

7-Day Challenge

CREATION

Genesis 1



Overview

Where did we come from?

The debate has raged across history in throne rooms, lecture halls and courtrooms. A millenia of campfires and watercooler conversations without definitive resolution.

We cannot end the dispute here in these pages. We can, however, simply ignore the controversy for a single week and read what the Bible actually says. Take some time to consider the far-reaching implications of its claims.

Because really, in the grand scheme of things, where we came from helps us know why we are here.

But *why* the human race is here – biological chance or Creator God — well, the answer to that question changes everything. Because what someone believes about God, themselves and the world ultimately drives their actions, attitudes and behaviors for life.

Biblical Christianity affirms the one, true God of the Bible stands at the base of all reality as Creator and Sustainer of all and, in fact, defines reality. If that is true, your life is not meaningless. Sure, it demolishes your entitlement to establishing your own standards or fashioning your own reality, but it also means you are actually here on this planet for a purpose.

A purpose set by a loving, almighty, all-powerful God, Father and Creator.

Thank you for taking this seven-day journey into God's Word. We pray you are challenged and changed in a way that makes your life better both now and for eternity.

What to Expect

In less than 10 minutes each day, you will:

1. **Pause** to clear your mind.
2. **Activate** a thought.
3. **Explore** a Scripture passage.
4. **Ponder** some questions that connect the Bible to your life.
5. **Consider** scholarly insights on Scripture.

DAY 1

PAUSE

Try to still your thoughts so you can approach this verse with a mind ready to see what is actually being said, and not what you think (or hope) it says.

Take two minutes in silence, meditation or prayer before continuing.

ACTIVATE

The Bible is a long book. Reeceally long. 783,137 words long, to be exact.

That's significantly longer than either the entire *Lord of the Rings* trilogy or *War and Peace*.

But the foundation for the entire tome – all 66 books, 1,189 chapters and 783,137 words – comes in its first ten words. A person's entire worldview – how they perceive all of reality and their personal place within it – hinges on whether they accept those words as fact or reject them as fantasy.

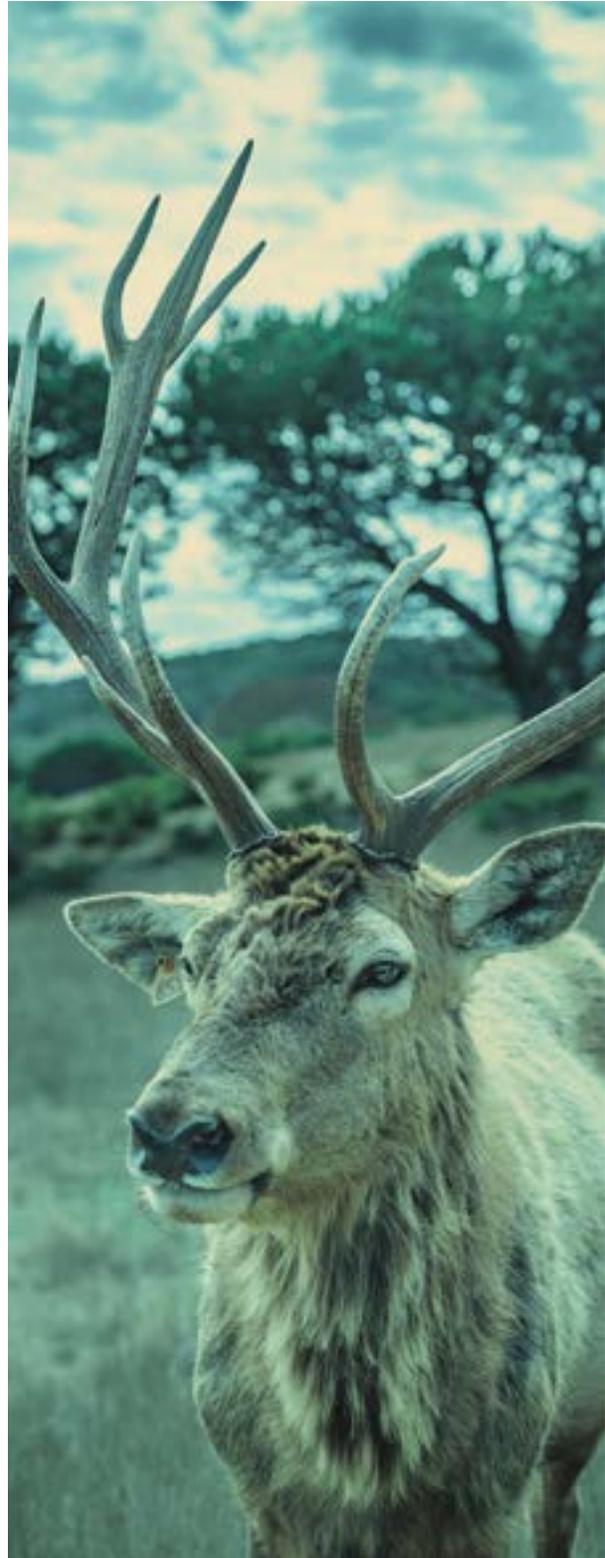
You might be thinking, “Seriously? Just ten words can impact everything a person believes about life, death and their very own existence?”

