



Week 4: Time

For the week of May 24, 2020

This guide and all original content was developed by Rev. Chris Heckert and Rev. JiSun Yang. Other sources and references are cited throughout the guide and are the works of those individuals.





Session Purpose

In this session, we will look at the wonders of time, which is relative and absolute, temporal and eternal. We will explore both the meaning of time and the timelessness of God's work. Also, this group discussion will help us find the wisdom of contentment in our daily life.

Welcome your group. Light a candle to begin your time together. Take a moment for silent reflection (up to one minute), then invite someone in the group to open with this prayer:

"God of creation, thank you for being our God, making all things good in your time. Thank you for this day, given to us to enjoy every moment. Help us experience your faithfulness, goodness, and presence, which transcends time. Bless us with your wisdom to be humble and patient as we walk through life during this season. Amen."

Go around your group and share your responses to the following conversation starter:

Share your favorite story
about time (movie,
song, book, etc.).





Invite someone to read Genesis 1:26-31 aloud:

Genesis 1:26-31

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." ²⁷So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

²⁹God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.



³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

In response to the Scripture you read as a group, use these questions to reflect upon what the text is saying:

Questions:

1. In verse 26, God is described with plural terms ("Let **us** make...", "according to **our** likeness..."). Does this plural form impact your understanding of God?
2. According to verse 26, humankind was created in God's own image and God's likeness, but that doesn't mean we are equal to God. What do you think about the image of God being inscribed on us?



Invite someone to read Ecclesiastes 3:9-15 aloud and then discuss the following questions:

Ecclesiastes 3:9-15

⁹What gain have the workers from their toil? ¹⁰I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with.

¹¹He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. ¹²I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; ¹³moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. ¹⁴I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. ¹⁵That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.

Questions:

1. What does the author know about life and time in this text?
2. How does this text speak to you today?





Invite someone to read 2 Peter 3:8-10 aloud:

2 Peter 3:8-10

⁸But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.

⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

In response to the text you read as a group, use this question to reflect upon what the text is saying:

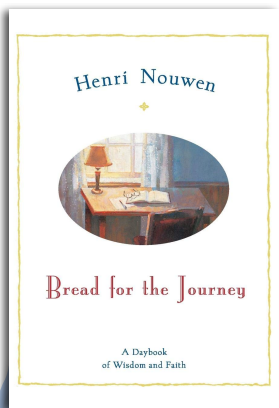
Question:

1. According to verse 8, the sense of time for God and us is very different. How can you relate this to the season we are in right now?





Invite someone to read aloud the following excerpt from Henri Nouwen's "Bread for the Journey":



The Fullness of Time

Jesus came in the fullness of time. He will come again in the fullness of time. Wherever Jesus, the Christ, is the time is brought to its fullness.

We often experience our time as empty. We hope that tomorrow, next week, next month, or next year the real things will happen. But sometimes we experience the fullness of time. That is when it seems that time stands still; that past, present, and future become one; that everything is present where we are; and that God, we, and all that is have come together in total unity. This is the experience of God's time. "When the completion of the time came [that is, in the fullness of time], God sent his Son, born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4), and in the fullness of time God will "bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth" (Ephesians 1:10). It is in the fullness of time that we meet God.

Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*. (San Francisco:California: HarperOne, 1996, 2006), Kindle location 4001 of 4215.

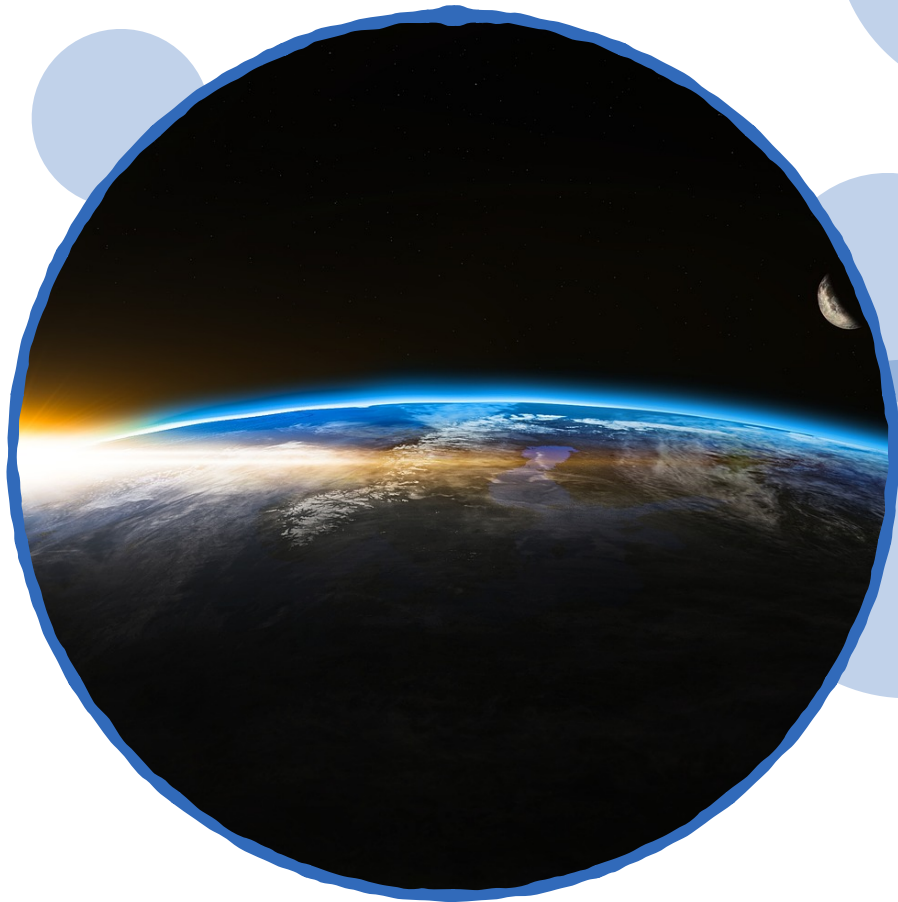


Use the following questions to reflect upon the implications of what the text says:

Questions:

1. What resonates with you about this quote?
2. Share how we can stand still and be patient in waiting for the fullness of God's time today.





Close your time together in prayer. Take some time to share prayer requests by asking the following question, then invite someone to close in prayer.

How can we be in prayer for each other?



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