

# Lesson 1 | September 4, 2022

## God Created Everything

**Study Text:** Genesis 1:1 through 2:3

**Central Truth:** Everyone and everything have been created by God.

**Key Verse: Genesis 1:31**

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good (KJV).  
Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! (NLT)

### Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to describe how God created the world and all living things, culminating with human beings in His own image.
- Students will be inspired to praise God for His power to create and sustain life.
- Students will be challenged to devote themselves to the God who has given them life and everything else.

## Introducing the Study

**Say:** Everything—but God—has a beginning. The Book of Genesis takes us back to the beginning when there was nothing but God, and tells us how He made the universe, planet earth, and all life. God’s creative work reached a crescendo when He made human beings, who reflect His own image and likeness in this world. *v (Play the video available at [RadiantLifeCurriculum.com/Adult](https://www.RadiantLifeCurriculum.com/Adult).)*

### Opening Activity—Something Big

*Ask.* What does it feel like to plan something really big—a family event, a major project at work, or even building a new home? Can you stay calm and focused, or do you “come unraveled” over the details? Student responses will vary. Note that it’s natural to get nervous when faced with creating something big, but preparing yourself for the task, through study, enlisting the help of others, and turning to God in prayer makes the task easier.

**Say:** God’s boundless ability to create and maintain the world is clear to everyone with the eyes of faith. The wonders of the natural world—from mountains to oceans to forests and plains—and every creature that lives on earth, display the God who spoke them into being. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**In an orderly process covering six days, God created the heavens and the earth and all there is, including the human race. He was satisfied with the goodness of His creation, but He was not satisfied to keep it to himself. God made people in**

His own image to care for His creation, to build lives and families together, and most importantly, to enjoy walking with Him in a daily relationship.

## **Part 1—God Made Heaven and Earth In the Beginning**

Genesis 1:1–2

**[Gen 1:1-2 KJV] 1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness [was] upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.**

**Say:** Before there was anything else, God existed—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Genesis takes us back to the beginning of the material world, revealing to us the power, authority, and creativity of the God who started it all. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The first verse of the Bible is also one of the most familiar: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1, NLT). The Bible speaks of God’s existence as an undeniable fact, never questioned nor argued. Further, there is only one God, not the collection found in non-Christian religions (see Isaiah 45:5–6). When God created the world, no other “god” was found to compete nor to challenge Him.

God is eternal, without beginning or ending (Psalm 90:2). Therefore, the “beginning” in Genesis 1:1 refers to the moment God chose to create the material world. He existed prior to all things and is greater than all things. And He is not synonymous with His creation, contrary to the false doctrine of pantheism.

Pantheism is defined as a doctrine which identifies God with the universe, or regards the universe as a manifestation of God.

**2. worship that admits or tolerates all gods.**

Rather than making all things complete at once, God created in stages. His first action brought forth the earth as “formless and empty” (verse 2, NLT). **Some divide the six following days of God’s creative work in this way: Days one through three are days of forming the earth that was yet formless; days four through six are days of filling the earth that was newly formed, but yet empty.**

The first biblical mention of the Holy Spirit appears in verse 2. While the Spirit’s person and work are explained more fully in the New Testament, the beginnings of the doctrine of the Spirit are present in the story of creation. Here, the Holy Spirit is pictured like a bird hovering or fluttering over the waters. By comparison,

**John witnessed the Spirit descending from heaven as a dove and resting upon Jesus at His baptism (Luke 3:21–22).**

### **Resource Packet Item 1: From the Very Beginning**

Before class, use one copy of the work sheet to cut into strips with one Scripture passage on each strip. Give each strip of paper to someone in the class to be prepared to read aloud. Then distribute the work sheet and ask those who have each passage to read it aloud. Ask for a volunteer to tell what the Spirit did in each.

### ***Discuss***

? How would you respond in both truth and love to someone who denies that God exists?

? God could have created everything at once. Why do you think He took six days?