Yes, seriously. Read them for yourself.

EXPLORE

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.



PONDER

- What does Genesis 1:1 reveal about God and creation?
- What most intrigues you in this verse?
- What makes this verse so important to the entirety of the Bible? To your life personally?

CONSIDER

Deep truths reside in this opening verse. As we embark on the Bible's account of creation, it is important to know how best to approach this passage. Our first instinct might be to approach creation with questions of "how," "why," "where" or "when." The Bible does not primarily speak into these intriguing questions. Rather, the Bible speaks to questions of "who" and "so what." Who is responsible for the world? Why does it matter? Genesis 1:1 tells us He alone is responsible for the

world, for you and for me. Why does this matter? Because if God made everything, including you and me, that means we are accountable to Him.

In Genesis 1:1, the Hebrew word for "create" is *bara*. This verb is used a total of three times throughout the Genesis 1 creation account (Genesis 1:1, 1:21, 1:27). *Bara* can refer to "creating something from nothing," or it can refer to "reforming existing materials." Either way, it always signifies God's divine creation of something strikingly new. Genesis 1:1 speaks of God's creation of the original substance of the universe, something strikingly new. Genesis 1:21 speaks of God's creation of sentient or conscious life, animal life as opposed to plant life, something decidedly new. And Genesis 1:27 speaks of God's creation of man and woman in His image, something remarkably new and indelibly glorious.





DAY 2

PAUSE

Take a deep breath. Exhale. Clear your mind and take a minute to make this simple request: “God, if you are there, make yourself known to me.”

ACTIVATE

Every good writer – no matter if they’re writing a stage play, science fiction epic, historical biography or romantic comedy screenplay – strives to create a memorable entrance for their main character. They want the audience to immediately latch on to that character and follow them to the end of the journey.

The truly great writers reveal something about the character’s inner life, what “makes them tick,” through their actions in this grand introduction. Whether it be a Jane Austen heroine’s unforgettable quip or Indiana Jones unfurling a bullwhip to foil a villain’s attempt to shoot him in the back, iconic characters immediately burn into the collective consciousness.

And no one in all of fact or fiction has a more illustrious, earth-shattering (or rather earth-making) entrance than Yahweh, God of all creation.

Let’s dive in and start exploring the infinite well that is God’s character.

EXPLORE

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Isaiah 44:6-8

⁶*“This is what the LORD says—
Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty:
I am the first and I am the last;
apart from me there is no God.*

⁷*Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it.
Let him declare and lay out before me
what has happened since I established my ancient
people,*

*and what is yet to come—
yes, let them foretell what will come.*

⁸*Do not tremble, do not be afraid.
Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?
You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?
No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.”*

PONDER

- What do you learn about God from these verses?
- Which characteristic brings you comfort? Why?
- Which characteristic do you struggle with? Why?

CONSIDER

“In the beginning God ...” A simple, yet profound phrase. The Hebrew word translated to “God” in this verse is *Elohim*, which means “supreme one” or “mighty one.” The word itself is plural yet used as if singular. This emphasizes that God is one being who exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit (John 1:1-5). All three are equally God and involved in creation. Creation is said to be from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:2 mentions the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 1:2 clearly states the universe was made through Jesus, the Son. God the Father is Creator, Sustainer and Judge of all. From this one simple, initial phrase in Genesis 1:1, we learn much about our God and Father.

