

Genesis: The Book That Started It All

Weekly Devotionals | August 17

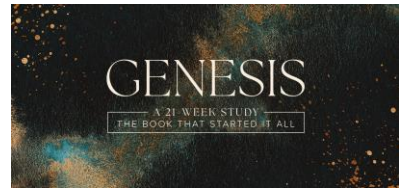
OPEN with prayer.

Begin this devotional exercise by finding a quiet place where you can spend time with God in His word. Before reading, pray that the Holy Spirit would open your eyes and heart to what God wants to say to you through His word.

*Dear God,
You are the creator.
I am your creation.
You are love, wisdom, grace, goodness and mercy.
You are creator, sustainer, and restorer.
And you made me in your image.
Let me honor the divine likeness in how I live.
May I reflect your virtues in who I am and in all I do this day.
And every day.
I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,
Who alone is the perfect image of the invisible God.
Amen.*

READ Genesis 1:26 – 2:25.

- In 1:26 God says, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.” What do we learn about God through the words “us” and “ours” in this verse? Consider this verse in relationship with 2:18. Why do you think it was important for God to create woman?
- How does being in the image of God connect to our relationships? Take a moment to think through the relationships you’re in. What is it about these relationships that seems like the relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

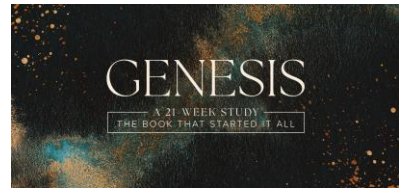


- Is there anything in your relationships that seems isolating, self-serving, or combative? What does it look like for you personally to lean into relationships in such a way that they reflect the relationship within the Trinity?

- Once God speaks about the creation of humanity, he puts them to work, “Let them rule” (1:26). There is a connection between being made in God’s image and ruling. How do you find this reality expressed in your own life? What do we know about the way God rules? How might this be fleshed out in your own life?

- Read 1:28 and 2:15. God’s blessing seems to be connected to man’s effort. Humans are designed to bear the image of God in a way that leads to flourishing. Just as God brought order out of the chaos (1:2), so humans are to subdue the earth. To subdue means to steward it, cultivate it in such a way that it harnesses the earth’s potential in a way that aligns with God’s purposes. This all leads to a series of questions:
 1. How do you view work? Do you see work as an opportunity to reflect God’s image in the world or as the result of the curse? What would it look like for you to step into the work you are doing as a way of living out God’s vision for your life?

 2. Think about the word “subdue” ...
 - a. In what ways do you tend to exploit the earth and God’s creation? Think about the foods you eat, how you utilize natural resources, the



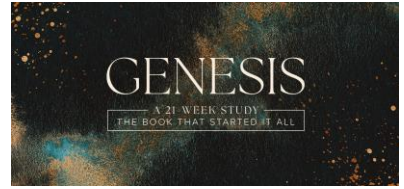
way you treat people who are not like yourself, etc. Do you use the resources of the world for your own gain or do you care for them in a way that promotes long-term flourishing? What parts of your life are being driven more by a consumer mentality than a stewardship mentality? Invite the Holy Spirit to accompany you as you reflect on your life in this way... Try not to think through the lens of media or politics, but simply with a curious, listening posture.

- b. What areas of your life do you find yourself contributing to the flourishing of all things? (Again, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you capture and celebrate how you get to work alongside God's vision for you).

- c. What stirs in you as you reflect on these questions? Is there anything God is inviting you into?

CLOSE with the same prayer you began with:

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I am your creation.
You are love, wisdom, grace, goodness and mercy.
You are creator, sustainer, and restorer.
And you made me in your image.
Let me honor the divine likeness in how I live.
May I reflect your virtues in who I am and in all I do this day.
And every day.
I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,
Who alone is the perfect image of the invisible God.*



Amen.