

THE TRUE STORY OF GOD, THE WORLD, AND US

Week 1 in our series  
'Bible in Ten'

**"GOD'S PEOPLE IN GOD'S PLACE"**



## FRIDAY: Day 1 - The Good Creation

There's a reason why God's creation is good.

Genesis 1:1-13

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*

*<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.*

*<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." <sup>7</sup> So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.*

*<sup>9</sup> And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.*

*<sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.*



The first three days of creation are about how God forms the world. The universe isn't just a jumble of random things - there is an order and a structure.

God carefully creates homes for all different kinds of creatures. Animals live on the land, in the sky, and in the sea, so they all have their special place. Even night and day have a purpose in creation - living things need night and dark to sleep so they can work in the day (and for nocturnal animals it's the other way around). Every element has a purpose, and serves God and his creation in the way God has prepared for it. It's perfectly crafted for humans, the crown of his creation, to thrive in.

It's not just good – it's good specifically for us.

Later on in the Bible, Jesus talks about going to heaven to prepare a place for us. It's hard to imagine, but it'll be an even better place than the first creation that was ruined by sin. There could be light and dark, sky and sea and land, or even other things that we can't even fathom yet.

The idea of the new creation is like the prize at the end of the race that keeps us running forward. And the best thing about it isn't the trees or the sun. If it turns out that some of those sorts of things aren't there, it won't really matter. Because we'll actually be close to God in a way that no one has ever experienced since the Garden of Eden.

**Head:** Think of some things listed in this account of creation that you encounter every day

**Heart:** Do you think much about the world around us belonging to God?

**Hands:** How does it affect the way you live knowing how the world was created?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we praise you for your creation. You made every part of the world that sustains us every day. And you also made all the parts of the world that we can't see, and barely think about. We know that we take your creation for granted. Help us to see the goodness in it, just a taste of the better world that is waiting for us. In your name, Amen.

A song to listen to: [All Creatures of Our God and King](#)

Zoe Harland

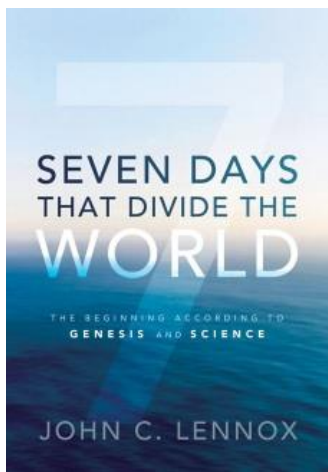
## SATURDAY: Day 2 - Amazing God

God shows off his amazing creativity in the creation of the starry heavens and then fine-tunes it for human existence by making the sun and moon – what an amazing God!

Genesis 1:14-23

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.



Amazing God, I cannot help but call to mind Chris Tomlin’s beautiful song “Indescribable”, which summarises the passage we’re pondering today:

*From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea; Creation’s revealing Your majesty;  
Every creature unique in the song that it sings; All exclaiming Indescribable, uncontainable;  
You placed the stars in the sky and you know them by name. You are amazing God*

And the uncontainableness of God is demonstrated as our telescopes get stronger and we find there is no end to the universe. It keeps getting bigger and bigger than we thought.

Verse 21 introduces the concept of God creating fish and birds according to their kinds. This unique word does not imply the fixity of species. It is different to our understanding of genus and species. It accommodates the concept of adaptation to the environment a living creature lives in based on mutation. God packed the genes of his creatures so full of his glory that they could adapt to their environment they found themselves in and thrive there. God’s dominion mandate applies initially to his living creatures over their environment by calling them to be

fruitful and multiply. This is the substance of all blessing. We learn here that God’s providential process of multiplication by reproduction marks all of life. The concept of “kinds” in relation to each category of bird and fish is specific enough for them to maintain their unique characteristics. This contrasts with the evolutionary idea of reproduction across species lines which is, as John MacArthur puts it, a false explanation of origins.

No-one can adequately explain the origins of the cosmos, as no person was there when it happened. But we can either believe in the constantly changing theories of man, or the revelation of God which is unchanging and does fit the facts of what we see around us. Whatever ultimately explains this process of creation, what we do know is that this creative God is truly amazing!

And Colossians 1:16 directs this amazement we feel at creation beyond the creation itself to Jesus. Jesus is both the source of all this wonder and also its goal; it reveals the beauty of the one who made it and died for it – to restore it to goodness, even better than it was before!