- **God is self-existent.** Before anyone or anything else, there was God. God exists in and of Himself by His own power. He has no origin. This is true of nothing else in the universe. Everything else – people, plants, cars, stars – has a cause for existence. God is the uncaused, uncreated One and the ultimate cause of all creation. God’s self-existence means God is answerable to no one. He sometimes explains His actions to us through His Word ... but He does not always, and He does not have to. He is God.
- **God is self-sufficient.** God has no needs and depends on no one. As human beings, we depend on many things – oxygen, heat, light, gravity, the laws of nature. If any of these go away, we die. But not God. Anything and everything can go away, but God will still exist. Because God is the only self-sufficient One, He is the only One worthy of our trust. God does not need a relationship with us. He does not need us to worship Him. He does not need us to accomplish His plans and purposes. But what joy to realize God nevertheless stoops to work in and through us and have relationship with us. We may rest knowing His sufficiency.
- **God is eternal.** God was, is and will always be. He is “the Alpha and the Omega, the

Beginning and the End” (Revelation 21:6). God’s eternity means God is unchanging. He does not change His mind (Numbers 23:19). He is not fickle. His will and promises stand firm from generation to generation. Therefore, we need not fear that God’s love for us might change or fade. He remains holy, wise, just and gracious. We are eternally secure in the arms of our eternal God and Father because His Son made that possible.

Truth about God evokes a variety of responses in us. His unlimited power and authority rightly lead us to respectful and holy “fear” before His greatness. The unshakeable foundation of God’s unwavering character also steadies us in daily life. Without God Himself as our anchor, we are tossed around by a constantly changing stream of human ideas.



DAY 3

PAUSE

Before you start, ask God to help you set aside any preconceived notions you have about creation – all of the science classes, films and folktales – and help you enter the story as if reading it for the first time.

ACTIVATE

Have you ever been in a cave? Like a real travel-deep-into-the-depths-of-the-earth-where-no-natural-light-can-ever-reach-you hole that opens hundreds of feet below the surface?

It is definitely something to be experienced. There are entire unseen worlds beneath the thin layer of dirt we call “ground” where we spend the majority of our lives. Caves hold beautiful rock formations, underground rivers and multicolored ribbons of minerals and sediment that dazzle the eyes.

Until they turn off the lights.

A person can literally feel cave darkness drop over them like a blanket. One cannot comprehend how much light there is in the world, even in the wilderness at midnight, until they have been buried underground without the single tiniest spark of light to be seen.

That is exactly where we find God in Genesis 1:2.

EXPLORE

Genesis 1:2-13

²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.”



And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.”⁷So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. ¹²The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

PONDER

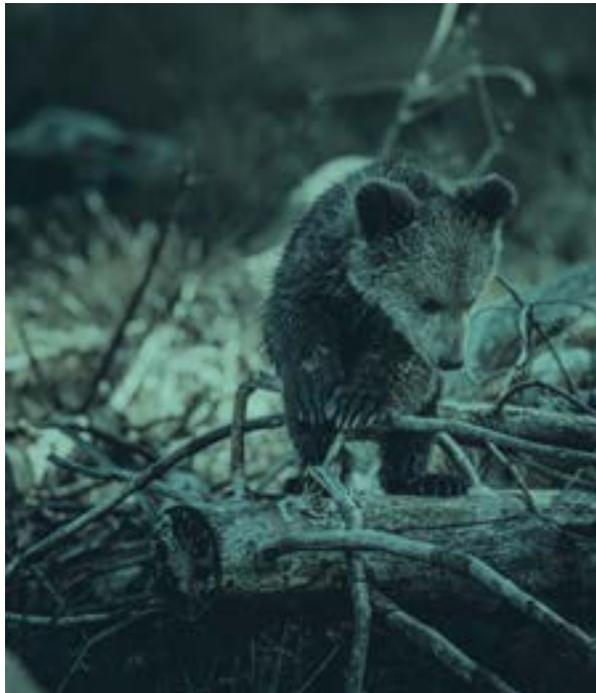
- What do you learn about God and creation from these verses?
- What are the possible ways to define “day”? Which one seems most plausible to you? (See Exodus 20:11; 2 Peter 3:8 and other Scriptures you may know for help.)
- What phrases are repeated? Why might they matter to you today?

