Genesis Reloaded: Uncovering the Story of Redemption

Bible Study That Builds Christian Community
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Core Values

Community: The purpose of this curriculum is to build community within the body of believers around Jesus Christ.

Group Process: To build community, the curriculum must be designed to take a group through a step-by-step process of sharing your story with one another.

Interactive Bible Study: To share your “story,” the approach to Scripture in the curriculum needs to be open-ended and right-brained—to “level the playing field” and encourage everyone to share.

Developmental Stages: To provide a healthy program in the life cycle of a group, the curriculum needs to offer courses on three levels of commitment:

1. Beginner Level—low-level entry, high structure, to level the playing field;
2. Growth Level—deeper Bible study, flexible structure, to encourage group accountability;
3. Discipleship Level—in-depth Bible study, open structure, to move the group into high gear.

Target Audiences: To build community throughout the culture of the church, the curriculum needs to be flexible, adaptable, and transferable into the structure of the average church.

Mission: To expand the kingdom of God one person at a time by filling the “empty chair.” (We add an extra chair to each group session to remind us of our mission.)
Group Covenant

It is important that your group covenant together, agreeing to live out important group values. Once these values are agreed upon, your group will be on its way to experiencing Christian community. It's very important that your group discuss these values—preferably as you begin this study. The first session would be most appropriate. (Check the rules to which each member of your group agrees.)

☐ Priority: While you are in this course of study, you give the group meetings priority.

☐ Participation: Everyone is encouraged to participate and no one dominates.

☐ Respect: Everyone is given the right to his or her own opinion, and all questions are encouraged and respected.

☐ Confidentiality: Anything that is said in the meeting is never repeated outside the meeting.

☐ Life Change: We will regularly assess our own life-change goals and encourage one another in our pursuit of becoming more like Christ.

☐ Empty Chair: The group stays open to reaching new people at every meeting.

☐ Care and Support: Permission is given to call upon each other at any time, especially in times of crisis. The group will provide care for every member.

☐ Accountability: We agree to let the members of the group hold us accountable to the commitments we make in whatever loving ways we decide upon.

☐ Mission: We will do everything in our power to start a new group.

☐ Ministry: Members of the group will encourage one another to volunteer and serve in a ministry and to support missions by giving financially and/or personally serving.
# Image Is Everything

*Genesis 1:26 – 2:3*

## Prepare for the Session

### READINGS

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Verses</th>
<th>Reflective Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1:26</td>
<td>Does the idea that you were made in God's image make you feel more affirmed or more challenged and responsible? In what way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1:27</td>
<td>How do you see God reflected in the qualities most often displayed in people of the opposite sex?</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1:28</td>
<td>What can you do to help make the world better for your children?</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1:29-30</td>
<td>Are you trusting God's provision for your basic needs?</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1:31</td>
<td>Do you feel that the life God has given you is still good? Why or why not? What are you doing to thank God for the goodness you do find in life?</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>2:1-3</td>
<td>Are you taking time in your life to rest and restore your spirit? If not, what can you do to make this lifestyle change?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Psalm</td>
<td>8:3-5</td>
<td>When you take time to reflect on creation, how does it make you feel about yourself? How does it make you feel about the God who made it all?</td>
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*Image Is Everything*
OUR GOALS FOR THIS SESSION ARE:

BIBLE STUDY
- To consider what being created in the image of God means
- To look at my responsibilities as a steward of the world God has created
- To better understand what I need to do to restore God's image within me

LIFE CHANGE
- To turn my life over to the lordship of Jesus Christ
- To look for someone each day to whom I can show a simple act of love
- To make a change in something I do to help take care of the environment

Icebreaker  
10-15 minutes

A “Chip off the Old Block.” Depending on time, choose one or two questions, or answer all three. Go around the group on question 1 and let everyone share. Then go around again on question 2 and 3.

1. Who in your family do people say you most resemble physically? In what features do they see this resemblance?

2. Were someone to say, “You’re just like your dad,” to what feature or personal characteristic would he most likely be referring?

☐ My facial features
☐ My sense of humor
☐ My temper
☐ My way of relating to the opposite sex
☐ My way of saying certain things
☐ My way of expressing anger or dealing with conflict
☐ My values
☐ “They better not say that if they want to live!”
☐ Other: _______________________________
3. What personal characteristic or physical feature of yours would you most like to see replicated in someone else in your family, such as a child or grandchild?

**Bible Study**

*30-45 minutes*

The Scripture for this week:

26Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.”

27So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.

28God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth.”

29God also said, “Look, I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the surface of the entire earth, and every tree whose fruit contains seed. This food will be for you, for all the wildlife of the earth, for every bird of the sky, and for every creature that crawls on the earth—all having the breath of life in it. I have given every green plant for food.”

And it was so. 31God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. Evening came, and then morning: the sixth day.

