



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT®

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# ADULTS PREVIEW GUIDE

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# All Ages Study Plan

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## Year 1

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**Volume 1 (Fall 2024)**  
**Creation and Covenant**

Genesis; Job

**Volume 2 (Winter 2024-25)**  
**Law and Life**

Exodus–Deuteronomy

**Volume 3 (Spring 2025)**  
**Land and Loss**

Joshua–1 Samuel

**Volume 4 (Summer 2025)**  
**Foolishness and Wisdom**

1 Samuel–1 Kings;  
Wisdom Literature

## Year 2

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**Volume 5 (Fall 2025)**  
**Division and Defiance**

1 Kings–2 Chronicles;  
The Prophets

**Volume 6 (Winter 2025-26)**  
**Prophets and Provision**

The Prophets; Ezra–Esther

**Volume 7 (Spring 2026)**  
**The Son Has Come**

The Gospels

**Volume 8 (Summer 2026)**  
**The Son Has Authority**

The Gospels

## Year 3

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**Volume 9 (Fall 2026)**  
**The Son Has Truth**

The Gospels

**Volume 10 (Winter 2026-27)**  
**The Son Has Risen**

The Gospels; Acts

**Volume 11 (Spring 2027)**  
**The Church Has a Mission**

Acts; The Epistles

**Volume 12 (Summer 2027)**  
**The Church Has a Future**

The Epistles; Revelation



“The Gospel Project walks through Scripture and helps people understand the whole Bible is one overarching story of God’s love.”

Neal Goodson, First Baptist, Dublin, GA

# FROM THE TEAM

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Say you are traveling somewhere new. How would you get there? You might turn to the Internet, call up the directions on a mobile app, or even purchase a paper map and mark out your journey. It might even be fun to go old school and use a travel agency. They would take care of all the arrangements with bookings, flights, and reservations, and give you the details needed to guide you throughout your excursion.

We often refer to the study plan of The Gospel Project as a journey, and like a travel agency, we aim to be faithful guides along this unique path. In the span of three years, we help groups travel through the Scriptures following the storyline of the Bible. From creation to Jesus's second coming, we navigate dark valleys and bright mountain vistas with the goal of understanding and appreciating not just the destination but the journey as well. The purpose of The Gospel Project is not just to enjoy the end of the story but to see fruit develop in our lives along the way because it all has purpose and meaning, namely, to point us to Jesus Christ.

The Gospel Project for Adults helps teachers and group participants along this journey. But we recognize that the guides on the ground are the teachers in the trenches, faithful Bible study group leaders who invest their time in study, preparation, and teaching, and in the lives of their group members. These teachers use faithful resources such as The Gospel Project, but their ultimate faith, and ours, is in Jesus our Savior, in the truth of God's Word (which speaks of Him), and in our ultimate Guide and Counselor, the Holy Spirit, who helps us to see Him in truth and faith.

We hope and pray to serve you well as a guide through the storyline of Scripture. And we hope and pray that our resources will help teachers and learners be engaged in faithful and meaningful study of God's Word for their good, for the benefit of the gospel mission, and for God's glory.

In Christ,  
The Gospel Project Team

## The Gospel Project is...

**Christ Centered.** It's all about Jesus, and every story points back to Him.

**Chronological.** All age levels study the narrative of the Bible in order, from Genesis to Revelation.

**Heart Transforming.** This study is designed to encourage true transformation that comes only from the gospel, not from behavior modification.

**Theologically Rich.** All studies are presented in an age-aware manner, and every session is doctrinally sound and thorough.

**Age Aligned.** Each week, every participant—from preschoolers to adults—can study from the same section of Scripture.

**Missionally Minded.** Every session calls participants to respond by sharing and living out the gospel.

# HOW WILL THIS HELP ADULTS?

## 1. Strong Foundation

The Gospel Project encourages people to dig into the Word of God for themselves prior to the group experience so they can participate in and contribute to the learning within the group.

- Learners will orient themselves in the biblical storyline with the session context and a timeline.
- Learners can complete their personal preparation in one, two, or even four days, depending on their style and schedule. They will read and interact with the Scriptures and be aided in their understanding by some brief commentary and reflection questions.
- Learners will see how Jesus Christ and His gospel are the focus of the Scriptures and how the theology of the Christian faith is grounded in the Scriptures.

**PERSONAL PREPARATION**  
GENESIS 2:18-25

**Key Concept: God created humanity for relationships.**

**GOD CREATED HUMAN BEINGS TO BE IN COMMUNITY WITH OTHERS.**  
Identify the three main scenes in this passage and briefly summarize each.

18 Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." 19 The Lord God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal, but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. 22 Then the Lord God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 And the man said, "This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man." 24 This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

**THEOLOGY CONNECTION**  
So God took a rib from the man and fashioned it into a woman, a companion who was like the man yet distinct and different, and she became his wife (2:21-22). For the work of tending the garden and multiplying to fill the earth, this woman would be the man's "helper" (2:18). We must not identify this role as clerical or administrative but as a role of honor and dignity, one that reflects God's image. For God himself is called a "helper" in Exodus 18:4.