**Head:** When you look into the starry night, do you believe that God could actually make all those stars and then enable you to have some tiny semblance of awe at the magnificence of it all?

**Heart:** How do you feel about the creator of this magnificent universe telling you to be fruitful and multiply?

**Hands:** Think of a friend or acquaintance that has doubts about God based on their evolutionary understanding of the universe. Then go and propose that there is another reasonable explanation of origins without compromising their intellect.

**Prayer:** Lord, thank you for your amazing creation that you have placed us in: the heavens which declare your glory, and the sky which proclaims your handiwork (Psalm 19). Help us to see that it is good, even though we may experience pain and frustration as we wait for you to restore all things. Give us the grace to be fruitful and multiply, especially in the area of bringing many to know you and glorify you.

A song to listen to: [Indescribable](#)

Sean Kluyts

## MONDAY: Day 3 - God spoke, and it was very good.

Even with the benefit of hindsight, God felt that creating humankind was still a very good.

Genesis 1:24- 2:3

<sup>24</sup> And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

**2** Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. <sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.



I found this a really hard Grow Daily to write because there is so much that is important in these few verses. I think I was paralysed by the significance of this moment in time (Creation and what it means for humanity and God's relationship to us), and doing it justice. In the end I just prayed and told myself to 'not overthink it'.

As I'm re-reading this passage again today, I'm struck by these key words – God Said; It was so; It was very good.

Humankind is quite good at building. We take elements of our world and re-work them to make something new; or we learn about what has been created and replicate it (in the way that the Scientist Craig Venter manufactured a new chromosome from artificial DNA in a test tube and then watched it multiply when transplanted into an existing empty cell that had been stripped of the original DNA – establishing synthetic life, but not creating life).

In the very beginning of our universe, God spoke and the land produced living creatures of all different kinds; God spoke and it was so. Then God spoke and created humankind in his own image; God spoke and it was so. God blessed humanity; gave them the resources they needed to live a life of abundance, and gave instructions about stewardship of the world he had created; God spoke and it was so. God looked at all that He had created, He thought it was good, and he knew it was complete; It was very good.

With the benefit of hindsight we know that Adam and Eve did not exist in a world of peace for very long (and in future passages that is addressed). It is important for us to remember that God had the benefit of hindsight during this moment in time and he was still content and confident that his work was good. His creation was exactly what He wanted. We were exactly what he wanted.

We live in a world that is full of technology and we can be pretty impressed by what we can achieve. It's important that we take time to reflect on what God has achieved in creating this universe, and in creating us. God spoke; It was so; It was very good. The artificial DNA copied by Dr. Craig Venter was made up of 485 genes. The human body DNA created by God is made up of 20,000 original genes. You may not be a strong advocate of camping in the bush so you can spend a weekend stargazing to admire God's creation; but we can pause and listen to a bird, admire a tree, buy some flowers, or take a moment to be in awe of the awesome creation that is mankind and the path that God set in place at that time that would end with us having the opportunity to be in a personal relationship with Him. God spoke; It was so; It was very good.

**Head:** Do you take time acknowledging what God has done, or are you quicker to praise the work of humankind?

**Heart:** How does it make you feel knowing that God created Adam and Eve and 'saw that it was very good' even though He knew there was going to be some significant challenges ahead?

**Hands:** God created you and you are awesome. Is there something you can do for your health today that reflects an appreciation the amazing creation that you are?

**Prayer:** Lord, I am in awe of your creation. Thank you for making me a part of this incredible plan. Thank you for providing a way back for us through Jesus, that we can have our sins forgiven and we can be restored to you. Please help me to remember that I am precious in your sight and part of your wonderful creation. Amen.

A song to listen to: [All Creatures of Our God and King](#)

Melinda Martin-Khan

## TUESDAY: Day 4 - They felt no shame

No shame! I cannot imagine what that would feel like. Can you imagine a world with no shame?

Genesis 2:4-25

<sup>4</sup> This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

<sup>5</sup> Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, <sup>6</sup> but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. <sup>7</sup> Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

<sup>8</sup> Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup> The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. <sup>11</sup> The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup> (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) <sup>13</sup> The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

<sup>18</sup> The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

<sup>19</sup> Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup> So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called 'woman,'  
for she was taken out of man."

<sup>24</sup> That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

<sup>25</sup> Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.



