

Small Group Guide

Origins: The Roots of Our Faith

Week 1 — In the Beginning, God

Introduction

This week Pastor Mark launched a new series called Origins, taking us back to the very beginning of all things. The central question of the sermon was simple but profound: how do we know where we came from? And the answer is equally simple and profound: we look to the one who was there. This guide is designed to help your group go deeper into the ideas from Sunday morning, share honestly with one another, and apply these truths to everyday life.

Key Takeaways

- God is the only witness to the origin of all things, and he has chosen to reveal himself to us rather than leave us in the dark.
- God has revealed himself in four key ways: through creation, through an inner witness in every human heart, through the written word of Scripture, and through the person of Jesus Christ.
- The opening word of Genesis, bereshit, points us to a beginning that was initiated by God alone, and the name Elohim carries both a singular and plural quality that points toward the nature of the triune God.
- Jesus, referred to in John 1 as the Logos, the Word, was present and active at creation. He is not merely a concept or a principle but a person.
- Scripture is God-breathed and completely reliable. It is not the product of human imagination but of men carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- God has placed eternity in the human heart, meaning every person has an innate awareness that points them toward their creator.
- Our families and our homes are a primary place where faith is to be passed on, practiced, and lived out together.

Opening Question

Start here before diving into the discussion questions. Keep it light and use it to get everyone talking.

- How far back can you trace your family history? What is one thing you know about a generation before your grandparents, and how did you come to know it?

Discussion Questions

On Knowing Our Origins

1. Pastor Mark pointed out that everything we know about history before our own lifetime depends on records, testimony, and the accounts of others. Why do you think it matters that we have a trustworthy source for what happened at the very beginning of all things? What would be at stake if we did not?
2. He described the Bible as revelation, meaning information God has chosen to disclose to us that we could not arrive at on our own. Does that idea change the way you think about reading Scripture? Why or why not?

On God Revealing Himself Through Creation

3. Read Psalm 19:1 together. Pastor Mark used the illustration of seeing a sports car and knowing instinctively that it had a designer. Where in your own life, in nature or in the world around you, have you most clearly sensed the presence of a creator? What was that experience like?
4. Pastor Mark said that when we look at the smallest molecules in our bodies and the vastness of the universe, both cry out that there is a God and a designer. Do you find that kind of evidence for God compelling? Are there people in your life who do not? How do you have that conversation?

On the Inner Witness

5. Romans 1:20 says that God's invisible qualities have been clearly seen since creation, so that people are without excuse. Ecclesiastes 3:11 describes a mysterious longing God has planted in every human heart that nothing under the sun can satisfy except God himself. Have you experienced that longing? What did it feel like before you understood what it was pointing toward?
6. Pastor Mark shared that when he first encountered Jesus at a Friday night youth program, he did not fully understand what was happening, but he experienced peace and love unlike anything he had known before. Has there been a moment in your life where God felt undeniably real, even if you could not fully explain it at the time? Would anyone be willing to share that story?

On Scripture

7. Second Timothy 3:15-17 describes Scripture as God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. In practical terms, what does it look like for you personally to treat the Bible as a living and authoritative word rather than simply an interesting historical document?

8. Pastor Mark challenged parents to open the Scriptures with their children rather than keeping personal devotional time separate from family life. Whether or not you have children at home, what is one environment in your life, a household, a friendship, a workplace, where you could be more intentional about bringing the word of God into everyday conversation?

On Jesus as the Logos

9. In John 1, Jesus is called the Logos, the Word, and Pastor Mark explained that ancient Greek philosophers were already searching for an eternal truth or principle to organize life around. He said the Apostle John was essentially telling them: you are right that such a Logos exists, but it is not an abstract idea. It is a person. How does it change things for you personally to know that ultimate truth is not a concept but a relationship?
10. Colossians 1:15-20 describes Jesus as the image of the invisible God, the one through whom all things were created and in whom all things hold together. What does it mean to you that the same person who spoke the universe into existence also gave his life for you?

Reflection and Application

Take a few minutes individually before sharing with the group.

- Of the four ways God has revealed himself, which one has been most significant in your own journey of faith, and which one do you feel you have been neglecting lately?
- Pastor Mark said that God has sent us on a pursuit of him, and he prayed that each person would have a fresh encounter with God this fall that would increase hunger and thirst for the things of God. What would it look like for you to actively pursue God this week rather than wait passively?
- He challenged every person in the room, whether an individual, a couple, or a family, to engage with Scripture together rather than in isolation. What is one concrete step you can take this week to make that happen?

Practical Commitments

Invite each group member to choose one of the following commitments for the coming week. Share your choice with the group so you can follow up next time.

- Begin reading the book of Genesis and track with the Origins series over the coming weeks.
- Set aside one meal this week where you open Scripture with someone in your household, whether a spouse, a child, a roommate, or a friend.

- Identify one person in your life who is searching for meaning or truth and pray specifically for them each day this week, asking God to reveal himself to them.
- Come to Alpha and explore the reliability and origins of the Bible in a setting where questions are welcome.
- Write down your own origin story of faith, the moment or season when God first became real to you, and consider sharing it with someone this week.

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying as a group. You may want to use the following as a guide, or pray in your own words.

Father, we thank you that you have not left us in the dark. You have revealed yourself through the beauty of creation, through the longing you have placed in every human heart, through your written word, and most fully through the person of Jesus. We confess that we do not always treat these gifts with the attention and gratitude they deserve. We ask you to increase our hunger for you this season. Help us to open your word not just in private but with the people around us. And Lord, give each one of us a fresh encounter with you that sends us on a deeper pursuit of who you are. In the name of Jesus, the Logos, the living Word, amen.

Looking Ahead

Next week the Origins series continues in the book of Genesis. Consider reading Genesis chapters 1 through 3 before the next gathering so your group can come prepared to discuss what God reveals about himself, about humanity, and about the world he made.