**GOSPEL CONNECTION**  
The exclusive relationship between husband and wife pictures the plan of God for Christ and the church to be united as one through the perfect sacrificial death of Jesus to cleanse us of our sins and make us holy (Ephesians 5:22-33).

## 2. Engaged Learning

The Gospel Project provides an enhanced group experience designed to help learners draw on their personal preparation from the week prior, contribute to the group activity and discussion, and apply the Word of God to their lives.

- Learners will participate in an interactive group activity to reinforce and refine what they learned through their study of the Scriptures in their personal preparation.
- Learners are encouraged to apply the teachings of Scripture through a Head, Heart, Hands framework because God seeks to transform every aspect of our lives through His Word.

**GROUP EXPERIENCE**  
CREATED FOR RELATIONSHIPS  
Based on Genesis 2:18-25, how should we relate to God? How should we relate to others?

**Key Concept: God created humanity for relationships.**

**PRAYING SCRIPTURE**  
Read Psalm 146, noticing how every aspect of God's creation should prompt thanksgiving to God for His work of creation.

**PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES**

**HEAD**  
When we come upon your life should change if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity?

**HEART**  
When your life leads you to isolation? How can the community of Jesus in the church help you to resist temptation? To enjoy fellowship?

**HANDS**  
How will you reflect God's image in your work and relationships with others this week?

UNIT 1 | SESSION 1

# GOD CREATED HUMANITY

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:7,15-25



**CONTEXT**

In the beginning, in Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. In six days, God created the domains of sky, sea, and land and filled them with lights and living creatures. But for all the wonder of the created world around us and the universe beyond us, the Lord made human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. We were created, both male and female, uniquely in the image of God. The world was created for humanity and humanity for the world, a realm to steward together in God's name. And God declared it all to be "very good" in His sight. In Genesis 2, the Scripture zooms in on the creation of the man and woman God made in His image.

**KEY CONCEPT**

**God created humanity for relationships.**

As you examine Genesis 2:7,15-25:

- Identify how we ought to relate to God and others because of how God created humanity.
- Contemplate the changes that ought to occur in your life if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity.

**TIMELINE**

The Eternal God Creates (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

- Day 1: Light/Day and Night
- Day 2: Seas and Sky
- Day 3: Land and Plants
- Day 4: Lights/Sun, Moon, and Stars
- Day 5: Fish and Birds
- Day 6: Animals and Humans (Zoom in with Genesis 2:4-25)
- Day 7: God Rested

**Daily Readings**

- Day 1: Genesis 1:1-13
- Day 2: Genesis 1:14-2:3
- Day 3: Psalm 6
- Day 4: Genesis 2:4-17
- Day 5: Genesis 2:18-25
- Day 6: Psalm 148

Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

**PERSONAL PREPARATION**

GENESIS 2:7,15-17

**GOD CREATED HUMANITY AS SPECIAL AND WITH PURPOSE.**

*Circle the actions (verbs) performed by God in this passage.*

7 Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. . . . 15 The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

**CHRIST CONNECTION**

First Corinthians 15:45-49 quotes Genesis 2:7 and makes an explicit comparison between "the first man Adam" and "the last Adam," or Jesus. The former is a man of dust, and we all take after his image, being descendants of Adam by birth. The latter is a man of heaven, and we will bear His perfect image through faith in Jesus crucified for our sins and raised again.

**Key Concept: God created humanity for relationships.**

God created humanity in His image (Genesis 1:27), an honor bestowed upon nothing else. So we as people are unique and special amongst God's creation. For this we should be grateful. God created us and blessed us—we exist and are alive because God has breathed in us the breath of life (1:27-28, 2:7). And so, as God declared, it is good to be alive (1:31).

**What are some ways you can use your breath to honor the God who created you in His image?**

the man in the garden to work it and watch over it (2:15). This was to be the perfect realm for humanity's expanding rule as those made in God's image (1:28).

Yet the man was to rule as a steward under the ultimate authority of his Creator and Sustainer. To ground this reality for the man, God raised up and identified one tree in Eden among all the other trees and commanded the man not to eat of that one (2:17). The consequence of disobedience would be death.

**How can our work today reflect our status as stewards under God's ultimate authority?**

Before we let our uniquely created status go to our heads, let us consider our bodies. We aren't made of gold, silver, or precious stones. Rather, the Lord formed humanity from the dust of the ground (2:7). From this humble beginning, a body fashioned out of the dirt, then infused with the breath of God, humanity was elevated by God, first to life and then to a responsibility.

The Lord planted a garden in a place that we know as Eden (2:8), and He took the man He had formed and placed him in that garden for two reasons. One, to provide food for the man (2:16). The Lord created this man, and all humanity, with the need for food, and the Lord provided abundantly for that need in Eden. And two, God placed

See a session sample of the *Personal Study Guide* starting on page 9 of this Preview Guide.

# HOW WILL THIS HELP LEADERS?

## 1. Personal Preparation

The leader of a Bible study group is still part of the group, with the same need for Bible reading and reflection, so the leader can have the same preparation experience as learners through the *Leader Guide*.

