



Week 3: Space

For the week of May 17, 2020

This guide and all original content was developed by Rev. Chris Heckert and Ken Hall.
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 the universe beyond our planet, and how looking up can give us a greater sense of perspective and gratitude. We will explore how much our knowledge of the universe has grown in the past century, and yet how much is still unknown. In all of this, God is a mystery as creator, but God is known as our redeemer, through the person of Jesus Christ.

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:

"Creator God, you made the universe and everything in it, and called it good. Thank you for the gifts in our lives and for loving us as we are. Help us to look up, and see beyond our own problems, worries, fears, and preoccupations, and see that we are but a part of the grand design you have set into motion. Help us to be in wonder of the works of your hands, and to find gratitude for the gift of life. Amen."

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

What is the most
interesting, or puzzling
thing you have ever
learned, or read about
space?





Invite someone to read Genesis 1:14-19 aloud:

Genesis 1:14-19

¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.



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

Questions:

1. When we look at creation, we often feel small by comparison. Do you feel you take space for granted?
2. Do you feel gratitude, humility, or other feelings when thinking about space?



Invite someone to read Psalm 8:1-9 aloud:

Psalm 8:1-9

¹O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

²Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.


³When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;

⁴what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

⁵Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.

⁶You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet,





⁷all sheep and oxen, and also the
beasts of the field, ⁸the birds of the air,
and the fish of the sea, whatever
passes along the paths of the seas.

⁹O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is
your name in all the earth!

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

Question:

1. Despite our smallness, God created us only a little lower than Himself and the angels. God gave us tremendous authority - to be in charge of the whole earth. In order to be accountable to God, what responsibility comes with this authority?



John 1:1-5

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

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

Question:

1. Jesus is the creator of life, and his life brings light to humankind. He has existed since the beginning. God made so much more than we can imagine. What evidence do you have that you are important to God?






Discuss the following points from Rev. Chris Heckert's sermon, "Space."

Space is vast. Locality gives us a sense of vision of our place in the universe. The current pandemic has resulted in much to be concerned about. We do not need to be in control of everything. How can understanding our place in the universe give us some perspective with our current situation?

We are subjects of our environment. The earth revolves around the sun, and this affects so many aspects of our lives - seasons, mood, etc. God is a God of systems and laws of physics. Technology is helping us understand things that have always been there (i.e., gravity, black holes, dark matter, etc.). What new knowledge about space has been developed over the years that helps you understand God's order and planning? Do we have to choose between faith and science?





Space should remind us that God is enormous and also present in every cell and atom. Our presence is a miracle. God never neglects us. We are loved because God chose us. Perfect love casts out fear. We are loved and called to love. What do you see when you look up, and does this reinforce your understanding of locality? Can the mysteries of the universe help us understand God's love and help us more fully love our neighbor?

Click the link below or visit YouTube to watch *How Great Thou Art* performed by Chris Rice. As you listen, look up and think about the stars, the galaxies, and all the wonders of space.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cc0QVWzCv9k>





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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