

Group Session

Small Group Study

Overview

Our God is the Almighty God who created everything. He created the sun, moon, stars, and everything beyond the earth. He also created the plants, animals, people, and everything on the planet. But you and I were created uniquely—in His image and likeness. He lovingly designed us with an individual plan and a purpose for our lives. He is the ultimate Creator, and we are His loved creation.

You Will Need:

- Uncooked spaghetti noodles
- Large or jumbo marshmallows
- Cell phone
- Extra Bibles (NLT or your preferred translation)
- Optional: Small prizes

Getting Ready:

- **First time leading Listen for Youth? Look here for the Facilitator Guide**

To access the Bible Engagement Project library from a computer, visit App.BibleEngagementProject.com.

Engage

Welcome

Take this time to welcome everyone, introduce new students, learn names, and thank everyone for coming.

QUESTION

What has been the best part of your week so far?

Opening Prayer

Prayer thoughts: Thank God for everyone who came, and ask Him to use this session to engage

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the group with Him and His Word. Thank God for His Word and pray that He would help everyone to fall in love with the Bible and understand it better.

Introduction

Today, we're beginning a journey through the Bible. We'll start with the first book in God's Word and the very first verse. Before we begin, let me share a little bit about the Bible itself.

Did You Know?

There are sixty-six books in the Bible. The Bible is divided into two parts, called testaments. There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament.

Group Activity

Creativity Challenge

You Will Need:

- *Uncooked spaghetti noodles*
- *Large or jumbo marshmallows*
- *Optional: Small prizes*

No prep is needed for this activity.

Today's session is about creation. Let's start things off with a fun contest to see your creativity. Break into groups of three to four students. *(Smaller groups might want to compete individually.)* For the next three minutes, I want you to create something out of a handful of uncooked spaghetti noodles and marshmallows. When time is up, each group will share its creation with everyone.

- *Allow students three minutes, or more if preferred, to create. Once finished, each group should display and describe their creations. If desired, choose or vote for a winner.*

You just used your God-given abilities to create something out of nothing more than noodles and marshmallows.

QUESTION

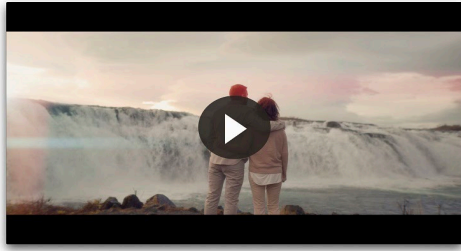
Did your creation turn out the way you hoped it would? Why or why not?

QUESTION

What did you like most about some of the other creations?

Now that your creative juices are flowing, let's look at what God created according to His Word, the Bible.

Watch



This video was filmed in Iceland, one of the most geographically unique countries on earth. It really shows the beauty and diversity that God made.

QUESTION

What stood out to you the most in this video?

QUESTION

What is the most beautiful place you've been or thing you've seen? Why was it so visually appealing?

Consider

Ensure each student has access to a Bible, preferably the same version.

There are so many beautiful things in our world. Let's find out how their creation happened. Open to the first book in your Bibles, Genesis.

Creation Begins

Read Genesis 1:1.

QUESTION

Why do you think the first message found in the Bible tells us that God created both the heavens and the earth?

Knowing that God created the universe is essential. First, God wants us to understand how He was and is involved in everything, including our lives. If someone struggles with believing that God is the Creator or that the creation account in Genesis is true, do you think they may struggle with several other places in Scripture too? (*Group response*) If there's no God of creation, then there may be no heaven or eternal life either.

Most likely, you've been exposed to different kinds of creation beliefs. Maybe that happened at school or even at home. The same was likely true for Moses, the author of Genesis. Although

these chapters he wrote may raise questions as to how and when God created, they reveal what was most important for Moses to communicate—who God is and why we were created.

We are not cosmic accidents or the random products of the blind forces of the universe. We were created by a powerful, intelligent, and loving God who imprinted us with His image and breathed His own life into us. Being made in the image of God means that we were created with spiritual natures that permit us to reason, to make choices, and to know and love God. This gives us value that no secular philosophy or worldview can ever take away.

Let's keep reading about what happened during the first few days of creation.

Read Genesis 1:2–10.

As God created the world, things began to take shape. Genesis 1:2 tells us that at first only darkness existed. But God's work took the world from darkness to full color as creation came to life. As God spoke, His incredible creative power and vision produced everything.

QUESTION

Based on the world you know, what do you think God's favorite color is?

Some might say that it's blue because that color shows up more in creation than any other. About 71 percent of the earth is covered in water, and the entire sky is often blue. *[Note: This trivia question is just for fun, and not intended to be understood as biblical fact.]*

This first part of Genesis lets us know that God took creation from darkness to life, but it doesn't tell us what materials God used. When you create something, usually, you make it out of something else. Another Bible verse reveals that God worked very differently.

Read Hebrews 11:3.

QUESTION

What does this verse say God used to create everything?

God created everything from nothing. He made what is seen out of the unseen. He simply spoke commands, and things that didn't exist came into existence!

God Creates People—Male and Female

Read Genesis 1:26–31.

At the end of the first chapter of the Bible, God finished His creation of everything in existence.

QUESTION

What did God create last?

Genesis 1:27 tells us that God created people on this last day of creation. He made them male and female.

QUESTION

Why do you think God waited until the sixth day to create people?