- The *Leader Guide* includes the same content as the *Personal Study Guide* for storyline orientation, interacting with the Scriptures, and brief commentary and reflection questions.
- Like learners, leaders will see how Jesus Christ and His gospel are the focus of the Scriptures and how the theology of the Christian faith is grounded in the Scriptures.
- The *Leader Guide* also provides some additional notes for leaders to consider and use as necessary when leading the group.

## 2. Group Experience

The leader of the group is responsible for helping the group participants understand and apply the Scriptures to their lives. The Group Experience instructions in the *Leader Guide* will help the leader do just that.

- Questions and instructions reinforce the expectation that group participants prepare ahead of time for the group experience and help get everyone up to speed for the group activity that week.
- An activity-based learning process contributes to group learning. Participants will draw on their personal preparation in the week prior, helping them to learn from and challenge one another.
- The Head, Heart, Hands framework will foster the application of each session's Scriptures and challenge group participants with potential next steps for the week ahead, including the discipline of learning to pray through Scripture.

This screenshot shows the first page of a Bible study guide. At the top, it says 'UNIT 1 - SESSION 1' and 'GOD CREATED HUMANITY'. Below that, it lists the 'CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 9:1-10:25'. The page is divided into several sections: 'CONTEXT', 'KEY CONCERN', and 'TIMELINE'. The 'CONTEXT' section discusses the beginning of Genesis and the creation of humanity. The 'KEY CONCERN' section focuses on 'God created humanity for relationships'. The 'TIMELINE' section shows a sequence of events from Day 1 to Day 7. There are also 'Daily Readings' listed for each day. A QR code is present at the bottom right of the page.

This screenshot shows the second page of the Bible study guide, titled 'PERSONAL PREPARATION'. It contains a section titled 'GOD CREATED HUMANITY AS SPECIAL AND WITH PURPOSE: GENESIS 9:1-10:25'. The text discusses the creation of humanity and the relationship between God and humans. It includes a 'Key Insight' about God creating humanity for relationships. There is a 'LEADER NOTE' section with advice for leaders. At the bottom, there is a 'CHRIST CONNECTION' section with a quote from the Bible. The page is numbered '2' at the bottom.

### 3. Commentary NEW!

Some leaders just want more when it comes to their own personal study and preparation for leading their groups. Our commentary resource provides more of what these leaders are looking for.

- *The Commentary* expands on the content base available for the core passage in the *Personal Study Guide* and *Leader Guide* for each week with an analysis of the text from a different writer's perspective.
- *The Commentary* includes the same Scripture breakdown and the same questions available in the personal preparation phase of the *Personal Study Guide* and *Leader Guide* as well as the same questions for Head, Heart, Hands for application.
- *The Commentary* can function as a supplement to the *Leader Guide* for personal preparation. And because it includes the Christ/Gospel/Theology Connections (key elements of The Gospel Project), the *Commentary* can also function as a large-print personal study guide for groups that prefer an increased print size.

UNIT 1 • SESSION 1

## GOD CREATED HUMANITY

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:7,15-25

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**Context:** In the beginning, in Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. In six days, God created the domains of sky, sea, and land and filled them with lights and living creatures. But for all the wonder of the created world around us and the universe beyond us, the Lord made human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. We were created, both male and female, uniquely in the image of God. The world was created for humanity and humanity for the world, a realm to steward together in God's name. And God declared it all to be "very good" in His sight. In Genesis 2, the Scripture zooms in on the creation of the man and woman God made in His image.

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

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DAILY READINGS

□ Day 1: Genesis 1:1-13	□ Day 4: Genesis 2:6-17
□ Day 2: Genesis 1:14-23	□ Day 5: Genesis 2:18-25
□ Day 3: Psalm 8	□ Day 6: Psalm 148

God created humanity as special and with purpose (Genesis 2:7,15, 17)

"Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. . . ." The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. "And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

**All People Are Valuable, Made in God's Image**  
In Genesis 1, in the beginning, there was God. Everlasting, ever-present, ever-powerful, ever-body, ever-loving. He exists as the triune God, and in the beginning, He created the heavens and the earth. Everything started with Him, and nothing exists except through Him (John 1:3). He continues to sustain all things to this day. We are talking about the triune God as we see that the Word—the Son—was from the beginning (John 1:1) with the Father and with the Spirit. It's important to start with God because without a belief in an all-supreme, all-good creator being, there is no foundation or purpose to anything good in life. Why have mankind and nature? Why do I humankind? Why treat each other with love? Why all types of evil? Why care for the earth? Yes, come up with tertiary reasons for doing so, but ultimately come down to the fact that God did it all, created us, and gave us a purpose in Him. So when we come to chapter 2 in Genesis, a tion of humanity (an expansion of Genesis 1

CHRIST CONNECTION

If you could meet 1546-69 quotes Genesis 2:2 and makes an explicit connection between "the first man, Adam" and "the last Adam," or Jesus. The former is made of dust, and we all inherit the image-bearing descendants of Adam. The latter is a man of heaven, and we will have the perfect image through faith in Jesus Christ for our sins and eternal glory.

What are some ways you can use your breath to honor the God who created you in His image?"

