

Session 3

Creation and Identity

Key Point: Knowing our God-given identity. I am created for relationship with God, others, and the world.

Key Encouragement: You have immense value and dignity.

Session Goals:

Pray for each other's family and friends.

Discuss the significance of being created 'in God's image'.

Notice how important the search for meaning and significance is for most people.

Introduction

People may make jokes about having 'an existential crisis', but the desire for meaning and purpose runs deep within us. God's story, revealed in the Bible, helps us understand why humans are like this.

What key points were made in the video? Did anything stand out for you?

Share with the group any parts of the Gospel summary 'Key to Christianity' that stood out for you, or any questions you had with the presentation.



Train

One way of summarising God's story is to divide it into four main stages, Creation, Fall, Redemption and Re-creation. In each of the next four sessions we'll look at one stage in God's story and how it intersects with our story. We'll consider how each stage of God's story answers the questions people ask about life and connect it with words that come up in everyday conversation.

In this session we focus on Creation. Knowing that God created us helps us answer questions about identity and purpose; questions like 'Who am I?', 'Do I matter?' and 'What is the purpose of my life?'.

God's Story: Creation

In Genesis 1 we learn about God's relationship with the people and world He made. We learn about who we are and what our God-given purpose is.

Read Genesis 1:26-31.

1. What do we learn about our relationship with:

a. God?

b. other people?

c. the world?

2. What does God think about us and our world?

Read Psalm 8:3-9.

3. Who or what are we created for?

4. What is the right response to our God and Creator?

Origin stories are powerful in giving us a sense of identity and purpose. Humans are created in God's image for relationship with God, each other, and the world. We were created to enjoy Him and His blessings as we care for each other in the world God made. When we understand how precious and important we are to God, we find a secure dignity, meaning and purpose. The impact of rightly understanding and embracing who God made us to be should ripple out from us and bless the lives of those around us.

My Story: Identity – Who am I?

How does God's story connect with you personally and become part of your story? How do you know, experience, and live out these truths in your life?

Choose one of the following questions to reflect on. They are different angles on the topic of Creation and Identity. There are several starting points because different approaches 'click' with different people. Choose the one that feels most natural to you. Aim to illustrate your answer with a specific example or story from your life. Spend a couple of minutes making some notes about what to share with the group.

1. How does being created in God's image give me dignity, value and/or purpose (i.e. why do I matter)?

Be specific. When has knowing this helped me respond to a situation at work, negotiate a difficult relationship, make a decision, etc? When has it changed my perspective or brought me joy?

2. How does knowing that all people are created in God's image, with dignity and value, shape the way I relate to them (i.e. why do you matter)?

Be specific. Is there a time when knowing this changed the way I thought, felt, and treated people?

3. What do I find beautiful about the picture in Genesis 1:26-31? Why?

Share

Share with the group about two more of the five people you are praying for regularly. Tell the group a little about your relationship with them. As you share, please remember to respect their privacy.

- How do you think they would answer the questions 'Who am I?', 'Do I matter?' and 'What is the purpose of my life? '.

- Take time to consider how their lives would be better if they knew Jesus.

Pray

When I consider your heavens,
 the work of your fingers,
 the moon and the stars,
 which you have set in place,
 what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
 human beings that you care for them?
 You have made them a little lower than the angels
 and crowned them with glory and honour.
 You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
 you put everything under their feet:
 all flocks and herds,
 and the animals of the wild,
 the birds in the sky,
 and the fish in the sea,
 all that swim the paths of the seas.
 Lord, our Lord,
 how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalms 8:3-9 (NIV)

Psalm 8:3-9 describes the right response to our creator God. Use this passage to guide your prayers for each other and for the family and friends you shared about earlier.

- Praise God for creating us with dignity and purpose.
- Ask God to help your friends and family see the beauty and satisfaction of knowing our God-given value and purpose.
- Ask for opportunities to share your story about the God who created us, and who knows and loves.
- Pray for each of the conversations and friends that people shared about earlier.

Review

1. In Genesis 2, the creation narrative narrows its focus to humanity. It speaks about who we are, as it again describes our relationship with God, each other, and the world God made. We need to read Genesis 1 and 2 together to understand them both. **Read Genesis 2** and add to the answers you gave in God's story.

2. From Genesis 1-2, write out an answer to the following questions:
 - Who am I?

 - What is my purpose?

3. Think of the five people you are praying for regularly. For each person, consider how they would answer the questions: 'Who am I?' and 'What is my purpose?' Take time to consider how their lives would be better if they knew Jesus.