**Chapter 2**

1So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. 2By the seventh day, God completed His work that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done. 3God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, for on it He rested from His work of creation.
...about today’s session

1. How does God understand the feeling we get when what we thought was a good file turns out to be corrupted?

2. What acts show that we are not reflecting a “clean copy” of God’s image?
   a. ________________________________________________
   b. ________________________________________________

3. What does “Genesis” mean?

Identifying with the Story

1. What do you remember making or creating that really said something about who you are?
   □ A project at work
   □ A home remodeling project
   □ A poem, story, or piece of creative writing
   □ A craft project
   □ A restored automobile
   □ A meal or special dish
   □ My child
   □ Other: ________________________________

2. Where in your life do you most feel like you “rule”?
   □ Nowhere
   □ When I am home alone . . . but then there’s my cat.
   □ In my family
   □ When I am playing my sport
   □ When I am on the road in my car
   □ When I am at work
1. In general, what was humankind “born” to do?

2. What does it say to us that the last part of verse 27 refers to both males and females?

3. What are three ways we are created to reflect God’s image spiritually?
   a. ________________________
   b. ________________________
   c. ________________________

What is God teaching you from this story?

When I am out hunting
☐ Only in my dreams
☐ Everywhere I go, I rule!
☐ Other: ________________________

3. When you need to rest or restore your life energy, what are you most likely to do?

☐ Read
☐ Lie on the couch and watch TV
☐ Get out into nature
☐ Go to my room and meditate or pray
☐ Lock myself in the bathroom
☐ Go for a drive
☐ Surf the internet or play computer games
☐ Go shopping
☐ Do gardening or yardwork
☐ Write in my journal
☐ Go to bed early or take a nap
☐ Other: ________________________

today’s session

1. In general, what was humankind “born” to do?

2. What does it say to us that the last part of verse 27 refers to both males and females?

3. What are three ways we are created to reflect God’s image spiritually?
   a. ________________________
   b. ________________________
   c. ________________________
1. How do you feel about God's commissioning of humankind to "rule" the plants, animals, and other life forms?
   - What was God thinking?
   - It's more responsibility than I want.
   - It shows we can do whatever we want with the world.
   - It makes me feel trusted.
   - It makes me feel guilty—we have done such a bad job!
   - God must believe we can do it.
   - Other: ________________________________

2. What do you see as the most important implication of the idea that we were made in God's image?
   - None of us is "trash"—we all have great value.
   - We have a lot to live up to.
   - We can do better than we are doing.
   - We should always look for that image of God in ourselves and in others.
   - We will be happiest if we live as we were created to live.
   - Other: ________________________________

4. What are some destructive ways people have used their power of choice?
   a. ________________________________
   b. ________________________________
   c. ________________________________
   d. ________________________________
   e. ________________________________

5. Why is Jesus important in helping us restore the image of God within us?

Learning from the Story

1. How do you feel about God's commissioning of humankind to "rule" the plants, animals, and other life forms?

2. What do you see as the most important implication of the idea that we were made in God's image?

Remain in groups of 6-8 people, in a horseshoe configuration.
1. Since no one has ever seen God, what does John tell us that we need to do?

2. According to John, how do the people we are now compare with the people we will be one day?

3. In what way have you recently seen the image of God reflected in yourself or in someone close to you?

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**life change lessons**

1. Since no one has ever seen God, what does John tell us that we need to do?

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**Caring Time**  

15-20 minutes

This is the time to develop and express your care for each other. Begin by asking group members to respond to this question:

“How can this group show love to you right now?”

Pray for love and direction in these areas of need, as well as for the concerns on the Prayer/Praise Report. Include prayer for the empty chair.

If you would like to pray silently, say “Amen” when you have finished your prayer, so that the next person will know when to start.

**Caring Time**

Remain in groups of 6-8 people, in a horseshoe configuration.
Use these notes to gain further understanding of the text as you study on your own:

**Genesis 1:26**

*image ... likeness.* God created people to be like Him. Adam and Eve became unlike God only when they tried to be “like” Him in terms of authority (see Gen. 3:5). Romans 8:29 reminds us that it is still God’s intention to make us into His likeness, that likeness revealed in Jesus Christ.

**Genesis 1:27**

*male and female.* Who of us is not aware of the differences between men and women? And yet, both were created in the image of God and given the responsibility to take care of the earth. In how men and women relate to each other, we are different; in how we relate to God, we are the same (see Gal. 3:28).

**Genesis 1:28**

*rule.* God gave people the responsibility to rule over the world. Ruling over and subduing is not an invitation to exploit. It does not make us sovereign over all; rather, we are stewards, ruling on God’s behalf (see Christ’s Parable of the Tenants, Matt. 21:33-42).

**Genesis 1:31**

*very good ... sixth day.* This last day of creation was not just described as “good,” but “very good.” It was the culmination of God’s work in creating our world. It was an apt description of the world God intended for us to live in and wanted us to have.

**Genesis 2:3**

*He rested.* Even though we see God’s energy as unlimited, Scripture proclaims that even God took time to rest from His creative work. When God gave the Ten Commandments, He referred back to this: “Remember to dedicate the Sabbath day” (Ex. 20:8).