To make this connection clearer—that God is intimately invested in us—going back to the beginning of this section of Scripture in verse 4, the phrase "Lord God" (Yahweh-Elohim) is used for the first time. Before this, God was referred to only as "God" (Elohim). But in verse 4, the use of the word "Yahweh" God's personal name (see Ex. 3:14-15), shows "the personal

covenant name of God who relates to and redeems his people. . . . Beautifully, Yahweh-Elohim combines the Creator and Covenant-Redeemer aspects of God into one magnificent name."

This starts the personal relationship that exists between humanity and God. He is our Maker. We are not only His beloved creation, we are part of His beloved family, and God will stop at nothing to keep us in relationship with Him, even at the cost of the crucifixion of His beloved Son. Because we are His special creation and He was intentional in creating us to be in relationship with Him, we find our value and worth in being made in God's image. We also find value in all people as they too are made in His image. As such, God gives us a foundation for why we are to love all people, treating everyone with respect, care, and honor because they are made in His image. From the unborn child to the broken murderer to the poverty-stricken refugee to the undisciplined orphan—we are called to love, grieve for, care for, and serve them all.

When we demean others, say crude jokes, disrespect God's image-bearers, or don't uphold the sanctity of life in others, we are ridiculing God's workmanship. We dishonor God and His creation when we cannot see the image of God in every person. Every human being has value and worth, even those who don't yet know Christ. For God so loved us all that He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us and restore our relationship with Him.

See session samples of the *Leader Guide* on pages 19-29 and the *Commentary* on pages 31-43.

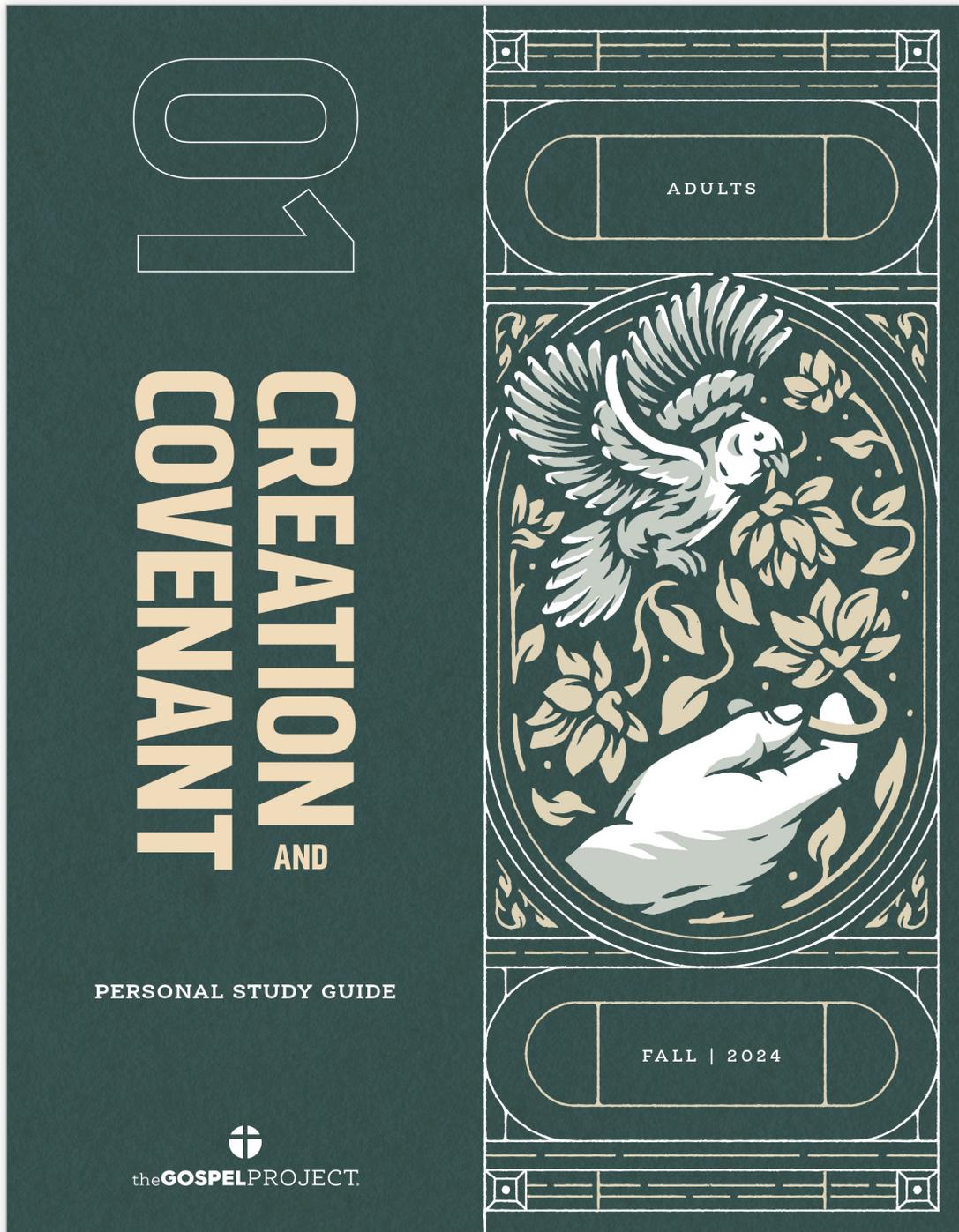
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Guide me in your truth  
and teach me, for you  
are the God of my  
salvation...