CONSIDER

The First Day: Light (Genesis 1:3-5)

At the sound of the booming voice of God, light separated from darkness. He called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” God’s initial act of creation represents an amazing breakthrough. God brought light to His creation. Light brings revelation, the ability to know and be known. Light takes over the darkness.

How did light fill the earth prior to the creation of the sun, moon and stars on day four? We cannot know for certain, but Scripture often



depicts God Himself as light. The apostle John captures the holiness and moral perfection of God when he proclaims, “God is light; in him there is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). We worship the God who created light and who Himself is light.

The Second Day: Sky (Genesis 1:6-8)

The second day of creation included another act of separation, as God increasingly brought order out of the formless. God separated the water below from the water above to form earth’s atmosphere, a “vault” or canopy above the earth. He stretched out sky, the domain of space so vast that its reaches remain unknown. God prepared atmospheric layers to surround and protect our planet. The sky stands high above our heads, reminding us of how small we are before our great God.

The Third Day: Land (Genesis 1:9-13)

On the third day, God set boundaries as He contained the waters under the sky to form seas, rivers, lakes and oceans. Dry land appeared, creating an environment ready for a variety of vegetation. Signs of life emerged on the earth from this point forward. From the soil sprung seed-bearing plants capable of reproduction and of yielding colorful flowers, ripe fruits and crispy vegetables.

The variety of landscapes and plant life in our world reflects the width and breadth of God’s creativity and care. Creation reveals the depth and diversity within God Himself. Mountain vistas, roaring oceans, plains, deserts, marshes and frozen tundra all present unique expressions of beauty. God prepared vegetation adaptable to each environment. Lush vegetation fills jungles. Rocky crags host trees whose bent branches boast survival of harsh elements. Cacti and wildflowers thrive in arid climates. The multiplied hues of flowers and falling leaves display a vibrant color spectrum only God could imagine.

DAY 4

PAUSE

You're in the home stretch! Take a moment to focus and ask God to clearly speak to you through His written Word.

ACTIVATE

A person who believes that an Almighty God created everything in our world will eventually come to a secondary question.

Why did God create so much?

This is a logical question because a person who creates something typically wants it to be seen and enjoyed by others. They want to share what they have “birthed” with the world.

But God created a vast world and universe in which the majority remains unseen or

experienced by humankind. Even popular wonders of the world like the Grand Canyon or Victoria Falls sat in secret for centuries until discovered. Add to this the infinite reaches of outer space or depths of the ocean that remain unexplored and it is statistically certain that even grander works of beauty await the first look of human eyes.

Beauty and wonder created by God for ... what reason? Why?

Hopefully we'll find out some day. Until then, let's just appreciate the innumerable wonders our eyes can see.

EXPLORE

Genesis 1:14-25

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” ²³And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.





²⁴ And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so.

²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

PONDER

- What makes believing in a Creator God difficult?
- How might a Creator God behind everything answer some questions?
- What one question would you ask God about creation? How would that answer improve your life?

CONSIDER

The Fourth Day: Sun, Moon and Stars (Genesis 1:14-19)

The fourth day signifies a transition. God now filled the heavens and earth He had formed with teeming life, moving creatures and the cadence of time. On day four, God fastened lights in the sky to serve as signs marking the seasons, days and years.

He established the rhythms of day and night, summer and winter, spring and fall. Never once has our faithful Creator forgotten or failed to cause the sun to rise or the seasons to change.

Endless galaxies, rotating planets and twinkling stars proclaim the vastness of God’s character and power. Every human who has ever lived benefits from God’s faithfulness, as witnessed in the sky above us. Human language cannot fully express all that God is.