Everything was perfect - it's like the opening scenes of a movie. It was beautiful in Eden: everything was in its place, and then God created Eve to walk alongside Adam in praising God. God had given them some pretty easy instructions it seems: eat anything except for the fruit of one tree. That shouldn't be hard. And then comes the verse that stands out the most to me - verse 25: "Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame". I feel like this is where the action music starts to play in the movie. We all know something is about to happen. Why would it be pointed out that they had no shame? Is that what perfection is? No shame?

I don't know about you but I would love that feeling of having no shame. Just imagine for a few seconds feeling no shame about anything. Wouldn't that feel great! It would be wonderful to not carry around daily the shame of actions from my past or feel shame at the small things I do wrong. Unfortunately, as we will see in tomorrow's passage that does not last that long for Adam and Eve as the actions they take next cause real consequences for us all.

We were created to have no shame but now shame plagues our everyday actions. What would it take for us to have no shame again? Jesus came to take our shame and sin to the cross and die once and for all to take it away. Yes, we still deal with the consequences daily of our sin and shame but I am very much looking forward to the day Jesus returns and we no longer have to deal with the consequences of our broken world.

**Head:** Do you think it is possible to live without shame?

**Heart:** What would it feel like to no longer be ruled by the shame in our lives? What does it feel like knowing Jesus has died for our sin and shame?

**Hands:** How can you live today no longer being ruled by your shame but by Jesus? Take some time to think about the shame that rules your life and take this to Jesus. Ask him to help you no longer be ruled by this shame.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that you created everything perfect and in its right place. Lord we are sorry that our actions caused division between us and you and caused sin and shame to enter this world. Thank you that your son came to die on the cross to remove our sin and shame, once and for all. Please help us to live lives that are ruled by you, not shame. In Jesus' name, Amen.

A song to listen to: [Rejoice](#)

Emily Andrews

## WEDNESDAY: Day 5 - Who am I listening to?

When we listen to the malicious words of the evil one, instead of the loving words of our creator God, the results are tragic.

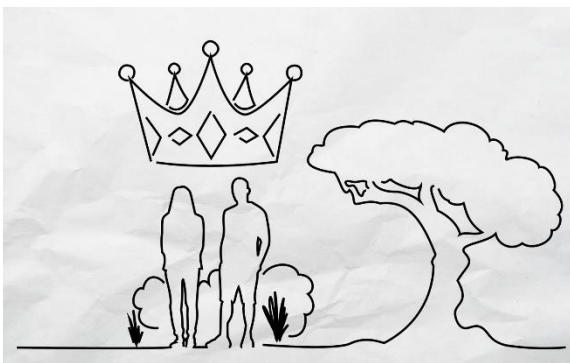
Genesis 3:1-7

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"*

*<sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"*

*<sup>4</sup>"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup>"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

*<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*



Just prior to this passage we are told that Adam and his wife Eve were both naked and felt no shame. This beautiful description is in some ways an ominous forecast of what is just around the corner. Suddenly a new character appears in our story – one who will wreak absolute havoc in all that is to come. If this were a movie we would certainly be hearing a change in the music and lighting that indicates a new mood that will be present until the final scene of an epic tale.

How exactly does the serpent undermine this beauty and innocence? You are probably familiar with the story, but have

another look at his methods. What questions does he ask? What doubts does he raise in Eve's mind about what God said, what God is like, and about Eve herself?

What might have been going through Eve's mind at that moment? Perhaps something along the lines of .... 'Did I hear God correctly, did I get it right?' 'Has God been holding out on me, keeping something better from me?' 'Does he really love me, delight in me as I am?', 'Does he want what's best for me?' 'Am I really enough as I am now or could I be better, wiser, know more, be more like God?'

What is the immediate result of Adam and Eve's new found knowledge? Is it greater love and intimacy? Does their new 'wisdom' bring joy to their hearts, or something else?

**Head:** What doubts do you struggle most with in your relationship with God? With others? What similarities do you notice in the way the evil one accuses you and undermines your trust in God, and this first story of his work? How does he speak 'shame' into your life?

How do you seek to cover this shame? What impact does this have on those around you?

**Heart:** How does it make you feel to consider that God delights in you, wants your absolute good and is holding nothing back from you? How does it make you feel that Jesus has confirmed God's love for you and secured your full relationship with him? How are you going at trusting that this is true in all parts of your life?

