



## *In the beginning God....* Leaders Guide Week 10

(Times are approximate) – start time: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Welcome**

(+3 min)

### **Opening prayer**

(+1 min)

### **Opening Comments –**

- Following are comments from our Pastors reflecting on their personal experience through our Genesis study.
- **From Pastor Malcolm** - "I've long believed the first three chapters of the Bible to be foundational for all that follows in Scripture and in life, but truly have been amazed week-to-week in our study how explicitly the key themes of the divine narrative are displayed there: God's Creation and our Fall, and even more so God's Redemption of us and promised Restoration of his creation. My trust in God's Word also has been renewed, deepened and strengthened. His Word - spoken (in creation), recorded (in the Bible), and lived (in Christ) - is the source of life, the guide for life, and the power for living!"
- **From Pastor David** - "Our Genesis study has helped me come to more fully appreciate this first book's impact on the whole of created life and certainly the whole of scripture. The many details which have been highlighted which point to the great care which was taken in the created order itself and how beautifully and perfectly we were set in it. In our series we have seen together we were so certain to fall, flee, be redeemed and restored and at so great a price. What has touched me most deeply is the way it has helped remind me of how deeply we are loved and carefully and wonderfully made."
- **From Pastor Kevin** - "The first three chapters of Genesis are so rich in revealing the character and nature of God and in revealing the reality of the relationship God longs to have with us. Not only did He create us in His image and to be in relationship with Him, but he also made a way for us to be returned to that relationship with Him through Christ. In the grand narrative that God has written and is continuing to write, we find that he has always pursued us and that His love and grace have provided the way for us to truly know life! Even in the Fall, we know that God's plan to continue to seek us out is unrelenting. He is the one true God!"
- **From Pastor Ron** - "For me, the most important blessing received from the first three chapters of Genesis is what they tell us about God, ourselves, and our world, not how they tell it. It's all about God! God is! God created! God blessed! God said! All that is, is dependent upon God. Genesis 1 and 2 note that. We have not placed ourselves here. God has! "It is he that made us, and we are his." (Psalm 100:3). We are his image-bearers in relationship to God, to others, and all of creation. The reality of Genesis 3 reminds us that we human beings are not only image-bearers, but as a result of sin, we experience separation from God and thus stand in the need of salvation, which we ourselves cannot provide. However, as we know, salvation is also all about God and his grace. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God...." (Ephesians 2:8)"
- Now let's share what we have learned in this last lesson, week 10, of Genesis.

(+3 min)

### **Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~50 min) – Weekly theme: Genesis – Foundational Theology**

**Leaders:** *This being the final lesson on Genesis, this study lesson is meant to have people reflect on what they have learned. It is also designed for them to share one-on-one in breakout teams. The text accompanying each question is for your benefit, as the leader, to help the group along if necessary. You will not have time to discuss everything. On days 4 and 5 there are a couple of helps which you might want to copy ahead of time to hand out, but that is your decision. We on the development team pray you have had a wonderful experience going through this study with your group and that this final lesson leaves your group wanting more studies like this. To God be the glory as we keep saying on the development team. God bless you and your group members.*

### Day 1: Revelations about God.

1. Write a paragraph or two on what you have learned about God in Genesis 1-3. Discuss His character, Him being Triune, and the authority of His word. Identify verses in Genesis that support what you have learned so you could share them with someone else. (Some outside references you may want to look up to help you are: Matt. 28:18; Romans 1:20; 1 Cor. 15:22-24; Jude 1:24-25; Rev. 1:8 & 12:10)