## **God's Creative Word**

Genesis 1:3–19

**[Gen 1:3-19 KJV] 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that [it was] good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which [were] under the firmament from the waters which [were] above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry [land] appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry [land] Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that [it was] good. 11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, [and] the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed [is] in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, [and] herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed [was] in itself, after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good. 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.**

**14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the**

**firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: [he made] the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that [it was] good. 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.**

**Say:** The Bible refers numerous times to light—both physical and spiritual. God began His creative work by speaking light into being, light which shone for a few days even before He created the sun and other stars. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

God spoke—and it was done. Light, which supports life on earth, was the first thing created through God’s spoken word (Genesis 1:3). Light reversed the darkness which covered the waters, and made visible the other works of God’s creation (verse 2). In the first of a series of affirmations, God recognized that the light He had created was good. **He then created day and night by separating light from darkness (verses 4–5). Notice again, that this was before the sun, moon, and stars were created.**

**On the second day of creation, God separated the waters above the sky—the clouds—from the waters below the sky—lakes, seas, and rivers (verses 6–7; Psalm 104:1–3). The word “heaven” (Genesis 1:8, KJV ) as it appears in many versions of the Bible is used in several ways. It may refer simply to the earth’s atmosphere (verse 20); to the space occupied by the stars (15:5); or to the realm of God himself (Ephesians 1:20).**

God created a habitat for animals and human beings on the third day. By lifting some parts of the earth’s surface and sinking others, He created areas of land and sea (Genesis 1:9–10). On the same day, He caused the land to produce a variety of trees and other plants, each of which was invested with the power to reproduce its own kind (verses 11–13).

**On the fourth day God created the lights in the sky, which serve several purposes. They separate light from darkness, and therefore day from night (verses 14,18). Also, their movements enabled human beings to create a system to record the events of their own lives, and history on a larger scale. God made a watch and a calendar.** Think of the way the movement of the earth in the solar system affects our perception of time, from counting a 24-hour day to counting years. What order God provided in this one act of creation! By giving light to the earth, these luminaries support plant, animal, and human life (verses 15,17). **In expansive language, the biblical writer declares that the sun, moon, and stars even “govern” day and night (verses 16,18, NLT).**

### **Discuss**

? How does God's power in creation help you believe that He can help you with anything you are facing?

? Why must believers reject astrology and anything else that credits the stars with power that belongs to God alone?

### **Resource Packet Item 2: When God Speaks . . .**

Distribute the work sheet. Draw attention to the results of God's voice in our lives and allow class members to share times when God has worked in their lives or in the lives of others.

## **God Made Living Creatures Creatures for Sea and Sky**

Genesis 1:20–23

**[Gen 1:20-23 KJV] 20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl [that] may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.**

**Say:** One of God's most important gifts is the power to reproduce. Instead of creating countless generations of animals, plants, and human beings individually, He invested each with the power to perpetuate life, and He has commanded them to do so. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**On the second day of creation, God put space between the waters of the earth and those of the heavens. On the fifth day, He created living things for sea and sky (Genesis 1:20–23). Far from being rare, God wanted the oceans to swarm with a variety of life (verse 20). The word translated “whales” (verse 21, KJV) refers elsewhere to serpents (Exodus 7:9–10) and sea monsters (Job 7:12; Psalm 74:13).**

**Likewise, the skies were filled with every sort of flying creature, including insects. God mandated these creations in sea and sky to have offspring. The command to “be fruitful and multiply” was a form of blessing also used later in the Book of Genesis (Genesis 1:22, NLT; see 35:11; 48:4).**

**God had blessed plant life to reproduce its own kind (Genesis 1:11). The same ability was also given to the members of the animal kingdom, and to the human**

race. In His work of replicating life on earth, God not only commands, He also gives all forms of life He has created the ability they need to produce generation after generation of its same kind.

### ***Discuss***

? What does the great variety and population of animal species tell us about the nature of their Creator?

? Why must God be glorified as the source of all life?