Psalms 25:5 (CSB)

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# PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE



Download two additional sessions at [gospelproject.com/preview](https://gospelproject.com/preview)

# Features

## 1. Timeline

The timeline and context provided here will help learners orient themselves to how the session's Scripture passages fit in the biblical storyline.

## 2. Daily Readings

The daily reading suggestions for each week will help the learner read through the Bible chronologically over a three-year period.

## 3. Digital Scriptures

The core Scripture passage for the session (printed in CSB) will also be available digitally in CSB, ESV, or KJV for easy access and reading.

UNIT 1 | SESSION 1

# GOD CREATED HUMANITY

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:7,15-25

### CONTEXT

In the beginning, in Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. In six days, God created the domains of sky, sea, and land and filled them with lights and living creatures. But for all the wonder of the created world around us and the universe beyond us, the Lord made human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. We were created, both male and female, uniquely in the image of God. The world was created for humanity and humanity for the world, a realm to steward together in God's name. And God declared it all to be "very good" in His sight. In Genesis 2, the Scripture zooms in on the creation of the man and woman God made in His image.

### KEY CONCEPT

**God created humanity for relationships.**

As you examine Genesis 2:7,15-25:

- Identify how we ought to relate to God and others because of how God created humanity.
- Contemplate the changes that ought to occur in your life if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity.

1

Actual page size of Personal Study Guide: 7" x 9"



**TIMELINE**

**1**

The Eternal God Creates (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

**Day 1:** Light/Day and Night

**Day 3:** Land and Plants

**Day 5:** Fish and Birds

**Day 7:** God Rested

**Day 2:** Seas and Sky

**Day 4:** Lights/Sun, Moon, and Stars

**SESSION STUDY: Day 6:** Animals and Humans (zoom in with Genesis 2:4-25)

**2**

**Daily Readings**

- Day 1:** Genesis 1:1-13
- Day 2:** Genesis 1:14-2:3
- Day 3:** Psalm 8
- Day 4:** Genesis 2:4-17
- Day 5:** Genesis 2:18-25
- Day 6:** Psalm 148



**3**

Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

**2**

# 1

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

GENESIS 2:7,15-17

### GOD CREATED HUMANITY AS SPECIAL AND WITH PURPOSE.

*Circle the actions (verbs) performed by God in this passage.*

**7** Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. . . . **15** The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

# 2

## CHRIST CONNECTION

First Corinthians 15:45-49 quotes Genesis 2:7 and makes an explicit comparison between "the first man Adam" and "the last Adam," or Jesus. The former is a man of dust, and we all take after his image, being descendants of Adam by birth. The latter is a man of heaven, and we will bear His perfect image through faith in Jesus crucified for our sins and raised again.

3

Unit 1 | Session 1 | God Created Humanity

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

God created humanity in His image (Genesis 1:27), an honor bestowed upon nothing else. So we as people are unique and special amongst God's creation. For this we should be grateful. God created us and blessed us—we exist and are alive because God has breathed in us the breath of life (1:27-28; 2:7). And so, as God declared, it is good to be alive (1:31).

**What are some ways you can use your breath to honor the God who created you in His image?**

Before we let our uniquely created status go to our heads, let us consider our bodies. We aren't made of gold, silver, or precious stones. Rather, the Lord formed humanity from the dust of the ground (2:7). From this humble beginning, a body fashioned out of the dirt, then infused with the breath of God, humanity was elevated by God, first to life and then to a responsibility.

The Lord planted a garden in a place that we know as Eden (2:8), and He took the man He had formed and placed him in that garden for two reasons. One, to provide food for the man (2:16). The Lord created this man, and all humanity, with the need for food, and the Lord provided abundantly for that need in Eden. And two, God placed

the man in the garden to work it and watch over it (2:15). This was to be the perfect realm for humanity's expanding rule as those made in God's image (1:28).

Yet the man was to rule as a steward under the ultimate authority of his Creator and Sustainer. To ground this reality for the man, God raised up and identified one tree in Eden among all the other trees and commanded the man not to eat of that one (2:17). The consequence of disobedience would be death.

**How can our work today reflect our status as stewards under God's ultimate authority?**



4

## Features

### 1. Interact with the Scriptures

An instruction and space are available for learners to interact with the Bible passage and record thoughts and questions to share and address later.

### 2. Christ/Gospel Connection

The Gospel Project for Adults will help learners see how the Scriptures, from beginning to end, point believers to Christ and His gospel.

# Features

## 1. Guided Reflection

A brief commentary on the Scripture passage and reflection questions will help the learner study God's Word and prepare for the upcoming group experience.

## 2. Theology Connection

The Gospel Project for Adults will help learners see how the theology of the Christian faith is drawn from the truth of God's Word.