The Fifth Day: Life in Sea and Sky (Genesis 1:20-23)

God filled the waters and sky with signs of life on day five. In contrast to plant life, sentient life has the ability to feel and perceive. One Bible translation reads, “And God said, ‘Let the waters swarm with swarms of living souls ...’ ” (Darby’s Translation). For the first time since Genesis 1:1, Scripture employs the term “created” (in Hebrew, *bara*). We are not told how, but God formed creatures suited to every environment from ocean depths to high above the earth. The brilliant colors of tropical fish dazzle us. Birds sing songs unique to their species, overcome gravity to take flight and migrate in clearly prescribed paths. When we ponder the creatures that soar above us and swim beneath us, God’s work amazes us. To



examine the variety of species God created from fossil records and in our own time is to stand in awe of Him.

The Sixth Day: Land Animals (Genesis 1:24-25)

On the sixth day, God first filled the land from the land. God said, “Let the land produce living creatures ...” (1:24). God commanded the land and thereby formed land animals. The animals are grouped in three classes – livestock, wild animals and crawling creatures.

All God’s creation finds full identity in displaying His glory. The vastness of the sky, filled with more heavenly bodies than can be mapped or named, declares God’s glory. Every location on the globe experiences the regular rising and setting of the sun and the predictable changing of seasons that give order to life. We see and enjoy the plants God designed. In countless varieties, the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea and the animals on the land give testimony to God’s provision and creativity. Without human words, God’s creation loudly declares the glory of its Creator. The intricacy and multiplied diversity in the created world could not happen by chance.

To acknowledge the reality of a Creator invites personal accountability to the One who designed the world. Some choose to ignore or deny this amazing revelation to rationalize their independence from God, even while living and enjoying what God created.

Acknowledging our Creator God is vital to understand the world’s purpose and our own. At a time in history almost like no other, people are eager to preserve the earth’s beauty and resources from further damage. God agrees. God remains responsible to care for, restore and ultimately reveal perfection through His work in our natural world. We honor God when we preserve and steward well His beautiful earth. Let us worship the God of creation!



DAY 5

PAUSE

Find a spot where you can see nothing but nature, even if it is looking straight up into the sky. Take a few minutes to consider that God repeatedly said that every aspect of His creation was “good.”

ACTIVATE

Everyone has feigned impressed looks and words of awe at some child’s indecipherable scribble or horribly off-key singing. Why?

Because a child thinks everything they create is awesome.

A child has no ability to discern what does and does not have artistic merit. And only the most heartless adult would callously proclaim a child’s pitiful creation “trash.”

God does not seek our accolades or worry about any critique. He rightly proclaimed what He created to be “good” because not a single artistic achievement in history could ever hope to rival a sunset, night sky or the intricacies of the human body. All it takes is a single ocean sunrise to know that God was not deluded in this self-appraisal.

If a single person had been there each time God declared something He created “good,” they would have undoubtedly disagreed, saying, “No, God, it is great.”

EXPLORE

Genesis 1:3-25

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁷So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

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was good. ¹³And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

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²⁴And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

PONDER

- What conclusions do you make from the repeated phrase “and God saw that it was good”?
- Why might God have felt the need to proclaim His own work “good”?

- What makes it difficult for you to see the world around you as “good”?
- How might seeing the good in creation more often change your current attitude?

CONSIDER

God saw it was good.

Seven times throughout the creation account, God declares His creation “good.” Creation is not good only because it is practically useful to us. Creation is good because God made it and declared it good in and of itself. The goodness of creation reveals God’s nature. He alone is fully good and, therefore, can create only what is good. Even after the Fall and subsequent pervasion of sin, God upholds the value of creation. In Genesis 9, after the Flood, God established a covenant with Noah, Noah’s descendants, every living creature and even the earth itself (Genesis 9:9-10, 13). Similarly, in Romans 8:21, God expresses the value of creation when He includes all of creation in His promise of future deliverance. If God finds creation good, we must find creation good as well. This means:

- We should be **thankful** for God’s creation and praise Him for it.
- We should **delight** in creation.
- We should demonstrate a **responsibility** toward creation.

To contemplate and uphold the value of creation brings honor and glory to the God of creation. This should cause us to trust Him more. If God cares so deeply for the plants and animals, how much more does He care for you and me (Matthew 6:26, 30)? As we praise the God of creation, we join throngs of heaven’s angels who shout: “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being” (Revelation 4:11).