## **Creatures Wild and Domesticated**

Genesis 1:24–25

**[Gen 1:24-25 KJV] 24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good.**

**Say:** With great foresight, God created plant life to support the animal life and human life He created later. God knows the needs of each and all of His creatures, and He should be trusted to meet those needs. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Having exercised His creativity by making all sorts of plants, sea creatures, and birds, God created the land animals on the sixth day (Genesis 1:24–25). Some commentators suggest a special correspondence between God’s work on the third day of creation—the provision of dry land and the vegetation that it supports—and the sixth day, wherein God made the animal and human life to benefit from it.

The animals God created are divided into three categories. First, the “livestock” (verse 24, NLT), or “cattle” (KJV), are the larger, grass-eating animals which humankind soon domesticated. This class may also include sheep, horses, and camels. “Creeping things” (KJV) are listed second, such as reptiles. The last class are the “wild animals” (NLT) as distinguished from the tame. Although some animals were soon domesticated and utilized by human beings, all animals fell under the order God gave for human beings to govern them (verse 28).

### ***Discuss***

? What does the fact that human beings were the final part of God’s creation tell you about His provision?

? Why do you suppose some animals are easier to domesticate than others?

## Part 3—God Made Humans Made in God’s Image

Genesis 1:26–27

**[Gen 1:26-27 KJV] 26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.**

**Say:** God’s creation—both the inanimate things like mountains and rivers and the living things including an incredible variety of animals, birds, and fish—show His power and creativity. But the crowning moment of His creative work was making human beings in His own image—a reflection of His nature in this world. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

In the last and most important act of creation, God made human beings (Genesis 1:26–27). Although He had commanded the earth, the sea, and the sky to produce or to be filled with plant and animal life (verses 11,20,24), He used more personal language—**“Let us make”—regarding His human creation (verse 26). Verse 27 states three times the truth that God created us.**

God made human beings in His “image” and “likeness” (verse 26, KJV). **These terms both refer to the same thing; we are a reflection of God, but not a duplicate. Humanity is the only part of creation that God refers to in this way (5:1; James 3:9). This dignity forms the basis for God’s command that human life must be honored and protected (Genesis 9:6).**

[Jas 3:9 KJV] 9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

God’s image in people appears first and foremost in our spiritual personality. **Human beings are the only life form who have the potential to relate to God although sin has made salvation necessary for this potential to be realized). We also see His image in the human ability to think, to reason, and to create. And His plan for humanity to rule over all other life is a reflection of His sovereign power.**

**God’s creation of people in two genders—both male and female—is recorded in Genesis 1:27. Later, in Genesis 2:18–25, the full account of man and woman, and the marriage between the two, is explained. Both genders reflect equally the nature of the God who created them, and deserve equal honor as the carriers of His divine**

image. Further, both genders have equal privileges of a relationship with God through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:28).

### **Resource Packet Item 3: Made in God's Image**

Distribute the case study work sheet and divide the class into three groups. Assign one of the case studies to each group and discuss how they would respond. Have a spokesperson from each group report to the class..

### ***Discuss***

? How should God's image in human beings govern the way we treat those from different cultures?

? In what way does God's image in both male and female affect your treatment of the opposite gender?

## **A Blessing and a Mandate**

Genesis 1:28 through 2:3

**[Gen 1:28-31 KJV] 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which [is] upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which [is] the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein [there is] life, [I have given] every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.**

**[Gen 2:1-3 KJV] 1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.**

**Say:** God gave humankind, made in His image, the purpose of multiplication, rulership, and stewardship of God's other creation. And, like the rest of His creation, humanity is declared very good. Now that creation was finished, God marked the event by blessing the day that followed. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**As He had for the other forms of life, God gave humankind a blessing and a mandate to multiply (Genesis 1:28). Specifically, His command to “fill the earth” (NLT) uses the same Hebrew word as His command to sea life to fill the oceans (verse 22). Unlike other forms of life, however, which act primarily upon instinct, human beings had the responsibility to willingly respond to God’s plan.**