### PERSONAL PREPARATION

GENESIS 2:18-25

### GOD CREATED HUMAN BEINGS TO BE IN COMMUNITY WITH OTHERS.

*Identify the three main scenes in this passage and briefly summarize each.*

**18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." **19** The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. **21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. **22** Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man. **24** This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

### GOSPEL CONNECTION

The exclusive relationship between husband and wife pictures the plan of God for Christ and the church to be united as one through the perfect sacrificial death of Jesus to cleanse us of our sins and make us holy (Ephesians 5:22-33).

5 Unit 1 | Session 1 | God Created Humanity

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

1

The constant refrain of Genesis 1 is “And God saw that it was good,” describing various stages of His creative work. God even concluded day six with the declaration that it was all “very good indeed” (1:31). But before the “very good” was accomplished, a “not good” was first identified (2:18). The man God created in His image was alone. Certainly, the Lord was with him, but God knew the man needed “a helper corresponding to him,” someone like him who could be a complement to him, unlike a dog, cat, bird, or fish (2:19-20).

2

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**MAN:** Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God’s creation.

So God took a rib from the man and fashioned it into a woman, a companion who was like the man yet distinct and different, and she became his wife (2:21-24). For the work of tending the garden and multiplying to fill the earth, this woman would be the man’s “helper” (2:18). We must not classify this role as slavish or subservient but as a role of honor and dignity, one that reflects God’s image, for God Himself is called a “helper” in Exodus 18:4.

**What are some ways God’s people should honor God for the good gift of gender as male and female?**

The first man and woman God created set the pattern for a husband and wife to join together and become “one flesh” in a relationship of love, sacrifice, submission, and respect (Ephesians 5:22-33). The fruit of marriage was expected to be a family with children and then a community obeying the Word of the Lord. As a result of Adam’s sin (Genesis 3), we don’t always see these intended outcomes, yet the Lord remains faithful, even through childlessness, unintentional singleness, and loneliness. Through the love and sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, God has raised up a community in the church to love and help one another. And in the church, we are united with one another and supremely with Christ.

**How can your group help others who feel lonely and isolated?**

# Features

## 1. Group Activity

Activity-based learning will help group participants recall, process, and apply what they learned in their personal preparation time. This also provides a varied experience each week that keeps the group experience fresh, engaging, and meaningful.

## 2. Head, Heart, Hands

Application through the Head, Heart, Hands framework will help group members recognize and experience transformation of their whole selves through the teaching of the Scriptures.

## 3. Praying Scripture

Group participants will be challenged each week to pray using Scripture as a guide, which will reinforce the learning from the session and connect them with the One who gave us His Word so we could be in relationship with Him.

**GROUP EXPERIENCE**

**CREATED FOR RELATIONSHIPS**

*Based on Genesis 2:7,15-25, how should we relate to God?  
How should we relate to others?*

**GOD**                      **1**                      **OTHERS**

What is one insight you gained from this activity that you need to think more about?

**7**      Unit 1 | Session 1 | God Created Humanity

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

2



## HEAD

What are some ways your life should change if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity?

3

## PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read Psalm 148, noticing how every aspect of God's creation should praise their Creator. Pray through Psalm 148, focusing on praising God for His work of creation.

PRAYER REQUESTS  
AND PRAISES



## HEART

What in your life leads you to isolation? How can the community of Jesus in the church help you to resist temptation? To enjoy fellowship?



## HANDS

How will you reflect God's image in your work and relationships with others this week?



