



Unit 1 | Session 1

# GOD CREATED THE WORLD

## Genesis 1

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus is Lord over all of creation. The Son has always existed. The Bible says everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together. All of creation exists to bring God glory.

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did God create everything? God created everything for His glory and our good.

### KEY PASSAGE:

Psalm 19:1

### SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE:

Worship



## LEADER Bible Study

What is worship? For most of us, when we think of worship, we envision a gathering of people singing and praying. While singing and praying certainly are ways to worship, the Bible paints a fuller, even much more beautiful, picture of what worship is.

Worship first appears in our English Bibles in Genesis 22:5. God had called Abraham to take his son, his beloved son of promise, and offer him as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. After what was surely an agonizing three-day journey, Abraham, Isaac, and two servants reached the mountain. Abraham told the two servants to stay at the base of the mountain. He and Isaac would go to worship.

What follows is not a worship gathering like we might expect. There is no singing. No sermon. No offering plates passed. There is, however, a fresh encounter with God through which Abraham and Isaac would come to know God more deeply as they also refined their own faith in Him. This is at the heart of worship—drawing closer to God and celebrating who He is as we continue to be shaped in His image.

The Hebrew word for worship used in this passage is *shachah*, which means “to bow down.” To bow down before someone is to acknowledge their greatness and worth. When we worship God, we are in a very real

sense bowing down to Him. Our bowing down may be figurative or literal, but either way, we acknowledge that no one is greater and no one is more worthy than He.

In *Real Worship*, Warren Wiersbe wrote, “Worship is the believer’s response of all that they are—mind, emotions, will, body—to what God is and says and does.”<sup>1</sup> So while worship does include the elements of a worship service, it is much more than what we do as a body of believers when we gather. Worship involves every part of us, not just our mouths. And worship is not confined to a church building on certain hours of the week. Our very lives are to be marked by worship in all that we do at all times.

We begin with worship as our first spiritual discipline because in a way, all the other disciplines are rooted in this one. We read the Bible as an act of worship. We pray as an act of worship. We live with generosity as an act of worship. All of the disciplines, and everything else we do, is to be done with a heart that cries out to God, “Yes, Lord! You are truly worthy!” May our kids echo this cry throughout this unit and beyond.

**Worship:**  
celebrating the  
greatness of God  
through Jesus by  
the Holy Spirit.

1. Warren Wiersbe, *Real Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 26.



**PREPARE**

FOR THE SESSION

## PLAN the Session

- Pray, asking God to prepare your heart to teach and the hearts of kids to receive His Word.
- Read the Leader Bible Study and review the session plan.
- Decide which welcome activities to prepare for the unit.
- Familiarize yourself with *Learn the discipline* section enough to teach naturally.
- Organize discipleship groups, including a plan for new kids.
- Print a copy of *Live for God through discipleship* for each discipleship group leader.

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper, index cards, basket or bin.



**WELCOME**

### OPTION 1: Make key passage play cards

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ index cards

### OPTION 2: Play “Four Corners”

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

### OPTION 3: Create with raw materials

- ☐ various craft supplies, such as construction paper, chenille stems, yarn, cardboard tubes, pom-poms, stickers, googly eyes, beads, and so forth



**LEARN**

### Group Game: Practice charades

- ☐ basket or bag

### Group Activity: Look and listen to creation praise

#### God

- ☐ basket or bag



**LOVE**

### Option 2: Worship through drawing

- ☐ rhythm instruments (optional)



**LIVE**

### Get everyone talking

- ☐ toy microphone or item to represent a microphone (optional)
- ☐ inflatable beach ball (optional)
- ☐ permanent marker (optional)

### Discuss Learn time

- ☐ poster board or large sheet of paper (optional)
- ☐ blindfold (optional)



## **WELCOME** Kids (5-10 minutes)

Choose one or all of these activities to engage kids as they arrive. You may choose to prepare all activities to repeat throughout the unit or prepare a different activity to use each week.

### ☐ **OPTION 1: MAKE KEY PASSAGE PLAY CARDS**

» index cards, markers or pencils, Key Passage Poster

Invite children to write each word of the key passage and its reference on individual index cards. Encourage children to copy the words from the Key Passage Poster. Suggest children write their initial in the bottom corner of each card. Guide children to use these cards to play a memory game, matching game, or a card game, such as “Go Fish.” Keep each child’s cards in the room to use throughout the unit.

### ☐ **OPTION 2: PLAY “FOUR CORNERS”**

» Big Picture Question Poster

Designate a number, one through four, for each corner of the room. Choose a child to be the counter. Guide the counter to face a wall, close his eyes, and count to ten. As he counts, the rest of the group will quietly scatter to different corners. Once the counter reaches ten, he will call out the number of a corner then open his eyes. The counter will ask the children in that corner the big picture question, and they will respond with the answer. Choose another counter and continue to play as time allows.

### ☐ **OPTION 3: CREATE WITH RAW MATERIALS**

» Various craft supplies, such as construction paper, scissors, glue, tape, markers or colored pencils, chenille stems, yarn, cardboard tubes, magnets, pom-poms, stickers, googly eyes, beads, and so forth

Set out a variety of raw materials for children to use to create. Limit direction and encourage creativity. Consider switching out the available materials for each session.