- *We recommend you put time marks in the margins of the pages to help you stay on track.*
- God's character: Genesis 1:1 – *"In the beginning God.."* establishes that He is self-existent and eternal.
- This is not true of anything else.
- Everything that exists depends on some other thing or person and ultimately on God.
- We all have heard the laws of "cause and effect," that is every effect must have a cause.
- But God is the ultimate cause and is Himself uncaused, He has no origins!
- He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things – **Rev. 1:8**, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."*
- That God is eternal has two major consequences for us: 1) He is unchangeable/immutable in His attributes; 2) He is inescapable, there is no place in which we can hide from Him.
- **Psalm 139:7** – *"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?"*
- God's self-existence means **He is unknowable** without help from the Holy Spirit.
- A. W. Tozer makes a good point, "Few of us have let our hearts gaze in wonder at the I AM, the self-existent Self, back of which no creature can think. Such thoughts are too painful for us. We prefer to think where it will do more good – about how to build a better mousetrap, for instance, or how to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before. And for this we are now paying a too heavy price in the secularization of our religion and the decay of our inner lives."<sup>1</sup>
- God is self-sufficient which means He has no needs and therefore depends on no one.
- We often run into the popular and widespread idea of God that says God cooperates with man and man with God, each thereby supplying something lacking in the other.
- For instance, some think God needed love and therefore created us to love Him.
- But God does not need us at all.
- He has chosen to do things His way and sometimes He honors us by allowing us to be a part of what He is doing.
- He doesn't have to do this to accomplish His plans but it is a privilege that He does.
- Again A. W. Tozer states, "Among all created beings, not one dare trust in itself. God alone trusts in Himself; all other beings must trust in Him. Unbelief is actually perverted faith, for it puts its trust not in the living God but in dying people."<sup>2</sup>

- Triune God: God is Triune – Gen. 1:1 – *Elohim* – plural for God; The Holy Spirit is mentioned in 1:2; *Let us make man...* Gen. 1:26; *Man has now become like one of us...* Gen. 3:22.
- Was Jesus Christ there at creation? Yes, **John 1:1-5**, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*”
- Authority of His Word: “*God said*” – 13x in Gen. 1-3; “*God called*” – 4x in Gen. 1-3; “*God saw*” – 7x; “*and it was so*” – 6x; “*God made*” – 7x in Gen. 1-3;
- God made everything out of nothing!
- There was no pre-existent matter from which He made things, it was by the authority of His word that all was created.
- He created the systems of physics and put them into action by His word.
- Man doesn’t know what gravity is – he can define its characteristics, he can use its effects to his benefit but he does not know how things hold together.
- God does, **Colossians 1:15-17** Paul says of Jesus, “*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together”.*
- Following are the verses referred to in the questions:
- **Matthew 28:18** – “*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*”
- **Romans 1:20** – “*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--His eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse”*
- **1 Corinthians 15:22-24** – “*For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when He comes, those who belong to Him. <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all (Satan's) dominion, authority and power”*
- **Jude 1:24-25** – “*To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- <sup>25</sup> to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen”*
- **Revelation 12:10** – “*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ. For the accuser (Satan) of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.”*”
- These are just a few of the ideas people should have picked up on during our study of Genesis.
- *Breaking into smaller groups (2 or 3) and sharing what has been learned should build confidence in their abilities to share the Bible with others. It is recommended once people in your group break out into small teams, they stay together through the entire lesson.*

(+5 min)

**Application 1:** Practice sharing what you have written and learned with one or two people in your small group or family member or friend. Practice helps give you confidence for that “*surprise opportunity*” to share with someone.

(+3 min)

**Day 2: Revelations concerning God's purpose and plan of creation.**

1. Write a paragraph or two describing new thoughts and understanding you have received about *God's purpose and plan* for His creation. Identify verses in Genesis that support what you have learned so you can share your new insights with someone else? (You may include extra passages outside of Genesis such as: Ps. 18:49; Isa. 6:1-3; Eph. 1:3; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11, 21:1-4)