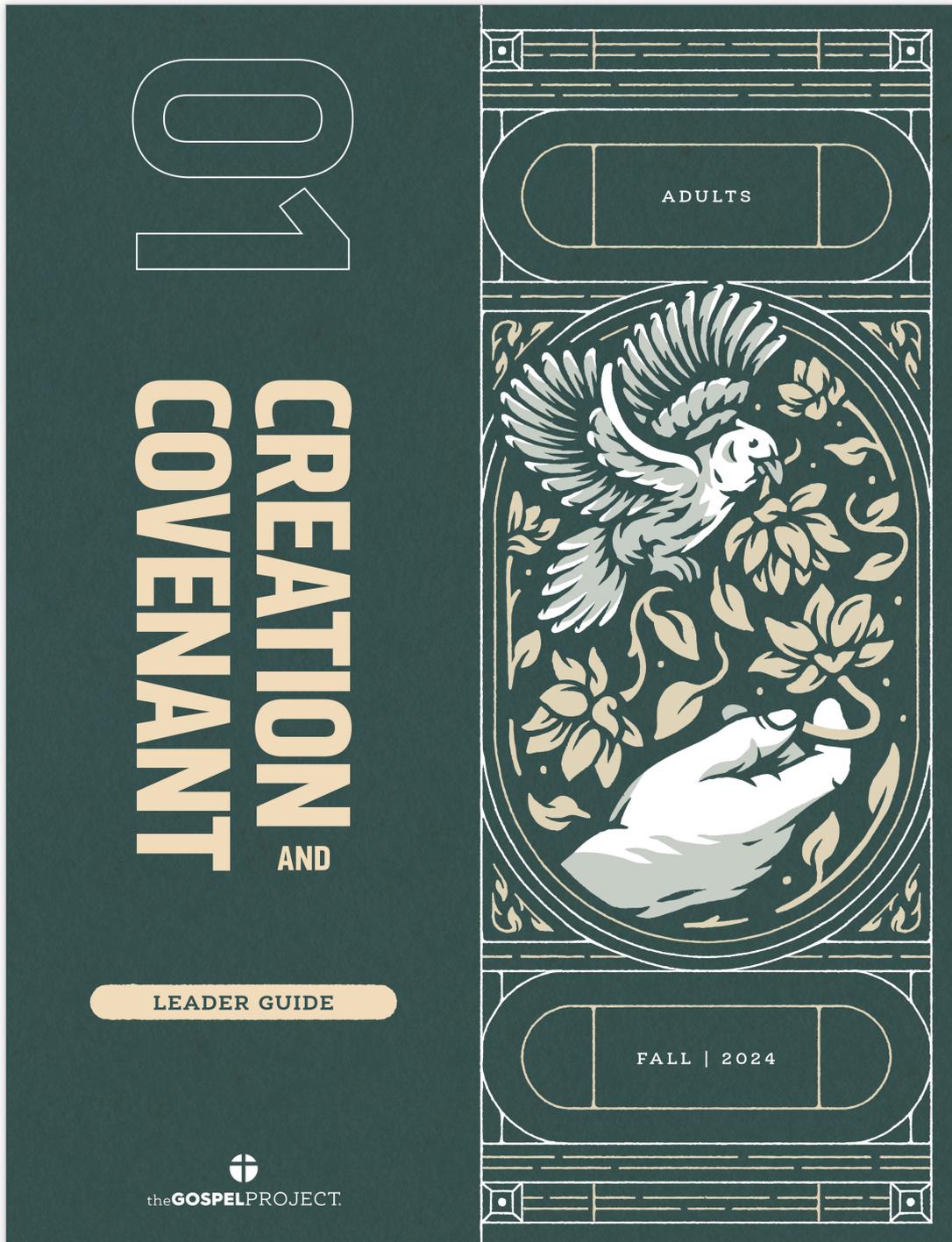
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I want their hearts to be encouraged and joined together in love, so that they may have all the riches of complete understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery — Christ. In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 2:2-3 (CSB)

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# LEADER GUIDE



Download two additional sessions at [gospelproject.com/preview](https://gospelproject.com/preview)

# GOD CREATED HUMANITY

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:7,15-25

## CONTEXT

In the beginning, in Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. In six days, God created the domains of sky, sea, and land and filled them with lights and living creatures. But for all the wonder of the created world around us and the universe beyond us, the Lord made human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. We were created, both male and female, uniquely in the image of God. The world was created for humanity and humanity for the world, a realm to steward together in God's name. And God declared it all to be "very good" in His sight. In Genesis 2, the Scripture zooms in on the creation of the man and woman God made in His image.

## KEY CONCEPT

**God created humanity for relationships.**

As you examine Genesis 2:7,15-25:

- Identify how we ought to relate to God and others because of how God created humanity.
- Contemplate the changes that ought to occur in your life if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity.



## TIMELINE

The Eternal God Creates (Genesis 1:1–2:3)

Day 1: Light/Day and Night

Day 3: Land and Plants

Day 5: Fish and Birds

Day 7: God Rested

Day 2: Seas and Sky

Day 4: Lights/Sun, Moon,  
and Stars

SESSION STUDY: Day 6: Animals and  
Humans (zoom in with Genesis 2:4-25)

### Daily Readings

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1: Genesis 1:1-13   | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4: Genesis 2:4-17  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2: Genesis 1:14–2:3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5: Genesis 2:18-25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3: Psalm 8          | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6: Psalm 148       |



Scan this QR code to access  
this session's Scripture passages.

# 1

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

Notes

### GOD CREATED HUMANITY AS SPECIAL AND WITH PURPOSE (GENESIS 2:7,15-17).

Circle the actions (verbs) performed by God in this passage.

**7** Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. . . . **15** The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

God created humanity in His image (Gen. 1:27), an honor bestowed upon nothing else. So we as people are unique and special amongst God's creation. For this we should be grateful. God created us and blessed us—we exist and are alive because God has breathed in us the breath of life (1:27-28; 2:7). And so, as God declared, it is good to be alive (1:31).

**LEADER NOTE:** Having the breath of life is not unique to humanity. The living creatures on the earth share in this as well (1:30; 7:15). We all breathe in and out. But only the man was said to receive the breath of life through a direct action of God—Him breathing into the man's nostrils (2:7). Life is shared by all living creatures, but humanity alone has the intimate connection with God of being made in His image and carrying His breath.

**What are some ways you can use your breath to honor the God who created you in His image?**

Before we let our uniquely created status go to our heads, let us consider our bodies. We aren't made of gold, silver, or precious stones. Rather, the Lord formed humanity from the dust of the ground (2:7). From this humble beginning, a body fashioned out of the dirt, then infused with the breath of God, humanity was elevated by God, first to life and then to a responsibility.

