

THE BEGINNING

CREATION

FALL

Lesson 01

SEPTEMBER 07, 2025

LESSON TEXT

Genesis 1–2

FOCUS VERSES

Genesis 1:27–28

²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

²⁸And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

TRUTH ABOUT COVENANT

God created the world for us and wants to be in covenant with us.

MY RESPONSE TO COVENANT

I will accept God's invitation to covenant.

COVENANT CONTEXT

Upon creating the world, including a Paradise for humanity to dwell, God invited us into a covenant relationship with Him.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: Growing up, how did your family divvy up typical household chores, such as mowing the grass, doing the dishes, or taking out the trash?

Teacher Tip: Connect the group's answers and indicate that in today's lesson we will talk about our responsibilities as part of the family of God.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection.

I. HUMANITY IN CREATION

A. God, the Only Creator

B. Adam and Eve, the Crown of Creation

- C. I will embrace the relationships and roles God has created for me.

DISCUSS: *How can you use your two greatest skills or abilities for the work of God?*

II. HUMANITY IN THE GARDEN

- A. Adam, the Lonely Man

DISCUSS: *Why is fellowship (especially with those of “like precious faith”) so important?*

- B. Eve, the Perfect Helper (V)

DISCUSS: *In addition to marriage, in what other areas of life are partnership-style relationships beneficial?*

- C. I will be a help to everyone.

DISCUSS: *How can we better serve one another so we can better serve God’s mission for our local church?*

III. CREATION AND COVENANT

- A. Creation, a Two-Step Process

- B. Life in Covenant

- C. I will accept God’s invitation into covenant.

Internalizing the Message (I)

DISCUSS: *How could lessons you learned while doing chores help you in areas where you struggle in your walk with God?*

PRAYER FOCUS

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For us to learn to serve God motivated by gratitude and a desire for a deeper relationship with Him
- For God to help us find ways to use our gifts to support one another and advance the Kingdom

LESSON CONNECTION

“It’s time to do your chores.” There are few more dreaded words in a child’s vocabulary. The word *chore* has become synonymous with drudgery and boredom. Perhaps you’ve heard a coworker complain, “Man, getting that report completed was such a chore.” In American society, household chores have been predominantly women’s domain. As late as 2015, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that women still spent twice as much time on household chores as men (businessinsider.com). However, that is changing, especially as automation takes on a more prominent role in domestic life. For example:

- It is estimated that seventy-eight million American households had a robotic vacuum cleaner as of 2024 (coolest-gadgets.com).
- As of 2014, 72 percent of American households used automatic car washes (up from 47 percent in 1994).
- As of 2010, American household spending on “food away from home” surpassed spending on “food at home,” rising to 50.2 percent (USDA Economic Research Service).

As much as most of us grew up hating—or at least trying to get out of—chores, they became a fundamental part of our core family memories. Many times they served as unofficial “rites of passage.” Remember the first time your parent gave you the responsibility to mow the lawn or to drive to the store to pick up some milk? Doing chores is a key part of growing up.

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, “Children who do chores may exhibit higher self-esteem, be more responsible, and be better equipped to deal with frustration, adversity, and delayed gratification,” all key components of “greater success in school, work, and relationships.” In ways we could never articulate in the midst of all our complaining, our household chores told us we belonged and had a job to do. To put it another way, chores gave us identity, purpose, and even security, all of which are fundamental to a healthy outlook on life.

Today’s lesson will focus on the biblical account of Creation, especially on the roles and responsibilities God assigned to Adam and Eve within it. Contrary to the “cosmic accident” modern evolutionary theory, the Bible teaches that humanity was created for a distinct and noble purpose within a carefully-ordered creation wrought by the hand of our loving God for our enjoyment and for His glory.

While it is almost a certainty there were aspects of “garden keeping” Adam and Eve may not have found all that enjoyable, life in the original Eden was the apex of humanity’s existence and is still our model for God’s highest purpose for human life. If we are ever to recover from the trauma of the Fall, we must look back to that original story for guidance and hope.

BIBLE LESSON

I. HUMANITY IN CREATION

A. God, the Only Creator

To understand the claims of the Genesis 1 Creation story, we must first consider a bit of the cultural background. No idea like Darwin’s theory of evolution existed when Moses recorded the Creation story. No one believed the universe “just happened” after a “Big Bang”; everyone knew God created everything that existed. Furthermore, given the vastness and variety of creation, it was impossible (so Moses’ Egyptian contemporaries thought) that this was all the product of one deity; surely it had to be the product of multiple divine beings working in concert. As those deities worked around the cosmic clock, almost all ancient creation myths contain some version of a battle between the gods and the forces of chaos, usually depicted as some sort of monster, like a great sea dragon.

But every one of these faulty assumptions is upended in the first few verses of Genesis 1: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”—all by Himself (Genesis 1:1). There is no mention of any other deities partnering in the project. That’s the first shock, setting up an even greater surprise: “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light” (Genesis 1:3). No sea dragons, no bloody battle—just one God who spoke, and it happened just as He said.