## **LEARN** how to worship (15-20 minutes)

### **1 INTRODUCE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**

**What do you think about when you hear the word discipline? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ You may think of how your parents discipline you when you make wrong choices. You may think of a person who is described as disciplined. They are really good at living by a certain standard. ”

**What do you think about when we put the word spiritual in front of the word discipline—spiritual discipline? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ A spiritual discipline is a practice, or repeated action, we do to help us grow in love for God and godliness. ”

### **2 GROUP GAME: PRACTICE CHARADES**

Write the following words on strips of paper: baseball, piano, reading, drawing, dancing, singing. Place the strips in a basket or bag. Call up a volunteer to stand beside you. Invite the child to select a strip. Lead a volunteer to act out practicing that action while the rest of the group guesses what he or she is practicing. Reveal the answer after a few tries. Choose additional volunteers and repeat as time allows.

**SAY** “ If you want to be a baseball player, you have to practice. If you want to be a piano player, you have to practice. If you want to be a dancer, you have to practice. If you want to grow in love for God, you have to practice. ”

**SAY** “ To be a better baseball player, you may practice by running bases, catching fly balls, or hitting pitches in batting practice. To grow in godliness, we also practice in many different ways: reading the Bible, praying, worshiping, giving, serving, and so forth. These are some of the spiritual disciplines that followers of Jesus have done for many years to help them grow in love for God. Doing these things does not make God love us more. God loves us because of who He is, not what we do. These disciplines simply put us in a place to receive from God, and He changes us to be more like His Son, Jesus. When we do the work of showing up, He does the work of growing us to love Him more and be more like His Son, Jesus. ”

### **3 INTRODUCE THE DISCIPLINE OF WORSHIP**

**SAY** “ We will learn eight spiritual disciplines this year. For the first few weeks, we will learn about the discipline of worship. ”

**What would you say worship is? [Allow responses.]**





**SAY** “Worship is celebrating the greatness of God. We often think worship is just singing or praying, but we can celebrate God’s greatness in many different ways.”

**Does anyone remember what our Bible story was about this week? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “We learned about God creating the world. Let’s read that story from the Bible.”

#### 4 READ THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to Genesis 1. Tell kids to listen for phrases that repeat as you read Genesis 1:1-25. Adjust the number of verses you read based on the age and attention span of your group.

#### 5 CREATION AS A SONG

**What phrases did you hear over and over? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “‘And God said, ‘Let there be, and there was.’ ‘God saw that it was good.’ ‘There was an evening, and there was a morning.’ God sure did repeat Himself a lot! Was that on accident? No way! God meant to repeat Himself. As God created, it was almost as if He was singing a song, repeating the chorus of creation over and over again. Let’s listen to the chorus of creation.”

#### 6 GROUP ACTIVITY: LOOK AND LISTEN TO CREATION PRAISE GOD

Show photographs, sound effects, or videos of various natural elements. Ideas include ocean waves breaking, a brook babbling, thunder crashing, a lion roaring, a horse galloping, a bird tweeting, an owl hooting, crickets chirping, a blooming flower, or mountain peaks.

**SAY** “Did you see it? Did you hear it? Creation is praising God! It is as if they are saying, ‘Our Maker loves us! Our Maker says we are good! Our Maker enjoys us!’”

#### 7 CREATING BY SPEAKING

**Now, look at how God created. What did God use to create the world? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “Nothing! God created the world out of nothing at all. The only thing God used to create the world was His words. ‘God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.’ ‘God said, ‘Let there be an expanse between the waters,’ ... And it was so.’ ‘God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky,’ ... And it was so.’ God spoke His Word and it happened.”

#### 8 CHRIST CONNECTION

Open a Bible to John 1. Tell kids to listen for something they heard in the creation story as you read John 1:1-5, 10-12.

**SAY** “Did you notice that? The first three words of the Book of Genesis are the same first three words of the Book of John—in the beginning. John says in the beginning was the Word.”



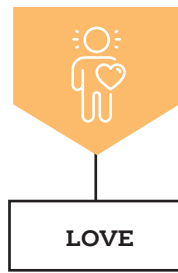
**What is the Word these verses are talking about? Maybe a better question is who is the Word? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ Jesus! Jesus is the Word. Jesus was with God in the beginning. He is Lord over all of creation. Jesus is God the Son, and He has always existed. Everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together. All of creation exists to bring God glory. Because of Jesus, we can join the song of creation. Our Maker loves us and sent His Son to rescue us! In Jesus, our Maker looks at us and says we are good! We can worship God and give Him glory through Jesus. ”

### **9 CLOSE IN PRAYER**

Use the scripted prayer below or pray in your own words.

**SAY** “ God, You are our Creator, our Maker. We worship You. You made all things, and You created them good. That includes us! Help us to enjoy Your creation with You and give You glory as we do. Thank You for sending Jesus, the Word of God, to rescue us from sin. Help us follow Him. Amen. ”



## **LOVE** God by practicing worship (10-15 minutes)

Lead children to choose one of these two options as a way to practice the spiritual discipline of worship.