- God's purpose for creation:
- **Ps. 18:49** - *"Therefore I will praise you, LORD, among the nations; I will sing the praises of your name."*
- **Isa. 6:1-3** - *"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.""*
- **Eph. 1:3** - *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."*
- **Col. 1:16** – *"For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him **and for Him**"*
- **Rev. 4:11** – *"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.""*
- Warren Wiersbe says, "Everything begins with God and fulfills His purposes for His glory. He works by the power of His Word (Ps. 33:6-9), the same Word that can work in our lives (1 Thess. 2:13). He works according to a plan: first, He forms, then he fills. He formed the earth and filled it with plants and animals. He formed the firmament and filled it with stars and planets. He formed the seas and filled them with living creatures. He can form and fill our lives today if we will yield to Him. Persons who have trusted Jesus Christ are a part of the *new creation* (2 Cor. 4:6; 5:17; Eph. 2:8-10)."<sup>3</sup>
- His purpose for the creation still holds true to this day and we are to bring Him glory.
- We can see His same glory in the universe, planets, stars, mountains, valleys, seas, birds of the air, animals on the land, and creatures in the seas as they did in Genesis after the Fall.
- We can see His glory in the miracle of birth and the promise for all believers of life with Him after our bodies give way which is the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15.
- We can see His glory in the delicate shape of a flower, or the song of birds, of the sun rises and sunsets.
- We can see His glory in so many ways as a result of His creation!
- The question is, do we see His glory?
- Or do we keep so busy in our efforts of living and busyness we place on ourselves that we miss His glory altogether?
- Another of His purposes is the expression of His Triune relationship – God, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- We are to see the harmony in which they live as an example of how we are to live.
- God's plan for creation:
- His plan is called "the Meta-Narrative" – which consists of:
- The Perfect Creation - Gen. 1:31;
- Man's Failure - Gen. 3:1-13;
- Followed by His plan of Redemption - Gen. 3:15;
- And lastly, the Restoration of peoples relationship back to Himself
- **Rev. 21:1-4**, *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup> I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud*

voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.<sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

- So we can see that this narrative begins in Genesis 1:1 and ends in Revelation 22:21.
- Throughout this narrative we see His many attributes expressed.
- A question for the group might be: How many attributes of God can you identify?
- What does all this say about His plan for His creation?
- All is to bring Him glory and we are the crowning portion of His creation.
- He wanted a relationship with us, not because He was lonely or without someone to share.
- Remember He is Triune, He has never been lonely!
- He chose to create people knowing they would fall but His love extends to us so we may be in relationship with Him and bring Him glory!
- There should be no doubt that He loves us (Rom. 8:31-39)!

(+5 min)

**Application 2:** Practice sharing what you have written and learned with one or two people in your small group or family member or friend.

(+3 min)

### Day 3: Revelations concerning God's creation of man.

1. Write a short paragraph or two about what you have learned regarding *God's creation of man*. What verses in Genesis would you use to help you explain the fall to someone else? (You may include extra passages outside of Genesis if you like.)
  - Questions like this should cause us to stop and spend time praying, reading and meditating on His Holy Word.
  - We should ask the Holy Spirit for enlightenment as we do these things.
  - Thoughts like this are very important to our spiritual growth, understanding, and appreciation for our God, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
  - Remember, after God created man and woman, He said, "*and it was very good.*"
  - This quote is a bit long but gives some fundamental truths on this topic of "God's placement of people in His creation" – the quote is from Max Lucado's book "*It's Not About Me*"
  - "Blame the bump on Copernicus... "Trivialities" people scoffed. But Copernicus persisted. He tapped our collective shoulders and cleared his throat. "Forgive my proclamation, but..." and pointing a lone finger toward the sun, he announced, "behold the center of our solar system." People denied the facts for over half a century... People didn't take well to demotions back then. They still don't. What Copernicus did for the earth, God does for our souls. Tapping the collective shoulder of humanity, he points to the Son – His Son – and says, "Behold the center of it all." "God raised him [Christ] from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. And not just for the time being but *forever*. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the center of all this, Christ rules the church." (Ephesians 1:20-22 MSG)... Lesser orbs, that's us. Appreciated, Valued. Loved dearly. But central? Essential? Pivotal? Nope. Sorry. Contrary to the Ptolmey within us, the world does not revolve around us. Our comfort is not God's priority.... If God exists to please us, then shouldn't we always be

pleased?... The moon models our role... The moon reflects the greater light. And she's happy to do so! What would happen if we accepted our place as Son reflectors? ... Life makes sense when we accept our place. The gift of pleasures the purpose of problems --- all for Him. The God-centered life works. And it rescues us from a life that doesn't."<sup>4</sup>