**Hands:** What will the security of God's love for you free you to do today?

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, thank you that you alone are pure, true, noble and trustworthy. Forgive me that I so easily listen to the voice of the one who seeks to shame and accuse me, instead of rejoicing in your grace, mercy and forgiveness through Jesus. Thank you that you have made me, and enabled me to do good in this world in your name. Please help me to do it today by the strength of your Spirit within me. Amen.

A song to listen to: [You are my King \(Amazing Love\)](#)

Ros Cree

## THURSDAY: Day 6 - Hope for a broken relationship

We walk away from our relationship with God, just like Adam and Eve – but God comes looking.

Genesis 3:8-19

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

<sup>10</sup> He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

<sup>11</sup> And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

<sup>12</sup> The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

<sup>13</sup> Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

<sup>14</sup> So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all livestock  
and all wild animals!  
You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will crush your head,  
and you will strike his heel."

<sup>16</sup> To the woman he said,

"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;  
with painful labor you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband,  
and he will rule over you."

<sup>17</sup> To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;  
through painful toil you will eat food from it  
all the days of your life.

<sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you,  
and you will eat the plants of the field.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow  
you will eat your food  
until you return to the ground,  
since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
and to dust you will return."



This passage is a candidate for the title of "most miserable section of the Bible," if such an award were to exist! Having turned their back on God, humanity must now bear the consequences. God lays it down clearly: choosing to break relationship with him means that people are put away from the benefits of God's presence: life, peace, order, satisfaction. And we see throughout the Bible (not to mention our world and our own lives today) that this grim state extends to all people, in all places, at all times. Ultimately, breaking relationship with God puts us on a path to being separated from him for eternity – a path that no one can change by their own will.

It's both surprising and wonderful, then, that this little episode starts with three words of hope: "Where are you?" God isn't asking for information here. Being God, he knows exactly where they are and exactly what they've done, even before the discussion begins. He could have wiped them out immediately. He could have issued judgement and condemnation from on high. He could have kept himself away from their presence, not to see them again, not even once, never again and for evermore. And yet, he comes looking for them – *he comes to find them*. He comes into the garden, to where they are. He acts to reach out to those who have broken relationship with him.

In verse 15, we see a picture of Jesus – the one who will be wounded by the evil one but will crush him. Someone is coming who can mend the broken relationship and fix the mess. He comes to us, where we are. When he comes, Jesus reminds us that the shepherd goes looking for his sheep; that the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. Jesus "the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10) because, from the beginning, God the Father has been asking "Where are you?"

**Head:** How do you see sin? Breaking the rules, or walking away from a relationship?

**Heart:** When you know you've pushed God away, what's your response? To hide, or to let God find you so you can get back together in relationship with him?

**Hands:** How can you encourage someone by reminding them that God comes looking for his lost and broken people?

**Prayer:** Father, I confess that sometimes I want to do things my own way and to push you out of my life. I confess that I hide from you. Thank you for loving me, for wanting to restore our relationship and for coming to find me. Thank you for making it right again through Jesus, even at great cost to yourself. Amen

A song to listen to: [Jesus](#)

Geoff Pryde

# FAMILY GROWTH

## Week 1 – God’s People in God’s Place

### Big idea

- God made the world good and rules as the loving King.

### Bible passage

- Genesis 1:1-28

### You Will Need

- Clay/playdough

Or

- Google images of beautiful creation

### All ages Activity

Make something beautiful out of clay (e.g. a flower, an animal). Or google search images of beautiful creation. Can your family make something beautiful together? What is one of your favourite parts of creation?

Keep your playdough creations somewhere for the week (e.g. on the kitchen bench) – or print out your images and keep them on the fridge. You will need them again for next week’s family growth.



### Discussion

God made this world to be good. And God is the King of what is good. God liked what He saw. God saw the world was good. When we look at creation we can see what is good about it – the complexities of life, the way God has made it all work together. It blows our minds. Can you think of something that blows your mind about creation? (for example, we breathe out carbon dioxide and trees breathe it in and give us back oxygen to breathe– thanks trees! Thanks God!).

When you made your playdough creations or looked at images of creation we are remembering what is good about creation. God’s plan from the beginning was to have a good creation, with a loving King.

### Prayer idea

Each time you see your playdough creation or image this week pray this prayer:

‘Thank you God for giving us a good creation. Thank you that you are a loving King.’