B. Adam and Eve, the Crown of Creation

But this story of Creation reserves its greatest surprise for the end. It presents God as building His creation layer

upon layer. First came the alternation of light and darkness, called “day” and “night” (the passage of time), then the sky, then the sea and land, and so on. At the end of each stage, God called it good. God was clearly pleased, but He still kept working.

Finally on the sixth day, after He had spoken skies and stars and plants and trees into being, God scooped up a handful of His newly formed earth (Hebrew *adamah*) and began to sculpt it into an “image” of Himself, male and female, that He called human (Hebrew *adam*). Then the story declares: “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). Only then did He stop working and rest.

Clearly God, who had been working tirelessly for days on end, had achieved something significant. In fact we must assume He rested on the seventh day not because He was tired but because He had achieved His primary goal: to make someone in His image and likeness with whom He could have a covenant relationship.

Let’s talk about this word *covenant*. Maybe you’ve heard it around the church or from Christians in general, but what is it? A covenant means a sacred pact between two parties where each makes a binding commitment of what they will contribute to create a holy relationship. This year we’re going to be studying how all of the Bible points toward God’s desire to be in this special covenant relationship with us.

If you wonder what motivated God to create in the first place, it was a desire for fellowship—to have someone to love and to be loved in return. To signify the uniqueness of humanity’s relationship with Him, God granted them dominion, sharing His authority so they could rule with Him, caring for creation in their role as His representatives.

C. I will embrace the roles and relationships God has created for me.

What is true of those first two humans—Adam and Eve—is true of every one of us. We are all created for a relationship with God and a unique role within the world He has made for us. We all have a list of “chores”—tasks assigned to us and to no one else. But these are not mundane things like taking out the trash or washing the dishes—things anyone else could do. No, these are things we were specifically designed to do, things only we can do.

DISCUSS: *How can you use your two greatest skills or abilities for the work of God?*

II. HUMANITY IN THE GARDEN

A. Adam, the Lonely Man

At the end of Genesis 1, God was clearly chuffed with everything (as the British would say). Everything He had done was good, and the overall result was very good, and as we enter Genesis 2, God turned His attention to building a home for His image bearer, Adam. This home was the famed Garden of Eden, earth’s first and last true Paradise. Given the idyllic setting, it was all the more alarming when God suddenly pronounced: “It is not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18). Adam was created in God’s image so he could share fellowship with God, but that meant Adam also needed fellowship with another human—one who was like him.

DISCUSS: *Why is fellowship (especially with those of “like precious faith”) so important?*

B. Eve, the Perfect Helper

It seems Adam himself may not have realized this was a problem...yet. But God, who as Creator can never be perplexed by any problem, already had a plan in place. God brought before Adam all the creatures He had made, probably not to see if one would work as Adam's companion—God knew none would—but to let Adam know that no one but God could provide a suitable companion. Eve was a divine gift to Adam, perfectly matched to meet his needs. This is emphasized in a couple ways: First, Eve was created from Adam (specifically, from his side). In a catchy hook to the world's first love song, Adam called Eve "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23).

Second, Eve was created as Adam's help, who was meet (matched) to him. This phrase has been corrupted in some circles into a compound word "helpmeet," which risks glossing over the crucial reason for God creating Eve. In his commentary on Genesis, John Skinner notes that the word translated "meet" literally means "in front of him," that is "corresponding to him" (John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*). The emphasis is on Eve's equality to Adam; she was Adam's partner, not his servant.

At key points in the Book of Psalms, this term "help" becomes an image of God's covenantal relationship with humanity. For example, in Psalm 54:4, the psalmist cried out: "Behold, God is mine helper." Even more famously, Psalm 46:1 declared: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Adam was not the only one created in the image of God; Adam and Eve together (male and female) comprised the totality of God's divine image. In fact, God called them together "Adam." (See Genesis 1:27; 5:2.)

DISCUSS: *In addition to marriage, in what other areas of life are partnership-style relationships beneficial?*

C. I will be a help to everyone.

In the same way God shared His dominion over creation with humanity, calling us into a covenant partnership with Him in caring for His gift of creation, Adam and Eve were called to live in covenant relationship with one another, likewise partnering and sharing power and responsibility. Adam and Eve were incomplete without each other; they needed to work together to fulfill the massive task allotted to them: keeping God's gift of the Garden.

In the same way, the mission and calling God has given us is not designed to be fulfilled on our own, but as part of His body, the church. Remember, Jesus' command to go and make disciples was given corporately to all the disciples, not just to Peter or Jesus' inner circle. The Great Commission is a group project (Matthew 28:19). Not only do I need to rely on my brothers and sisters to help me achieve my goals, but more importantly, I need to be the kind of brother (or sister) who supports others in their pursuit of God's purpose.

DISCUSS: *How can we better serve one another so we can better serve God's mission for our local church?*

III. CREATION AND COVENANT

A. Creation, A Two-Step Process

In his book entitled *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, John Walton points to the two-step

process of separating and then naming in Genesis 1. By creating clear distinctions, God gave the empty void definite forms. Then, by assigning specific names, He gave those new forms distinctive functions. At first God created light by separating light from darkness. God then named the light “day” and the darkness “night” (Genesis 1:4–5). In modern scientific terms, God created the space-time continuum.