- God gave humans dominion and rule over His earthly creation, not all creation, but here on earth.
- Dominion of any kind, but particularly dominion of this scope carries with it responsibility to care for things as He would care for them.
- People are also responsible for their acts towards one another.
- How we use our tongue is very important.
- James 3:9-10 forbid the use of the tongue to curse others because these others are also made in God's image: *"With the tongue we praise the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness... This should not be."*
- Everything relating to people and our relationships to one another is really about Him not us!
- Lawrence O. Richards says of man and creation, "Genesis 2 answers a basic question. What is the origin and nature of human beings? The answer is the we human beings are the special creation of God, made in His image and likeness. Our special creation gives each human being individual worth and value. Because God made us, and made us like Himself, you and I are precious beings.... The rest of the Bible demonstrates how important human beings truly are to God. Despite man's fall into sin, God continues to love. The Bible is the history of redemption, of God reaching out to humankind to rescue and save."<sup>5</sup>

(+5 min)

**Application 3:** Practice sharing what you have written and learned with one or two people in your small group or family member or friend.

(+3 min)

### Day 4: Revelations concerning God's plan for man's Redemption.

*This study has information for talking with someone about the gospel.*

1. Write a paragraph or two about God's "Redemption plan" found in Genesis 3:15. How would you use this verse to help you explain the gospel message to someone else? (These may be helpful: Luke 21:25-28; Ro. 3:21-26; Eph. 1:7 & 4:30). Here are some verses to help you encourage a person to have a personal relationship with Christ: Eph. 2:8-10; Col. 1:21-22; Acts 17:24-31; Romans 3:10-12, 20, 23; 1 John 1:8-10; John 14:6; Ro. 5:8-9; and Eph. 2:1-10.

- **These passages are for the first part of the question.**
- **Lk. 21:25-28** – *"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.<sup>26</sup> Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.<sup>27</sup> At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.<sup>28</sup> When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near"*
- **Ro. 3:21-26** – *"But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.<sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.<sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--<sup>26</sup> he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus"*

- **Eph. 1:7** – *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace”*
- **Eph. 4:30** – *“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”*
- God planned from the beginning a way to redeem His people and restore them to Himself.
- His redemption message begins in Gen. 3:15 and goes through to the end of Revelation.
- But His message doesn't end with us coming to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.
- That is just the beginning!
- Jesus Christ commanded that believers are to be ready to make disciples in all nations.
- Jesus says in **Matt. 28:19-20**, *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*
- This was not an option, He didn't say “if you feel like it,” or “if you want to,” but *“Therefore go...”*
- Many are hesitant to do this.
- Two thoughts on this: 1) We often have our authority out of kilter. We do not convert anyone, that is the work of the Holy Spirit. He must soften peoples hearts so they will at least listen to the gospel message; 2) Often we are hesitant because we don't do what Peter says we are to do in **1 Peter 3:15-17**, *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,<sup>16</sup> keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.<sup>17</sup> It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil”*
- We need to practice in a safe environment how to share with someone about the gospel message.
- Talking with someone about their salvation typically requires you to have their confidence.
- Rarely does someone come to Christ by someone sitting next to them in the mall and sharing the gospel with them.
- So our first step is to build an honest relationship with the person(s).
- When the Holy Spirit leads you to share the gospel, obey Him even if you are uncomfortable.
- Trust Him to give you the right words to say.
- You may want to have some passages marked in your Bible.
- The list given progresses nicely to possibly bringing them to a decision point (remember the Holy Spirit does the converting and enlightening, we just spread the seeds of scripture before them).
- Here is a progression of questions: **1)** Have you ever, as a definite event in your life, received Jesus as your Savior? (Eph. 2:8-9); **2)** Have you ever thanked the Lord Jesus because He died for yours sins on the Cross? (Col. 1:21-22); **3)** Do you know that God made you and keeps you? (Acts 17:24-31); **4)** Have you admitted to yourself and God that you are a sinner? (Romans 3:10-12, 20, 23); **5)** Have you confessed your sins, as much as possible, naming them explicitly? (1 John 1:8-10); **6)** Do you believe that Christ went to the Cross for you, taking your guilt and sins with Him? (John 14:6; Ro. 5:8-9); **7)** Do you believe Christ rose from the dead, conquering sin and death, and that He ascended to the Father in heaven to reign as Lord? (Eph. 2:1-10); at this point you may offer to pray with them.
- **These passages are for the above progression of questions:** (Note: other materials often used for sharing the gospel with people are *“The Four Spiritual Laws”* and *“The Roman Road.”* Both of these Bible tracks may be purchased at Christian book stores or Christian Book Distributors on the internet.)
- **Eph. 2:8-10** – *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