DAY 6

PAUSE

Breathe. Feel the air enter your body and your lungs expand. Concentrate as you exhale, feeling your body relax as the air spills over your lips. Repeat this process for a minute, thanking God for how well he constructed the human body.

ACTIVATE

The birth of a human child truly is a miracle.

The number of biological processes that must perfectly align in order for a baby to enter this world truly boggles the mind.

And the fact that the majority of births are healthy points to the existence of an Almighty Creator God.

Take a few minutes to read where it all began. Consider how our great great great great ad infinitum granddaddy came into being without father or mother, just a miraculous “birth” at the design of our Creator God.



EXPLORE

Genesis 1:26-31

26Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

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

28God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

29Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

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

PONDER

- What distinguishes humanity from the rest of creation?
- What do you learn about the identity and purpose of humanity? How does that encourage or challenge you?
- What commands did God give humanity? What would following these commands look like for your life today?

CONSIDER

On the sixth day of creation, God filled the created world with land animals (Genesis 1:24-25). God planned His creative work carefully, much like parents prepare nurseries for their expected children. The right atmosphere, lights, seasons, vegetation and living creatures stood ready for the pinnacle of God's creation. God announced His divine resolution: "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness ..."

Genesis 1:26 seems to invite us into a conversation between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. "Let us" reflects the united will of the triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All three persons of God worked in perfect unity in creation. God exists as one divine being in three co-equal, co-eternal persons, distinct, yet indivisible. This truth, not fully explained here, is progressively revealed throughout the Bible.

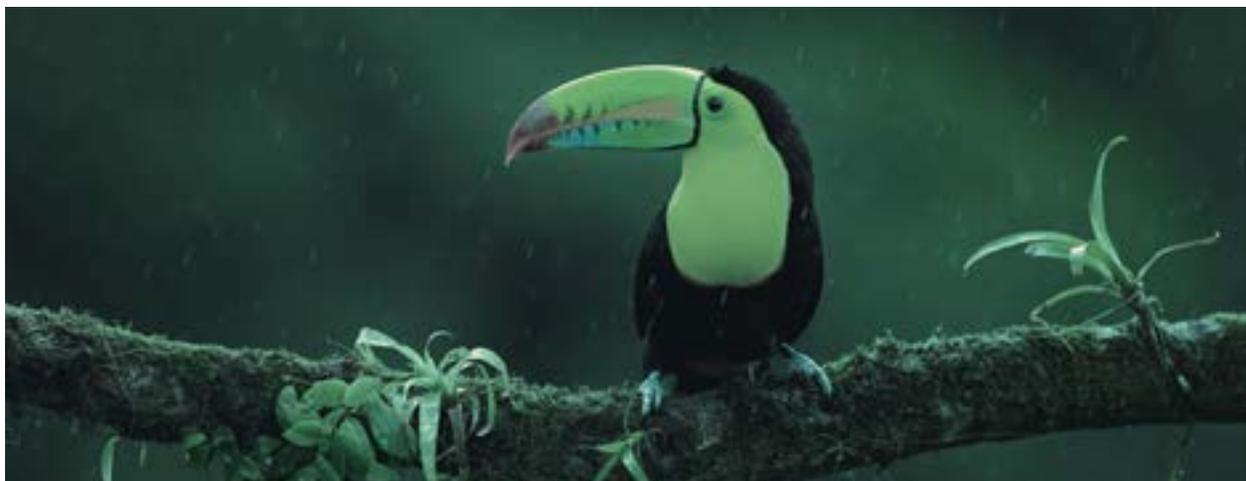
Until this point, God simply commanded, "Let there be ..." (1:3); "Let the land produce ..." (1:11); "Let the water teem ..." (1:20). Here, "Let us make" highlights the unique relationship and action of God invested to create humanity. God personally created people in His image. Genesis 1:27 repeats three times that God directly created mankind (*bara*). The Hebrew *adam* refers here to mankind, both male and female. The repetition emphasizes that God views human beings, made in His image, as the high point of His creation.