**Along with multiplication, God made human beings responsible to govern, or subdue, the other life forms on earth. He gave people the capacity to rule over them. This capacity must be used to display God’s glory, not to spoil nor destroy His creation. As with all the tasks God gives to us, we are accountable to Him for their quality and completion (see 1 Corinthians 3:11–13).**

[1Co 3:11-13 LSB] 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident, for the day will indicate it because it is revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

**God gave a great variety of plant life to His human and animal creation for food (Genesis 1:29–30). In some cases, consumers eat the leaves; and others, the seeds; and still others eat the fruit. In chapter 2, Adam is given the task of properly caring for the plant life which was given him for food (verse 15).**

**[Gen 2:15 LSB] 15 Then Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.**

After repeated statements of the goodness of God’s creation, Genesis 1:31 declares His work—now including humankind—as very good. This stamp of perfection begins to set the stage for the contrasting entrance of sin and evil in Genesis 3.

**Creation was now complete (2:1). God “ended his work” (verse 2, KJV) not because He was tired, but because His work was finished (see Isaiah 40:28).** The material world—both animate and inanimate—stood ready to serve His purpose. In addition, God blessed and declared holy this seventh day, setting it aside as a day of rest and worship (Genesis 2:3). This purpose would be mandated more fully when God gave His Ten Commandments through Moses (see Exodus 20:8–11).

### ***Discuss***

? How can human beings both subdue other creatures, and preserve them for God’s glory?

? Describe the world we would live in, had not sin entered and spoiled it.

## **What Is God Saying to Us?**

**Say:** God's act of creating the entire universe put His power on display for every human being to see and experience. The universe was not the impersonal result of the laws of science; rather, the laws of science are humanity's attempt to understand and explain what people observe of the created world. God never intended to stop at the creation of animals, birds, and fish; He placed human beings here to care for the earth, to relate to one another, and most importantly, to have a relationship with Him. No person needs to feel alone nor forgotten. The same God who created us has enabled us to approach Him, to know Him, and to walk with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.

## **Living It Out**

### **Ministry in Action**

- Take time to praise God this week for the beauty of His creation— things simple and great.
- Search your heart for any prejudice against any person made in His image and likeness.
- Ask the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of creation—to help you reflect the light of Christ to those around you.

## **Daily Bible Readings**

### **Monday:**

When God Made the Earth.  
Job 38:1–11

**[Job 38:1-11 KJV] 1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who [is] this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 Or [who] shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, [as if] it had issued out of the womb? 9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, 10 And brake up for it my decreed [place], and set bars and doors, 11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?**

### **Tuesday:**

Bless God the Creator.  
Psalm 104:1–9

**[Psa 104:1-9 KJV] 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. 2 Who coverest [thyself] with light as [with] a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: 3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: 4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: 5 [Who] laid the foundations of the earth,**

**[that] it should not be removed for ever. 6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as [with] a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. 7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. 8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. 9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.**

**Wednesday:**

Great Is God the Creator.  
Isaiah 40:12–18

**[Isa 40:12-18 KJV] 12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? 13 Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or [being] his counsellor hath taught him? 14 With whom took he counsel, and [who] instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? 15 Behold, the nations [are] as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. 16 And Lebanon [is] not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. 17 All nations before him [are] as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. 18 To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?**

**Thursday:**

Title.  
Reference Worship God the Creator.  
Acts 14:11–18

**[Act 14:11-18 KJV] 11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. 12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. 13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. 14 [Which] when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard [of], they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, 15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: 16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. 18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.**

**Friday:**

Title.

Reference The Creation Reveals God.

Romans 1:18–2

**[Rom 1:18-21 KJV] 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed [it] unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

**Saturday:**

Created for God's Pleasure.

Revelation 4:8–11

**[Rev 4:8-11 KJV] 8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]; and [they were] full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. 9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**