

session 1 study guide

**genesis: creation
and curse**

starter

CREATIVE CREATIONS: Get together with four or five people and get creative with the following questions:

1. What's the strangest, most bizarre invention that you've ever heard of?

2. What's the most useful creation or invention you use regularly?

3. If you could create or invent anything, what would it be?

Now, with clay or Play-Doh, make a prototype of your group's best invention idea. It doesn't have to work, but try your best to sculpt a model of the finished product. Now share your small group's answers and brilliant creation with the larger group (and, if time allows, vote on the most promising invention!).

message

Today we're going to take a close look at our human family's origins. Here's something to keep in mind: Sometimes when we read the Bible, we forget that the stories in it are about real people with real feelings, thoughts and motivations. The following questions can help us put ourselves in the "shoes" (metaphorically speaking, of course, since Adam and Eve were naked a good bit of the time) of the characters.

Individually or in a group, read Genesis 2:4–3:19. If you're feeling creative, assign each person in your group a part and act out the drama that took place between Eve, the serpent, Adam and God. Once you've read the passage, answer the following questions on your own or as part of a group discussion.

1. How do you think Adam felt when God told him that he would have a partner?

2. Why do you think Eve would want to be like God?

3. How do you think the serpent must have felt as Eve bit into the forbidden fruit?

4. What might Adam and Eve have been thinking as they were sewing fig leaves together to cover themselves?

5. What would you guess was God's tone of voice when He spoke to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:11?

6. As Adam was explaining to God that it was all Eve's fault, how do you think Eve felt?

7. If you were Adam, what would you have wanted to say to Eve after God explained the curse?

8. What would you have wanted to say to Adam if you were Eve?

9. Do you think Adam and Eve were sorry for what they did or sorry that they were caught (or both)? Why do you think this?

dig

There was a progression in Adam and Eve's feelings about their sin. First they felt good, then they felt ashamed and then they were afraid. Get into pairs to answer the following questions:

1. Think about a temptation you are struggling with in your life right now. How would giving in to it make you feel good, at least at first?

2. How might giving in to this temptation later make you feel ashamed?

3. Read 1 John 4:15-18. Adam and Eve went from ashamed of their sin to afraid of God. Why don't we need to be afraid, even when we sin?

4. Even though we never need to be afraid of God, sin is destructive to our relationship with Him and others—so avoid it! Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. How do you think God can give you a way out of your temptation this week?

apply

The fallout from Adam and Eve’s sin didn’t just affect them; we are still dealing with the consequences today. Ever wonder why the world is so beautiful and so messed up at the same time?

1. Read Romans 5:12-21. This passage in Paul’s letter to the Roman church is one of the foundational Scriptures that explain the Christian doctrine of *original sin*. Compare these verses with Genesis 3:16-19, then do your best to come up with a definition for original sin. What does it mean that “the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men” (Romans 5:18)?

2. Christians have wrestled to pin down a definition of original sin since the Church’s earliest days. Most agree that the Fall of humanity resulted in a “sin nature” in all of us, an inability to do the right thing every time. We can’t help but “miss the mark,” which is what the Greek word *hamart* means—translated into English, “sin.” Think about your own struggle to do the right thing every time. How have you “missed the mark”? Do these sins demonstrate the reality of a sin nature? Why or why not?

3. Take another look at Romans 5:12-21. If your sin nature, inherited from Adam and Eve, makes it impossible for you to hit the mark every time on your own, how can you “receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness” (v. 17)?

4. People aren’t the only ones who bear the penalty of the Fall. Read Romans 8:19-22. Do you see humanity’s sin nature affecting the natural world? In what ways?

5. Now check out 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. What does it mean to be a “new creation” (v. 17) in light of the curse found in Genesis 3:16-19? What do you think it means for God to have given us the “ministry of reconciliation” (v. 18)?

reflect

There are two different accounts of Creation in the book of Genesis. In chapter 1, God lets us have a look at what He was thinking through the whole process (isn't that amazing?). Read Genesis 1:26-28, and then answer the following questions on your own or with a partner or small group.

1. What do you think it means to be made in God's image?

2. What do you think God had in mind when He said, "Let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground" (v. 26)?

3. How do you think this job, given to humanity by God at the very beginning, relates to Romans 8:19-22, which we read in the previous section?

4. You are created in God's image. On top of that, if you have asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior, you are a new creation who is called to be Christ's ambassador of reconciliation (see 2 Corinthians 5:17-21). Let those facts sink in for a minute, and then write a prayer on the lines below that expresses your feelings about who you are and what you are called to do.

meditation 

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

GENESIS 1:27