The intentional pairing of the phrases, "In our image, in our likeness" emphasizes the unique relationship of God and humanity. The purpose and identity of mankind centers on God and being made in His likeness. This stands in stark contrast to the birds and animals, created "according to their kind." As the apex of God's creation, every person is:

- **identified** as belonging to God our Creator.
- **created** in the image of God to glorify Him.
- **intended** to relate to God and all creation in peace.
- **designed** as a co-regent with God over creation.

God's words in Genesis 1:28-31 explain why we were created. God's blessing reveals His provision, purpose and pleasure for mankind among all creation. God exists not only as Creator, but also Provider and Sustainer of all He has made.

God's work and human work emerge together in this passage. God declares His pleasure about His completed work of creation – it was "very good." He gave Adam specific work in the perfect garden He made. God entrusts people with the capacity and desire for meaningful work. God intended that people find pleasure in Him and His purposes.



DAY 7

PAUSE

Last day! Ask God to open your heart and mind to the amazing connection He created between Himself and all of humanity – including you.

ACTIVATE

Human beings are creative.

Whether it's a kindergarten drawing, yard work, home repair, art project or becoming a parent, you have created something new at some point in your life.

And whatever it is you create – from weeding a garden to writing a novel – you pour a part of yourself into it. The act of creation itself creates a sense of pride and ownership and satisfaction in the “creator” upon completion.

It has to make you wonder: Are those feelings an inkling of what God felt when He finished forming humanity?

EXPLORE

Genesis 1:27

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

PONDER

- What does it mean to be “created in God’s image”?
- What impact does this have on your view of other ethnicities and nations?
- How might treating everyone as if they are created in God’s image impact your interactions with people? Your own self-image?





CONSIDER

God's unique connection to human life emerges clearly in Genesis. "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness ..." (Genesis 1:26). God shares His breath of life with mankind (Genesis 2:7). God's life and image impart dignity and sacredness to all human life. The entire Bible consistently underscores this truth. Throughout church history, this truth has been captured in the Latin phrase *imago Dei*, which literally means "image of God."

The way we relate to God and one another reflects God's image. Reason, emotion and will are foundational elements of human personality shared with God and other people. God expresses all these perfectly. While human expressions are imperfect, our capacity to relate in all these ways reflects God's image in us. God's thoughts are not limited by any flaw, and He balances all interests in absolute perfection. Humans make reasoned decisions and explore the deeper meaning of life. God's character includes love, joy, hate and peace. God designed people to experience joy and pleasure. We enjoy beauty, delicious food, art, fragrances, music and fine craftsmanship. God demonstrates perfect relationship among the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We yearn for satisfying human relationships.

Every human life holds value beyond the shallow measurements of external beauty, exceptional intellect or astounding accomplishments. Our human longing for identity and significance can only be satisfied when we understand our value to God. Deep within, our hearts long to know the God who knows us. We wrongly idolize many things because God instilled in us a need to worship Him. Finding identity and purpose in anything but God leaves us wanting.

Acknowledging God as the source of human dignity raises our passion to alleviate human suffering. The atrocity of human trafficking, murder, racial injustice, mistreatment of the disabled and elderly, and other social issues gain context when we view people as image-bearers. We can love and accept people not like us because we understand what binds us together as humans created in God's image. To fail to see God's imprint on humanity steals the worth and value God intended for all people. Without our life centered on God, we value things more than people and our own comfort over the welfare of others. Recognizing the image of God stamped on humanity changes the way we view ourselves and others.

Congratulations!

You have completed the 7-Day Challenge.

We pray you have gained new insight into the beginnings of creation and found the week both refreshing and enlightening. If that is true, please consider sharing this study with others.

If you would like to continue exploring God's Word, consider using one of Bible Study Fellowship's other free offerings.

- **James – Two-Week Study** – This timeless and timely book on dealing with trials offers tremendous spiritual encouragement and direction.
- **WordGo** – BSF's new app delivers short studies straight to your phone – perfect for personal use or starting your own Bible study with friends.
- **Find a Group** – Meet in-person or online with people around the world to study God's Word together.
- **More 7-Day Challenges** – Check for a new Challenge every few months.

Thank you again for taking the 7-Day Challenge! We pray God met you in His Word and spoke to you through it.

