

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

Bible Basis: Genesis 1:1–3:24

Key Verse: So God created man in his own likeness. He created him in the likeness of God. He created them as male and female. —Genesis 1:27, NIV

Bible Point: God made everything there is. He made me to know him.

Resource: *The Story for Children*, Chapter 1: “The Beginning of Life as We Know It”

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

Get children’s attention by pacing around the room clapping your hands slowly. With each clap name an item that you see in the classroom. This can be anything as big as a whiteboard or as small as a paper clip. Children will try to figure out what you’re going to look for next. As children watch you, invite them to join in. Ask individual children to name something they see as you all clap together. Then ask:

- If we were going to name everything there is, how long would the list be?
- How many things do you think there are that we don’t even know about?

Say, **In our Bible story today, we’re going to hear about some of the amazing things God made—including you and you and you!** Point to children as you say this.

STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

Stuff You Need: copies of *The Story for Children*, Bibles, *The Story Elementary Trading Card 1*

Tell the story from *The Story for Children*, Chapter 1. You can also have children find Genesis 1 and mark it in their Bible. Either you or a child in your class can read the Scripture passages listed throughout the story.

Follow the directions to present the Bible story. Then gather to debrief.

In the Beginning

As you begin Bible story time, have children spread out so they have plenty of space to move. If possible, dim the lights. (Some young children may be frightened by complete darkness.) Begin the story in dim light, and turn on the lights when indicated. Explain that they should watch what you do and follow your example. Ask children to crouch with you as you begin the story.

In the beginning, everything was dark. But God’s Spirit was there. God said, “Let there be light.” Jump up and have someone flip on the lights. God called the light “day.” He called the darkness “night.”

Spread your arms wide and lift them up. Next, God created a huge space that he called “sky” with water underneath. Stomp in place. Then, God made the dry ground that holds us up.

Punch your arms upward repeatedly and twinkle your fingers. And then came the stars and the sun and the moon in the sky. Pretend to swim. Then God filled the water with living things—fish and whales and starfish and everything else that lives in the water. Pretend to fly as you turn in a circle. And God made birds that fly through the sky—eagles and robins and swallows and every other kind of bird. Gallop in place. Then God made all kinds of animals—wild animals and livestock, big animals and small ones, friendly ones and scary ones.

Have everyone be still. All of this took six days of work for God. In six days, he made the whole world except for one thing. What do you think was missing? Pause for responses. People! So God did one more thing on the sixth day. He made people! Grin and point to your cheeks. But the people were not like the animals. God said, “Let us make man in our image.” He wanted people to know him and be like him. He called the first people “Adam” and “Eve.”

Read Genesis 1:31a; 2:1–2. Our amazing world was finished and ready for us to live in. God was ready for people to know him and enjoying being with him.

Early elementary children will enjoy retelling the story themselves with some prompting. You might tell the story again and ask children to suggest new motions for each creation event. Or you might demonstrate the same actions and encourage children to tell you the part of the story each action represents.

After you have told the Bible story, give each child a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 1*. Ask children to describe the picture on the card and tell what part of the story the picture shows. As a class, read the key verse from the back of the card or from the Bible. Ask:

- **Of all the things God created, why do you think people are the best?** (*Because we can know God and be like him.*)
- **Tell me some things you know about God.**

Collect the cards for now. You'll send them home with the children later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Choose from these activity options to help your class explore the lesson further.

OPTION 1: WHAT GOD MADE

Have children stand along one wall, facing you. Explain to children that you will name an object. If they think God created that object, they should take one step forward. If they think God did not create the object, they should stay still. Play until a child reaches where you are standing. Children might enjoy being the leader and naming objects God created.

Option 2: This I Know

Stuff You Need: beanbag or other small item to pass, open floor space

Invite kids to join you in a circle on the floor. Say, **God made us in his image so we can know him and be like him. I'm going to toss the beanbag to someone. If it's you, tell me something you know about God and toss the beanbag back to me.** After everyone has had a chance to tell something they know about God, play again. This time, ask children to tell you one way they can be like God (loving, kind, creative, generous, and so on). If you have time, you can play again and this time let one of the children take the role of choosing whom to toss the bag to. After the game, have a brief discussion on these questions.

- **Of all the things we've named, what do you think is the coolest thing about God?**
- **Tell me one way you'd like to be more like God this week.**

Say, **Our great God, who made everything in the universe, wants us to know him and be like him! Totally cool!**

Option 3: God Is So Good

Stuff You Need: God is So Good Activity Sheet, markers or crayons

Optional: tissue paper, glitter glue, fabric scraps, foam shapes, watercolor paint and brushes

Give an activity sheet to each child. Talk about the special things that God provided in the Garden of Eden for Adam and Eve. Say, **What do you think Adam and Eve liked the best? What part of God's creation do you like the best?** Instruct children to color the picture. Consider offering the optional supplies so children can give texture and dimension to the coloring page.

Option 4: Creation Mobile

Stuff you need: plastic disposable plates, ribbon or string, hole punch, construction paper, crayons, markers, glitter, etc.

