

RESCUE SUNDAY

God's Creation, Good and Very Good



GOD'S CREATION, GOOD AND VERY GOOD

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Study 1:

God's Creation, Good and Very Good

Have you ever been humbled by nature? Have you ever walked through a field of wildflowers, gazed at the grandeur of a mountain or watched a sunset and been reminded of how incredibly awesome God is and how small we are by comparison? It's humbling because it can cause us to consider our place in the world, our mortality and what really matters in life. It's very humbling! Creation reveals the glory of God and ought to lead us to worship the one that made it all! Yet, when we look at this world, we know it is beautifully flawed.

What do you feel in the face of injustice? That knot in your stomach, that anger, that thought that cries out: "This is not how it is supposed to be!" Helpless? Hopeless? Whether someone is vulnerable to being abused or taken advantage of by a person in power, a family living under the Henderson Poverty line or a child exploited through human trafficking—the injustice in our world can feel overwhelming and sinister. Where is God in the midst of this? Does God care about the rampant injustice that cripples us and our communities? If he does care, is he doing anything about it?

In the Christian worldview, justice is inherent in God's character and central to God's desires for the world. However, people who claim to follow Jesus haven't always reflected God's heart for justice; in fact, followers of Jesus throughout history have, at times, acted justly or loved mercy. So, what does the Bible really say about justice? This series will trace the theme of justice throughout the Bible and how we, as disciples of Jesus, must be ambassadors for justice with our time. We'll start at the beginning and ask: What was God's intention for our world?

DISCUSS:

- How would you define "justice"? What has shaped your understanding of justice?
- What injustices in the world grieve you? What makes you say, "This is not how things are supposed to be"?

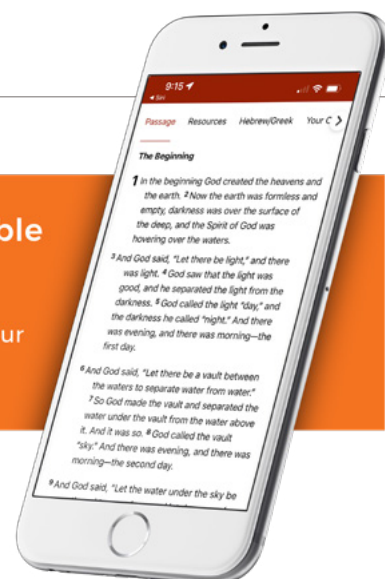
People across the earth are longing for Jesus's living water, thirsty for the freedom of His truth, searching for belonging, and yearning for Heaven's grace to heal and refresh their lives. And His invitation of love is available to all!

READ:

Genesis 1 is the very first chapter of the Bible. Look out for repetition, imagery, and contrasts in this poetic retelling of the creation of the world.

This is a long text, so listen with your visual imagination.

Grab your Bible
and open to
Genesis 1
or look it up on your
mobile device



DISCUSS:

- What is one thing that stands out to you in this description of creation?
- What relationships do you see in this text? What role do these relationships play in the ecosystem of creation? (Ecosystem: a complex network or interconnected system)
- What does it mean to be made in the image of God?
- God is a God of justice; how is God's justice evident in creation before the fall in Genesis 3?

Additional questions;

- What verbs are used to describe God's actions in the passage?
- How would you describe the relationship between Creator and creation?
- Humans are the only part of creation who are created in God's image and likeness. How do God's actions in the text bring deeper insight into God's instructions to the first people?
- The refrain "God saw that it was good" is repeated throughout the text. How might this frame or affect our understanding of justice?

SUMMARY + REFLECTION:

God speaks creation into being with intentionality and love. In this expansive ecosystem of flourishing, there is no lack. We see God's generosity, creativity, and heart of hospitality, ensuring that all creation is cared for. Creation is interconnected, and the world can thrive when these relationships are honoured and stewarded. Humanity finds unique dignity and purpose, made in the image and likeness of God, called to cultivate and create in a just world, just as God did.

This is God's intention for creation—that we would worship God in perfect relationship with each other and in the created order, where things are as they should be (we'll discuss the concept of "shalom" more next time!). Stewardship of creation leads to the flourishing of all. In contrast, abuse of creation or dishonouring the image of God in humanity are insults to God and acts of injustice. Genesis 1 is a window into the heart of God. In future weeks, we'll see how the world strays further from this beautiful picture of flourishing. Destiny Rescue seeks to bring God's justice through rescuing, restoring and reintegrating young lives that were exploited. Each child suffering under the weight of injustice matters to God, and together, we can see broken young lives restored in this beautifully flawed world as we stand up to be ambassadors of God's justice.

- **Take a minute to pause and listen;** ask God to highlight something from today's text or discussion. What emotions or thoughts arise? How might God be speaking to you?

APPLY:

Spiritual Practice: Breath Prayer

Breathing: it's easy to ignore this simple act that keeps us alive. This week, try a simple Breath Prayer, an ancient Christian prayer practice that helps us be attentive to our bodies and God, the giver of life and breath. Spiritual practices sustain and ground us in the long-term pursuit of justice.

At the start or end of your day, slow down for a few minutes and imagine the picture of Creation flourishing or go outside and look at creation and pray;

- As you inhale, pray aloud or in your mind: Creator God
- As you exhale, pray aloud or in your mind: Thank you for creation; I receive its beauty

For next time: Reflect + Share

Journal your responses to these questions, then share them with your group.

- What is God saying to you or your community through this passage?
- How was practising breath prayer for you?