

ORIGINS

Pillars - Origins • Oct - Nov 2022

Overview

Why is there something instead of nothing? Who am I? Why am I here? Why are things the way they are in the world? Belief in God, his purposes in creating us, shapes all of Christian thought and history. In fact it defines everything about us as humans, and makes a big difference in how we see the world and how we live. In this series, we head back to the very beginning to equip us with the uniquely Christian grace-filled response to the issues we face with our neighbours and the rest of the world.

Outline

1. Genesis 1:1-3 Creation - Why is there something instead of nothing?
2. Genesis 1:26-31 Humanity - Who am I and why am I here?
3. Genesis 3 The Fall - What went wrong?
4. Recognising Diversity: Gender & Sexuality
5. Creation Care
6. The Value Of Life

Resources

Videos	Books
<p>Questioning Christianity with Tim Keller https://qcpodcast.gospelinlife.com/</p> <p><i>This is a really great series of short talks and Q&As. While not explicitly about origins in Genesis, it speaks to everyday implications like faith, proof, meaning and identity.</i></p> <p><u>The Image Ruined and Restored</u> N.T Wright <i>This is a presentation in Right Now Media at a conference giving a thoroughly bible-based exploration of what it meant for humanity to be made in God's image, damaged through the fall, and restored through Jesus Christ.</i></p>	<p>"Dwell: Life with God for the World" Barry D. Jones</p> <p>"Exploring Christian Theology (Volume 2): Creation, Fall & Salvation" Holsteen & Svigel</p> <p>"What Makes us Human?" Mark Meynell</p> <p>"In Six Days" edited by John F. Ashton</p>



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Week 1 • 16 Oct • Psalm 24:1

The earth belongs to God and we are responsible to Him.

1. What is the biggest / most awe-inspiring thing you know? What is a fact that you find overwhelming or unbelievable?

2. What do the following verses reveal about God?
 - a. Psalm 24:1
 - b. Psalm 90:2
 - c. Isaiah 40:26
 - d. Philippians 2:10&11

3. How does this equip us to respond with grace and mercy to someone who thinks everything has come from random chance?

4. How can you use what these verses reveal about God to inspire you to worship every day? Is there some change you can make to your life or new habit you could adopt to



5. Think about how, as a Life Group, you show that “The earth belongs to God and we are responsible to Him.”

What is one change that you can make to how you operate as a group that would make this more evident?

Extra resources - Here are links to a couple of talks by Louis Giglio. They aren't new but they are focus on the awesomeness of creation that may help you worship:

- [“Indescribable”](#)
- [“How great is our God”](#)

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Week 2 • 23 Oct • Genesis 1:26-31

We have a unique identity and purpose in God's world.

1. Describe a time you felt 'the most alive ever'?

2. There were a number of key points about our identity brought out in the message about Genesis 1:26-31. What do you recall? How are they seen or expanded upon in the following passages:
 - a. Genesis 2:15-25
 - b. Revelation 21:1-7

3. Who am I?
 - a. What is your answer to this question?
 - b. How might you help someone else answer this question?
 - c. How does the Bible / Life Group help with this?

4. Why am I here?
 - a. What is your answer to this question?
 - b. How might you help someone else answer this question?
 - c. How does the Bible / Life Group help with this?



5. Think about the other members in your Life Group, one by one. Invite God to show you some insight about the other members in your Life Group. Where do you see God's character shining through?

Take a moment to encourage one another.

You might like to do this verbally, individually, and pray for each other. Alternatively people could write down any thoughts and inspirations as an encouraging message (might include a specific word) for each person to take home.

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Week 3 • 30 Oct • Genesis 3

Sin is rebellion against God - it broke everything.

1. As a child, were you a rule-enforcer or a rule-breaker?

2. What do the following passages reveal about the pervasiveness of sin?
 - a. Romans 3:23
 - b. Romans 8:22 and 23
 - c. Ephesians 2:1-3
 - d. James 1:15
 - e. Isaiah 13:11
 - f. Isaiah 6:5

3. All human relationships, with each other and creation, have been corrupted by sin and evil.
 - a. Where do you see this?

 - b. How does this grieve you?

 - c. How do you keep going in the face of this?

4. In John 11, meeting Martha, “Jesus wept.” When someone shares with you a tragedy they face; how can you bring mercy and grace into that situation?

5. Spend time in prayer for the places you see in your community, workplaces and families where things are damaged by sin and in need of restoration through God’s mercy.