1. Ahead of time, cut the plastic plates in half. Each student will need one half, so two students can share a plate.
2. Punch eight holes along the bottom (straight) edge of the plate. Some holes may be higher than others. Punch one hole at the top in the middle to help hang the mobile.
3. Have students draw and color a small picture to represent each day of creation.
4. Punch a hole at the top of each of the creation pictures.
5. Cut eight pieces of ribbon of varying lengths.
6. When they are done decorating help students thread ribbon through the pictures and the holes in the plate. Tie securely in place.
7. Thread a ribbon through the top hole and tie in a loop. This will allow you to hang the mobiles around the room.

STEP 4: GOING HOME

At the end of the lesson, pray together praising God for his creation and asking God to help you know him better. Make sure each child takes home a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 1*, Activity Sheet(s)/Crafts, and the Parents' Page.

GOD IS SO GOOD

God's creation is so good! Color this picture. Make it beautiful and bright.



Name _____

FAMOUS FAMILY

[Scooter walks on stage wearing a wild, colorful outfit.]

Scooter: [pulls out a pocket mirror and admires himself] Wow! I look good!

Beth: Hey, Scooter! [sees Scooter's crazy outfit] Whoa! What happened to you?

Scooter: Hi, Beth! What do you mean "what happened?"

Beth: Um, well, your outfit is ... INTERESTING. I don't really have the words to describe it.

Scooter: [strikes a silly pose] That's because it's so awesome!!!

Beth: What happened to your regular clothes? I think they looked great.

Scooter: [frowns] Well, no one ever noticed me because my clothes were boring.

Beth: Scooter, you don't have to wear crazy clothes for people to notice you.

Scooter: I don't?

Beth: No, people notice you because you're Scooter. You have a kind heart and a big smile.

Scooter: Sometimes I don't feel like ANYONE notices me. Mom is always busy with my baby brother, Huey, and my dad has to work a lot.

Beth: Everyone feels unnoticed sometimes, but there's someone who ALWAYS notices you.

Scooter: Who?

Beth: The same someone who created the land and the oceans and the distant galaxies!

Scooter: Wow! That sounds like a really important someone!

Beth: He is! God created the land and the oceans and the galaxies. And he created you and me, too! People are his most special creations and he always notices us. He even wants to be our friend!

Scooter: I never thought about that before. I guess I am special just being Scooter. I don't have to wear these crazy clothes for someone to notice me.

Beth: No way! But if you keep wearing them, I know someone who WILL notice you ...

Scooter: Who?

Beth: The circus!

[Both laugh and exit.]

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

Timeless Truth: Humans are God's crowning creation.

Bible Basis: Genesis 1–3:24

Key Verse: When God created man, he made him in his own likeness. —Genesis 5:1 NIV

Resource: *The Story for Children*, Chapter 1: "The Beginning of Life as We Know It"

PARENT TIPS

Read the key point from the Sunday school class your child(ren) attended. Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table at some point this week. The Living Faith activity is designed to help your child know that he's perfectly created by God. The Extra Mile idea will help your family spread God's love in the community.

GET THE POINT

God made everything there is. He made me to know him.

TABLE TALK

- If you could live a day as any animal, what animal would you be? What are some of the good and bad things about living as that animal?
- What are some ways people and animals are different?
- Are people or animals more important to God?

Explain that people are worth more than animals, because we're the only part of creation made in God's image. We were made to have a relationship with God. Even Jesus said in Matthew 10:31 that we're "worth more than many sparrows."

LIVING FAITH

Spend a few moments one evening going on a family treasure hunt around your house. You can write your own clues or use the ones given. End your hunt at a mirror (either handheld or in a bathroom) so your family can discover God's greatest creation—you!

Clue No. 1

I'm no simple box with doors and a light.
I will keep your food cold, both day and night.

Clue No. 2 (hide in refrigerator)

Yawn. If you're tired, you're coming to me.
For safety and warmth, I'm the place to be.

Clue No. 3 (hide in a bed)

I'm pretty and make oxygen for you.
Give me water—it's the right thing to do.

Clue No. 4 (hide in a plant)

With four wheels and an engine, I go fast.
But without any gas, I cannot last.

Clue No. 5 (hide in car)

Your search is almost over, so be glad.
You wipe your eyes with me when you are sad.

OPTION 1—TAKES YOU TO BATHROOM**Clue No. 6 (hide in tissue box)**

This is the last clue. Hope it has been fun.
Always wash your hands in here when you're done.

OPTION 2—TAKES YOU TO COUCH WHERE YOU'VE PUT A MIRROR UNDER THE CUSHIONS**Clue No. 6 (hide in tissue box)**

Come to me when you want to sit around.
Lift up my cushions and treasure you've found.

When you find the mirror, ask your children to identify the treasure. (They should say it's them.) Remind your children that they are created in God's image. Let them know how proud you are of them. Talk about some of the things you appreciate about them and tie that into how those characteristics are from God. Tell them you expect a lot from them and have high standards because they are God's perfect creation. Encourage them to always follow God and his will for their lives.

EXTRA MILE

For added emphasis on this week's themes, try one of these activities.

1. Grab a family photo album that has some shots of you enjoying the outdoors. Ask:

- **What do you remember most about this experience?**
- **What are some of your favorite things about God's creation?**
- **How can you see God's handiwork in the outdoors?**
- **Where are some places you'd like to visit?**

If the conversation leads, plan a fun family outing or your next family vacation.

2. Remind your children that all people are important to God by taking some food to a local food bank or going through your closets and making a donation to a homeless shelter. Remind your kids that helping the less fortunate shows them God's love.



GOD