God spent the first five days preparing a place for people, full of plants, animals, and an assortment of living things. God made sure the first humans had everything they needed for an abundant life.

QUESTION

According to Genesis 1:28, what did God plan for people to do?

God's plan for His creation was to do specific things. One of those things was to have a relationship. God is relational, and He wants that for us too. He wanted people to be fruitful and multiply in order to fill the earth as the result of the closest human relationship. God also gave us purpose. He commanded that people watch over and care for the planet and His creation. He also wants you to discover your purpose in life through Him.

QUESTION

Why do you think God wanted us to read about the details of His creation, especially people?

Read Psalm 37:23.

QUESTION

What does this verse promise to us?

That verse reveals that God is involved in the lives of those who follow Him. We can trust that if we're living for Him, He's directing our lives toward the best path for our future. And He knows that direction because He created us. Because God is the Creator, He is aware of everything going on in this world, how it works, and why it is. He knows how to make things work for our good. God's involvement with the details of creation began at the very beginning. Yet today, He continues to influence the details of our lives positively!

Reflect

Let's consider the main idea for this session: God is the Creator.

QUESTION

What does understanding God as the Creator tell you about Him?

There's much to be learned about God through understanding the biblical story of creation and His activity in it. For example, the story of creation helps us understand that God desires diversity.

God created the earth and everything in it, including people.

Read Psalm 104:24.

When God created the earth, we read that He filled it with a variety of living things. He created the plants, the animals, and people. He created so many living things that scientists today believe there are approximately 8.7 million different species on earth.

QUESTION

Which living thing do you think shows God's creativity the most? Why?

QUESTION

Why do you think God created so many different kinds of plants and animals?

We can tell from the range of amazing things God created that He loves diversity. His character is seen through all unique aspects of His creation, including the difference in people like you and me. He loves people of all races, backgrounds, and nationalities.

Though God created with great diversity, He still understands every detail of His diverse creation.

Optional Illustration

Designed with Purpose

You Will Need:

- *Cell phone*

No prep is needed for this activity.

Since God created us, He knows best how we work, how we think, and what we feel.

[Hold up the cell phone.] The designers of our phones know best how they are intended to work because the designers created them. If your phone was critically broken, would you ask any random person to fix it? Of course not! We wouldn't let just anyone work on our cell phones. We'd take them to someone who is an expert at fixing them.

In much the same way, our Designer, God, knows how we were created to live and what our purpose is. He knows this because He created us.

QUESTION

How might knowing that God understands every aspect of you and your feelings affect how you trust Him?

God didn't create us and leave us to be alone in this world. The rest of the Bible makes it clear that He continues to be involved in our lives. As your Creator, you can trust that He not only knows what's best for your life, but He also wants to be involved in helping you live the best life you were created to live.

Activate

Because the Bible is true, we can conclude a few things about God the Creator that should impact how we live.

QUESTION

How does knowing more about God the Creator affect how we should treat others?

God Has Purpose for Our Lives

God not only created us, but He also has a purpose for our existence. He knows us best. He knows how we work and what our mission is because He created us. Just like God led the first people, and all humans, to populate the earth and care for it, He has specific purposes He's leading you toward.

QUESTION

How should knowing God created purpose for us before the foundation of the world change how we live today?

If you're comfortable sharing, what are some purposes you believe God has for your life? They may be in the future, like your occupation or family goals, or they could be for now, like showing kindness, being generous, or sharing what you know about God. *(Allow responses.)*

God Made Us to Be Creative

It's easy to see from this creation account in the Bible that God is very creative. It's a part of His nature. Being made in His image likely means that creativity is a big part of our nature, as well.

QUESTION

What are some ways you can use the creativity God has placed within you to worship Him?

There are endless ways God can use your creativity to affect the world He created. Maybe God will lead you to invent new things. Perhaps He will use you to solve challenging problems in your future work. Or even now, He may use you to find creative ways to make peace between fighting friends.

Another great way to celebrate creativity is through a program called Fine Arts. It's a way for students to demonstrate the creativity God has placed within us. *(For more information to get your students involved, go to <https://youth.ag.org/Participate/Fine-Arts>.)*

QUESTION

What's one thing you learned today about God that you could share with others?

Conclusion

God is the Creator, and He's specifically your Creator. To help understand more about God and His creation, let me encourage each of you to spend a few minutes this week engaging with the Personal Devotions.

Next time we'll take a closer look at the first people God created, Adam and Eve. We'll explore how a piece of fruit brought separation in their walk with God. We'll also talk about how sin attempts to destroy God's creation and the act that led to each of us needing a Savior.

Prayer

Prayer thoughts: Take a moment to thank God for His creation and for creating each of us. Thank Him for giving us relationships and purpose. Ask Him to help us grow in our understanding and love of the Bible, His Word.

Salvation Opportunity

Include this if you think there may be some in the group who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus.

God didn't create us and then leave us. He sent Jesus to save His creation because He loves His creation and every part of it. That includes each of us. He knows everything about us, including the choices we've made in life. Yet He still wants to be a part of our life and lead us toward the amazing future He created for us.

Is there anyone here that we can pray for who doesn't have a relationship with Jesus or wants to renew their relationship with Christ?

Take a moment to acknowledge those who respond and thank them for their desire to make things right between themselves and God. Pray with them now or after the group time is over. Following group time, talk more about where they are in their walk with God and how you might be able to help.