

Genesis: The Book That Started It All

Group Guide | August 3

Open with prayer and a reading of Genesis 1 (15 minutes).

Start your group time with a word of prayer. Pray that God would guide your time together, that the Lord would encourage and challenge your group through this study of Genesis, and that God would be glorified in you as you reflect and study.

Then, read all of **Genesis 1**.

Read this introduction to Genesis and ask the following questions (20 minutes).

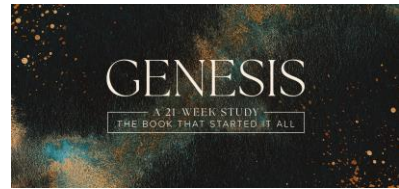
Today, we begin a brand-new sermon series through the book of Genesis. Genesis begins for us God's generous disclosure of Himself. As the first book of the Bible, it offers us a foundation for understanding who God is and what it means to live in relationship with Him.

As Emerson mentioned in his sermon:

"Genesis is a book of beginnings. It is the beginning of the Torah, the beginning of the whole Old Testament, and the beginning of our whole Bible! It tells us of the beginning of creation. It tells us of the beginning of sin. It tells us of the beginning of salvation. It begins the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (i.e. the nation of Israel). It begins the biblical themes of grace and forgiveness, judgment and wrath, hope and restoration, plan and promise, covenant and sacrifice, anticipating not only Israel's entrance into the land of promise but also anticipating the redemptive work of Christ! AND, last one...Genesis begins the gracious self-disclosure of the one, true God."

For the remainder of the year, we'll explore the ways in which the book of Genesis can help us think biblically about some of the most pressing issues of our day: who we are, who God is, what we are made for, and more.

We'll begin by exploring some key doctrines that ground our faith, then finish by tracing the lives of the fathers of our faith. The book that started it all still speaks today—inviting us to know God more fully and follow Him more faithfully.



- What has your experience been with the book of Genesis? Do you have any favorite stories? Characters? Themes? Explain.
- What are you most excited for as we begin this series?
- What questions do you hope to have answered through this series?

Discuss Genesis 1:1 and the sermon as a group (30 minutes).

- Genesis 1:1 opens with "God." What are all the characteristics and attributes that you can think of that correspond to who God is and what God is like?
- Which of the different attributes or characteristics that you noted regarding God is most significant to you? Why?
- Which do you need to be most reminded of in this season? Explain.
- Pick out a few of the following passages (maybe one per person or only select a handful): **Numbers 23:19, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Psalm 11:7, Psalm 25:8, Psalm 92:15, Psalm 145:1-3, Isaiah 40:28, Isaiah 55:8-9, Malachi 3:6, John 4:24, 1 Timothy 1:17, Revelation 4:11**. Have selected people read the selected passages and then ask, "What do we learn about God's nature and/or character from these verses?"
- In his sermon, Emerson described how God just IS and he contrasted God's IS-ness with creation's *lack* of IS-ness. Have you ever thought of God in this way before? How might this knowledge impact your everyday life?
- Apply God's infinity to your own life. Earlier you were asked, "Which of the different attributes or characteristics that you noted regarding God is most significant to you? Why?" Think back to your answer. Which attribute did you choose? What does that attribute mean to you when you infuse it with the reality of God's infinity?
- Lastly, Emerson talked about the "beyondness" and "closeness" of God. Why is God's "beyondness" a good thing? Why is his closeness a good thing? How does God's beyondness point to his closeness?
- When was the last time you were awestruck by the wonder and greatness of God? Explain.

Finish your group time with prayer (5 minutes).