- **Col. 1:21-22** – “Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.<sup>22</sup> But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—”
- **Acts 17:24-31** – this passage is too long to place here – mark your Bible so you can get to it quickly.
- **Ro. 3:10-12, 20, 23** – “As it is written “There is no one righteous, not even one<sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.<sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one” and “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.” and “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
- **1 Jo. 1:8-10** – “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.<sup>10</sup> If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives”
- **Jo. 14:6** – “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”
- **Ro. 5:8-9** – “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.<sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!”
- **Eph. 2:1-10** – this passage is too long to place here – mark your Bible so you can get to it quickly.
- If you are given that wonderful and glorious opportunity to share and the person accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, your work is just beginning.
- From that point on you are to disciple them.
- Our resource center has some samples of very good materials to use to disciple someone.

(+9 min)

**Application 4:** Practice sharing what you have written and learned with one or two people in your small group or family member or friend.

(+4 min)

### Day 5: Revelations concerning the priority of God's Word.

1. Write a paragraph or two regarding the *priority God places on His Word*. What verses would you use from Genesis to help you explain what you have learned to someone else? (Verses that might give more insight: Ex. 24:7; Jos. 8:34-35; Neh. 8:2-3; Matt. 22:29; Mk. 12:10; Jn. 2:22, 7:38, 42; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.)
- **Ex. 24:7** – “Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey.””
  - **Jos. 8:34-35** – “Afterward, Joshua read all the words of the law--the blessings and the curses--just as it is written in the Book of the Law.<sup>35</sup> There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read to the whole assembly of Israel, including the women and children, and the aliens who lived among them”
  - **Neh. 8:2-3** – “So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand.<sup>3</sup> He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law”

