal and write down what they see, especially noting anything that stands out as unusual or unique. They can use a smartphone or a recorder and record any sounds they hear. They should be on the lookout for birds, insects, or wildlife that live in the area where they are walking. After spending some time in this activity, they can write a prayer of worship and thanksgiving to God for the beauty and wonder of creation.

Remember Your Value as God’s Creation

Distribute copies of VTE 1-5 (“I Am”) and discuss the verses that are listed. The handout serves as a reminder that God loves us and we are very valuable in His eyes. Encourage your students to think about God’s love for them each day this week and to thank Him for His awesome love.

Distribute copies of VTE 1-6 (“For More Creation Information”). This handout provides a number of additional creation resources (websites, books, articles, etc.) for further reading and study.

Encourage your group members to complete this week’s devotions in Velocity devotional study guide, and to discuss the devotions with family members.

Give a copy of Velocity Teaching Essential 1-7 (#teenfeed) to all parents of teens.