The separation and naming process continued: the waters under the heaven were separated from the waters above, creating heavens and seas. Then the waters below were gathered together, so dry land (called “earth”) appeared (Genesis 1:9–10). In the latter half of Creation week, the function of these new forms was made clear; they were to be homes for different creatures. Some scholars even argue that Genesis 1 gives us a rather advanced understanding of plants and animals, especially in its time.

B. Life in Covenant

Although the word “covenant” is not found in the Creation story, it is clear God was already establishing His desire to be in covenant with His people. This covenantal way of life described in the rest of the Old Testament is the only way to live harmoniously with God’s creation. Like the rest of His creation, life in covenant is marked first by acts of separation and then by acts of naming.

Examples abound throughout Scripture. In Genesis 12 God called Abram to separate himself from his pagan culture by leaving his “country,...kindred, and...father’s house” (Genesis 12:1). However, even after Abram obeyed, God still gave him and Sarai new names in order to mark the couple’s new function as nation-makers even though they would be barren for a long time. Millennia later, from the window of an upper room likely overlooking the Temple courtyard, a newly Spirit-filled and emboldened former fisherman named Peter called his hearers to separation from the world through repenting of their sins and taking on themselves the name of Jesus through water baptism (Acts 2:38).

C. I will accept God’s invitation into covenant.

These examples highlight another important reality of salvation: covenant with God is corporate and individual. As with the call to Abraham, the call to covenant is extended to each individual person. The choice to join God in covenant relationship will always come to the individual; no one else can make that choice for you. However, as with Peter’s new-birth message, accepting God’s individual call brings each individual into fellowship with the body of Christ. Covenant teaches us that we have more than just a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (as vital as that is); we also have a relationship with His body, the church, a relationship that is also vital to our spiritual health.

God’s gracious invitation to covenant relationship with Him and His church is a saving call because it is simultaneously a call “*out of*” sin and the depravity of a fallen world and a call “*into*” a renewed life established on God’s original purpose and design (covenant). Without both aspects, we cannot experience true salvation; we will either become completely isolated from the world or totally assimilated into it. But when we enter into covenant with God, we receive both an identity and a responsibility that allow us to be, as Jesus said, “in” the world but not “of” the world (John 17:14–16).

Teacher Option: Share the information below or a story of your own to illustrate the value of turning from anything

that would break covenant with God.

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

DISCUSS: *How could lessons you learned while doing chores help you in areas where you struggle in your walk with God?*

What is the worst chore in the world? Andrew, an East Coast father of an elementary school student, thinks he has discovered it. It all came about when his daughter came down with a miserable cough and a significant fever. As Andrew took care of her, he wondered aloud how she had become so sick. Soon he learned that his seven-year-old daughter had been selected to walk sick students from class to the school clinic. This father was more than a little frustrated to discover his daughter had been guiding hacking, flu-ridden students to the clinic the first several weeks of school as the kids swapped viruses and bacteria with each other. Surely his daughter was doing the worst chore in the world. Andrew successfully lobbied to have her chores exchanged for something more OSHA-compliant.

In her 2015 TED Talk, Julie Lythcott-Haims, former Dean of Stanford University, boldly asserted: “Professional success in life...comes from having done chores as a kid.” All parents know the tricky part is how to motivate their children to do their chores. There are two main approaches: transactional and relational. In the transactional approach, the child earns points, stars, or even money they can exchange for rewards or privileges. This system relies on extrinsic motivation: the child isn’t doing chores because chores are good; the child is doing chores for a reward. Over time this approach makes children more selfish and unwilling to help “for free” (parentingforbrain.com).

However, it is possible children with strong relationships with their parents will do chores just to spend time with Mom or Dad. This seems to be the default setting of early childhood. Many young toddlers enjoy pretending to do chores, and research has shown that children as young as fourteen months can offer help spontaneously without seeking a prize or reward. Usually a transactional system guarantees faster results, but once the list of chores is finished, that child will stop helping unless an additional or greater reward is offered. A relational approach takes more time and effort on the parents’ part, but it builds tighter family bonds and better character in the long run. Children learn generosity and kindness.

God gave Adam and Eve a really big chore. But by inviting them into a covenantal relationship, God chose the relational approach to motivating them; God walked with Adam in the Garden “in the cool of the day.” God did not want Adam and Eve to care for the Garden simply for the reward of eternal life; He wanted them to do so just because He wanted to spend time with them because He loved them.

The same is true today. Yes, God has a “chore” for you—a job, a calling, a responsibility for which He has specifically designed you. But God doesn’t just love you for what you can do for Him; He loves you because you are you. You are His child, loved with a love as deep as Calvary and as passionate as Pentecost. He wants to be in relationship with You, to be with you through life’s thick and thin, to partner with you in the call He has for you to answer, to celebrate your successes, and to help you grow stronger through the setbacks. He’s just waiting for you to say yes to Him today.