- **Matt. 22:29** – “Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God”
- **Mk. 12:10** – “Haven't you read this scripture: " `The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone”
- **Jn. 2:22** – “After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken”
- **Jn. 7:38, 42** – “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him” and “Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David's family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?”
- **1 Tim. 4:13** – “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching”
- **2 Tim. 3:16-17** – “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
- We are encouraged to be in His Word daily, to learn the context of passages, and to see His consistency in Scripture.
- By doing this, we can have more confidence in correct interpretations and we can know false teachings.
- We are to give our time to learn more and more about Him.
- We cannot know Him if we do not spend time in His Word.
- You might have heard it said that “if we ate physical food the way we eat spiritual food (studying the Bible) we would starve the first week. One day a week of eating physical food isn’t enough and neither is one day of eating spiritual food.”
- Many of our priorities are incorrect but the priority for studying the Scriptures seems to be one of the lowest, or even nonexistent, for many people.
- Here are some suggestions for doing Bible study.
- **Leaders, you may want to copy this and give it out. Watch your time if you go over this with the group.**
- **To start**, one must have a proper approach: *prayer and reverence*. If we do not have the right attitude and mindset, we will not get much out of God's Word, because our will gets in the way of His!
- **A Prayer!** “Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law” (Psalm 119:18). This is the essential, first step to starting anything, especially studying of the Bible!
- **Attitude!** Have a good attitude based on seeking Christ rather than seeking self. Our minds must be clear and childlike before Him, because, when you read His Word, you are standing before the face of God-the Holy God! So, adjust to a good attitude and reverence for God and His Word.
- **Translation:** There are many translations of the Bible. Select a translation that is readable and is a reliable translation (some we recommend are: NIV, NASB, NKJV, Amplified, ESV).
- **Selection:** Select what you want to study, a verse, a book, or topic, whatever you wish to study.
- Read the entire text you want to study to give you “the big picture.” Skim the passage and keep in mind the question “what does this passage say as a whole?”
- Then look at the passage as if you were interviewing the Bible; ask it questions to get to know the story, just as a reporter or researcher does. Remembering whom you are interviewing is God's Most Holy Word in His Holy presence!
- **Leaders, you may want to copy the following and give it out to your group. Watch your time if you go over this with the group.**
- Some questions to always ask yourself as you study, think of the acronym SPECK:
- **S)** Is there a **Sin** for me to avoid? **P)** Is there a **Promise** to obey? **E)** Is there an **Example** for me to follow?  
**C)** Is there a **Command** for me to obey? **K)** Is there **Knowledge** about God or Jesus for me to learn?

- Make sure you trust and obey what God is telling you!
- Keep these things in mind as you study: read carefully; notice such things as people involved; situations/circumstances people are in; watch for repeated words/phrases; watch for changes in the theme or tempo of the story.
- Seek to discover the original intended meaning of a passage. Before we ask “what does this passage mean to me” we need to ask “what did this passage mean to the original readers/hearers.”
- A very important responsibility, as you study, is to be aware of the *context* in which things take place.
- Typically, the context is within a couple of verses or paragraphs, but sometimes, you may have to expand your reading to one or more other chapters.
- In rarer cases, you may have to read other books to pick up the true context of the subject matter.
- Also consider the literary context. What type of literature is this passage (poetic, historical narrative, a proverb, didactic teaching, apocalyptic...)?
- Study with purpose! Remember God is God and we are not!
- Be open to the Holy Spirit revealing the scripture to you as you read.
- Be sure to ask the primary question which is “What is God wanting to teach me?”
- This is where you are seeking conviction, and allowing the work of the Spirit, through His Word, to show you principles and precepts to apply to your life.
- Be aware that sometimes you may not like what is shown, but it is what you need to hear.
- Studying the Bible can be so exciting and rewarding. It is reassuring, a confidence builder, and your awareness of your relationship with God will become more apparent.
- Your spirit will be enlivened as you dig deeper trying to understand more and more.

**(+8 min)**

2. Write a prayer of thanksgiving for all that the Lord has revealed to you during this Genesis study. Thank Him for the many blessings you have received by doing this study. Thank Him for being who He is and for caring so much for you.

**(+2 min)**

**Application 5:** Practice sharing what you have written and learned with one or two people in your small group or family member or friend.

**(+3 min)**

### Closing Comments

- The closing comment from the development team is "AMEN to the Genesis study!"

### Closing Prayer

- You may have each person in your group contribute in a prayer of thanksgiving for what they have learned through this study.

**(+? min)**

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<sup>1</sup> A. W. Tozer, “The Knowledge of the Holy,” New York: Harper & Row publishers, 1961, pg. 34

<sup>2</sup> Same as #1 but on pg. 42

<sup>3</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, “With The Word The Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Handbook,” Nelson Publishing, 1991, ISBN 0-8407-9108-9, ppg. 13-14

<sup>4</sup> Max Lucado, “It’s Not About Me,” Integrity Publishing, 2004, ISBN 1-59145-042-X, pg. 3-9

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence O. Richards, “The Teacher’s Commentary,” Chariot Victor Publishing, 2000, ISBN 0-89693-810-7, pg.26