



The Story of Scripture

LIFEGROUP STUDY

SESSION ONE: THE STORY OF CREATION (8/7/2022)

JOHN 1:10-13; PSALM 33:6-9

MAIN POINT

The all-powerful God merely spoke and brought the universe into existence. Every snow-capped Alpine peak and every island paradise, every jungle cat, leviathan of the sea, and mosquito in your backyard was made in the wisdom and knowledge of an intelligent design and for a specific purpose—God's glory.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

How would you answer if someone asked you why is it important to know and understand the doctrines of the Christian faith?

Have you experienced the reality that the gospel is simple enough for a child to understand but complex enough to never been completely understood? How has this impacted you?

Our primary text in this lesson (and the next three lessons) is John 1:10-13. In this study we will focus particularly on verses 10 (He was in the world, and the world was created through him) and 11 (He came to his own). These clauses are packed with theological truth that is worthy of our attention.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:10B; PSALM 33:6-9; GENESIS 1.

What did John say that Jesus did in verse 10b? What is this significant?

Read Psalm 33:6-9. What part of this passage do you find the most striking, surprising? Why?

Consider Genesis 1 in light of John's revelation. What attributes of God do we see in Genesis 1? How do these also apply to Jesus?

What does the truth of Genesis 1 have to do with how we live our lives today?

The purpose of John's Gospel was to show his readers that Jesus is the Christ so that they would believe. In John 1:10-13 there are two foundational questions that John sought to address: 1) Who was Jesus? and 2) What did He do? These two questions depend upon each other to be answered from John's perspective. If we know what Jesus did, then it will be obvious who He is. And if we know who Jesus is, then the meaning of what He did will be clear.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:10B; JOHN 1:1-3.

What does John tell us about creation in 1:10b? What does this mean? How are we to understand Jesus' role in creation?

What is the orthodox understanding of Jesus being fully God? What does the Bible teach about this question?

How can I pray, sing, read Scripture, and live in a way that accurately reflects my relationship to all three persons of the Trinity?

The doctrine of creation is simple yet profound. It's simple because even a child can comprehend that God made us. It is profound because we will spend the rest of our days contemplating and beholding the mystery of God's eternity, power, and goodness. It won't be until we pass from this life to the next that we fully appreciate and grasp our complete dependence upon an independent self-sufficient Being. The mystery only deepens when we overlay John's words with what we know about creation and the Creator.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:10A, 11A, 14A.

What truth did John want to convey to his readers? What does it mean, exactly, that God the Son took on flesh?

How does the reality of the incarnation change the way that you understand and treasure the gospel? How might you live in a way that truly shows that the good news of the incarnate Jesus is truly precious to you?

We have already considered God’s glory in creation and the wonder of the Trinity. Now, let’s think about one more fundamental truth about God that is both simple and deeper than we can fathom. John wrote, “He was in the world” (10a). And then in verse 11a “He came to his own.” Finally, in verse 14a, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

If God owns what He creates, what does it mean to belong to God? If people looked at your calendar, checkbook, or your browser history would they conclude that you belong to God? What needs to change?

If you are a Christian, does your life mirror His humility and service to others? Who are those that you serve? Do you expect to be served or do you look for ways to serve others?

What are some ways that you can expand your theological understanding of the Trinity so that you will better understand and appreciate the work of the Triune God on your behalf?

PRAYER

Pray with these great truths in mind today. Pray as a person under authority, in submission. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Pray to the Triune God acknowledging the different roles of the three persons of the Trinity on your behalf. Finally, pray with great joy giving thanks for the incarnation of Christ. Worship God because the Son of God took on flesh in order to redeem His people from death and the wrath of God the Father.

COMMENTARY

| JOHN 1:10-13

1:10-11. Immediately after describing the announcement, John tells us about apathy toward the message of regeneration. The world (kosmos) is another of John’s theme words; he used it seventy-seven times. With the device of repetition, John taught incarnation, creation, and rejection all in one verse (v. 10). Depravity and blindness thwarted God’s efforts to reach out to his own creation—and still do.

In verse 11, the first appearance of the word *own* appears in the neuter gender and the second is masculine. What significance could such a distinction have for interpretation? One possibility is that Jesus came to earth, the place he had created, and the second tells us that the people who lived there turned him away. He was not welcomed or accepted.

1:12-13. Early in his book, John established the heart of the gospel, still two chapters away from the famous John 3:16. From the announcement of regeneration followed by apathy the apostle introduces the acceptance of regeneration.

Like most things in life, there is a right way and a wrong way to respond to God. The right way (and the only meaningful way) is to believe the gospel, receive the Savior and accept new birth as a result. The wrong way somehow links a relationship to God with human qualities such as physical birth, self-determination, or the choice of another person. In John's theological vocabulary, *believed* and *received* are synonymous when it comes to the gospel.

| PSALM 33:6-9

33:6-9. The psalmist declared, By the breath of his mouth, he made everything out of nothing, which is to say, he created *ex nihilo*. Omnipotently, he gathered the waters of the sea into jars like a farmer who puts his grain into storehouses. As a result, let all the earth fear the Lord, since he exercises such power over lives. For he spoke, and it came to be without any opposition or failure.

33:10-11. In the same way, God rules over human affairs. The Lord foils the plans of the nations that seek to operate contrary to his sovereign will. The plans of the Lord stand firm forever as opposed to the plans of impotent men who are always changing. The purposes of his heart endure unchanged, unlike the purposes of people. The God who spoke this world into existence continues to rule over it and to order all things by the secret counsel of his will (cp. Eph. 1:11).