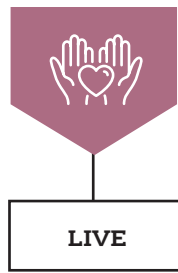
### ☐ **OPTION 1: WORSHIP THROUGH DRAWING**

Offer children paper and markers or colored pencils. Guide children to draw something God created in the creation story. Suggest children think about God and praise Him for His greatness as they draw. Lead children to write God, I worship You as Creator. on their papers. Ask a child to share what they drew as they feel comfortable.

### ☐ **OPTION 2: WORSHIP THROUGH WRITING**

Form groups of two to three children. Invite each group to work together to write lyrics to a song or lines to a poem to worship God. Suggest children choose one part or all of the creation story as their inspiration. Consider offering children rhythm instruments to play their song.





## **LIVE** for God through discipleship (20-30 minutes)

Form groups ideally of no more than five children and one adult leader. Prioritize forming groups according to gender first, then age. Adult leaders should never be alone with children.

### **1 EMPHASIZE GOSPEL SAFETY**

Explain that discipleship time is a sacred time because we share the deep things in our hearts with one another. All must work together to create a safe place. Consider these three rules:

1. Listen when someone is talking.
2. Only comment when the person sharing invites you to do so.
3. In general, what is shared in the group should stay in the group. Only speak to a trusted adult if it would help the person who shared.

Note: Be sure to follow local laws and ministry policies concerning any report or suspicion of abuse or neglect.

### **2 GET EVERYONE TALKING**

Choose one of the options below to encourage children to engage with one another.

#### ☐ **OPTION 1: SHARE HIGHS AND LOWS**

Sit in a circle. Tell something that was a high point and something that was a low point of your week. Model honesty and vulnerability in an age-appropriate way. Then go around the circle, inviting each child to share his or her high and low.

#### ☐ **OPTION 2: PASS THE MIC**

Use a toy microphone or another item to represent a microphone. Ask a question, such as “What is your favorite color and why?” “What is something you do most Saturdays?” or “If you could be an animal, which one would you choose?” Ask and answer the question yourself and then pass the microphone to a child to invite him to answer. After answering, that child will pass the microphone to another child, and so forth.

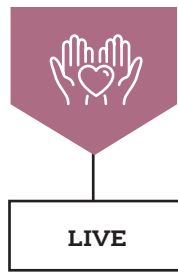
#### ☐ **OPTION 3: TOSS A BEACH BALL**

Before the session, inflate a beach ball. Use a permanent marker to write a question in each section of a ball. Toss the ball to a child. Invite her to answer the question in the section that her left thumb touches. Continue tossing the ball until each child has had a turn.

### **3 DISCUSS LEARN TIME**

Choose an option below to engage kids with the following questions.

1. What is something you learned today?
2. Name ways you see creation worship God. How can you worship God?
3. How do you think God is calling you to respond to what you learned?



#### ☐ **OPTION 1: PICK A CARD**

Write each question on an index card. Fan the cards in your hand where kids cannot see the questions. Invite a kid to pick a card and answer the question.

#### ☐ **OPTION 2: DRAW A QUESTION**

Write each question on a slip of paper. Fold the papers and place them in a basket or bin. Invite children to take turns drawing a question and answering it.

#### ☐ **OPTION 3: PIN THE FINGER ON THE QUESTION**

Write the questions on poster board and display them on a wall. Invite a child to wear a blindfold or close his eyes. Spin him around three times and guide him to touch the poster board. Remove the blindfold. Lead him to answer the question his finger landed closest to.

### **4 WALK IN THE LIGHT**

Read 1 John 1:7. Explain that this is a time for honesty with one another as we answer the questions: What is not working in your life this week? How are you struggling to honor God with your life? Guide children not to offer advice or try to fix the problem but simply to pray.

Answer the question or confess sin in an age-appropriate way to model confession. Ask a volunteer to pray for you. Choose one of the following ways to lead children to walk in the light. Do not force a child to share or pray.

- Form a circle. Go around the circle, giving each child an opportunity to share what they are struggling with. Ask a volunteer to pray for him or her.
- Form pairs. Guide each pair to take turns sharing and praying for each other.
- Give each child a sheet of paper. Allow children to write or draw their answer to the question. Mix up the papers and distribute one to each child to pray for silently.

### **5 COMPETE TO SHOW HONOR**

Read Romans 12:10. Invite children to “outdo” one another in showing each other honor. Begin by telling a child you want to honor him or her. Say a specific way you see God at work in his or her life. Be prepared to help kids share meaningful encouragement to one another. Choose one of the following ways to lead children in competing to show honor.

- Allow children to take turns honoring one another as they choose.
- Choose one child to honor for the day. Allow the rest of the group to take turns honoring that child.
- Guide each child to write her name at the top of a sheet of paper. Lead children to pass their paper to the child next to them. That child must write or draw a way to honor the child whose name is on the paper. Continue passing the papers after a given amount of time until each child’s paper is returned to them.

### **6 WEEKLY CHALLENGE:**

End by challenging kids to spend time outside worshipping God for His creation this week.