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Week 4 • 6 Nov • Recognising Diversity

*Gender and Sex is part of how God has created each of us in his image.
Let our posture be biblical, humble and Christ-like.*

1. When was the last time you felt like you were totally different to everyone else in the room? What was it like?
2. Look at Matthew 4:17.
How do we help each other repent of all our sin humbly?
3. Read Romans 8:23-26.
This passage speaks of, despite our faith and salvation, our bodies 'groaning inwardly', and the Holy Spirit helps us in this.
How does this help us start wrestling with the following questions:
 - a. What does it look like for someone to honour Jesus even if they continue to experience same sex attraction?
 - b. What does it mean to follow Jesus as a man or woman when I continue to be in anguish with my biological sex?
 - c. What are some stereotypes of men and women that are unhelpful here?



- d. How do we build a community that extends grace and love to each other and the world, without letting go of truth?
4. For followers of Jesus, what we believe about sex and sexuality is perceived by some to be hateful.
- a. How do you feel about following Jesus knowing that it may bring a level of persecution?
 - b. What do you need from others in our church community in order to walk through this?

Further Resources:

Websites	Books
<p><u>Center for Faith, Sexuality and Gender</u> https://www.centerforfaith.com/ For example: https://theologyintheraw.com/podcast/1011-sexuality-and-the-gospel-jackie-hill-perry/</p> <p><u>Living Out</u> https://www.livingout.org/ For Example: https://www.livingout.org/resources/posts/78/a-bible-chapter-for-same-sex-attracted-christians</p>	<p>Washed and Waiting - Wesley Hall</p> <p>Holy Sexuality - Chrisopher Yuan</p> <p>Embodied - Preston Sprinkle</p> <p>Why does God care who I sleep with? - Sam Allberry</p> <p>Gay Girl, Good God - Jackie Hill Perry</p>

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Week 5 • 13 Nov • Creation Care

God has made all things, all time, all places and all people. He made us in his image to purposefully engage with his creation as he does.

1. What place or occasion moves you to worship God whenever you think of it?
2. Review Job 38 and 39. Select an appropriate section for your life group. Read aloud that section. What question asked is most humbling, or inspiring of awe and wonder?
3. Which point from the message impacted you more, and why?
 - a. Being part of God's creation is part of my, and others', identity; or,
 - b. We were made in God's image, to emulate God's care for his Creation
4. There were two traps that we might fall into:
Falling into False Worship, and
Apathy and Disregard for God's Creation
 - a. Which is a greater risk for you? How do you guard your heart and mind from this?
 - b. How do we encourage each other to avoid these sins?



- c. How might you live a grace-filled life that contradicts these ideas?
 - d. How do you live a life that contradicts these lies in our wider society? What cost might you need to pay?
5. The question is not so much *should* I care, but *how* will I treat the gift of God?

Share your thoughts, dreams and aspirations and then spend time commissioning each other in prayer for what God has placed on your hearts and minds.

Further Resources:

Websites	Books
<p>Creation Care https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/374024 This is a RightNow Media course that will allow individuals or small groups to explore how they should improve as stewards of God’s Creation</p>	<p>Creation Care: A Biblical Theology of the Natural World (Biblical Theology for Life) - Douglas J. Moo, Jonathan A. Moo Stewards of Eden - Sandra L. Richter</p>

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Week 6 • 20 Nov • Value of Life

God has breathed life into his creation. It is a gift that since the fall has been corrupted by sin and death.

1. On Sunday, we talked about some really big topics; abortion and euthanasia.
 - a. What reflections have you had about this message?
 - b. How do you feel when someone talks about either of these topics?
2. Have a look at 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.
 - a. What jumps out at you in this verse?
 - b. How about the people you know who aren't followers of Jesus? What might jump out to them and why?
 - c. What is a personal application for you out of this passage?
3. Jerram talked about how the perspective of eternity shapes how we see pain and suffering (see 2 Cor 4:16-17).
 - a. When you have experienced suffering, what has been the most helpful things other people have done for you?



- b. How can we be people who help one another maintain an eternal perspective on suffering?
4. Jerram gave quite a few potential responses to a suffering world. Which one did you feel challenged about engaging in?
- a. Loving and honouring Mothers
 - b. Loving and honouring Fathers
 - c. Fostering children that need a safe home
 - d. Mourning miscarriage
 - e. Holding the elderly in higher regard
 - f. Offering hope and comfort to those facing death
 - g. Surrendering authority over our bodies to God

Further Resources:

Websites	Books
<p>https://www.voiceforlife.org.nz/</p> <p>“Life in the Balance”</p> <p>https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/517</p> <p><i>This is a series of video testimonies of christian people struggling with the issues that they face and how God has lead them.</i></p>	<p>On Death - Timothy Keller</p> <p>Assisted Suicide - Vaughan Roberts</p> <p>When Breath Becomes Air - Dr Paul Kalanithi</p>