The Lord planted a garden in a place that we know as Eden (2:8), and He took the man He had formed and placed him in that garden for two reasons. One, to provide food for the man (2:16). The Lord created this man, and all humanity, with the need for food, and the Lord provided abundantly for that need in Eden. And two, God placed the man in the garden to work it and watch over it (2:15). This was to be the perfect realm for humanity's expanding rule as those made in God's image (1:28).

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.



**LEADER NOTE:** We typically view work as toil, a burden we carry to sustain ourselves with the fruit of our work, whether that be produce or pay. We only consider ourselves blessed in this regard if we have a job we love. But God intended work itself to be a joy and a privilege. God Himself worked through six days of creation (2:2-3), and He included the man in that blessing through his work in the garden.

Yet the man was to rule as a steward under the ultimate authority of his Creator and Sustainer. To ground this reality for the man, God raised up and identified one tree in Eden among all the other trees and commanded the man not to eat of that one (2:17). The consequence of disobedience would be death.

**How can our work today reflect our status as stewards under God's ultimate authority?**

#### CHRIST CONNECTION

First Corinthians 15:45-49 quotes Genesis 2:7 and makes an explicit comparison between "the first man Adam" and "the last Adam," or Jesus. The former is a man of dust, and we all take after his image, being descendants of Adam by birth. The latter is a man of heaven, and we will bear His perfect image through faith in Jesus crucified for our sins and raised again.

Notes

## Features

### 1. Personal Preparation

The *Leader Guide* has the same personal preparation content as in the *Personal Study Guide* so the leader can share in the same preparation experience as the group participants.

### 2. Leader Notes

Additional leader notes provide the leader with content to help explain a concept or answer potential questions from the group during the group experience.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

Notes



### GOD CREATED HUMAN BEINGS TO BE IN COMMUNITY WITH OTHERS (GENESIS 2:18-25).

Identify the three main scenes in this passage and briefly summarize each.

**18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." **19** The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. **21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. **22** Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man. **24** This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

The constant refrain of Genesis 1 is "And God saw that it was good," describing various stages of His creative work. God even concluded day six with the declaration that it was all "very good indeed" (1:31). But before the "very good" was accomplished, a "not good" was first identified (2:18). The man God created in His image was alone. Certainly, the Lord was with him, but God knew the man needed "a helper corresponding to him," someone like him who could be a complement to him, unlike a dog, cat, bird, or fish (2:19-20).

**LEADER NOTE:** The triune Creator God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is one God in three Persons in perfect unity and harmony. He has never been lonely nor lacking in perfect love. And from His nature of perfect community, God identified that it was not good for the man to be alone. Rather, the man should experience love and community with someone like him and yet distinct, in a way similar to the Trinity.

So God took a rib from the man and fashioned it into a woman, a companion who was like the man yet distinct and different, and she became his wife (2:21-24). For the work of tending the garden and multiplying to fill the earth, this woman would be the man's "helper" (2:18). We must not classify this role as slavish or subservient but as a role of honor and dignity, one that reflects God's image, for God Himself is called a "helper" in Exodus 18:4.

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**MAN:** Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation.

**What are some ways God's people should honor God for the good gift of gender as male and female?**

The first man and woman God created set the pattern for a husband and wife to join together and become "one flesh" in a relationship of love, sacrifice, submission, and respect (Eph. 5:22-33). The fruit of marriage was expected to be a family with children and then a community obeying the Word of the Lord. As a result of Adam's sin (Gen. 3), we don't always see these intended outcomes, yet the Lord remains faithful, even through childlessness, unintentional singleness, and loneliness. Through the love and sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, God has raised up a community in the church to love and help one another. And in the church, we are united with one another and supremely with Christ.

**LEADER NOTE:** It was and is not good for human beings to be alone. But a marital relationship is not the only means God uses to address loneliness. Marriages often produce children who grow up and get married, leading to extended families. And then there are friends, especially those who share in our fundamental beliefs, like the believers in our church. Jesus had friends, and He laid down His life for His bride—the church.

#### GOSPEL CONNECTION

The exclusive relationship between husband and wife pictures the plan of God for Christ and the church to be united as one through the perfect sacrificial death of Jesus to cleanse us of our sins and make us holy (Eph. 5:22-33).

**How can your group help others who feel lonely and isolated?**

Notes

# Features

## 1. Group Experience

The *Leader Guide* group experience section helps the leader know how to engage the group in the active-learning activity in the *Personal Study Guide* by prompting group participants to draw on their study from the week prior.

## 2. Recap

The group experience draws on the group participants' study from the week prior. But not everyone studies, and visitors may be present. The recap section will both encourage weekly preparation by participants and bring others up to speed so they too can engage in the group experience.

## 3. Online Training

Every week, training will be available for leaders to grow in their knowledge and experience of leading a group.

1

### GROUP EXPERIENCE

#### ARRIVAL

**ASK:** As people arrive for the group experience, begin by asking this ice-breaker question: What was a favorite creation of yours as a child, and why?

#### CONTEXT

**SAY:** At the beginning of the Bible, in the beginning of time, God created people as male and female to be His image-bearers in the world. This is a unique gift for humanity, especially since God is a spirit and does not have a body like human beings. Part of being God's image-bearers means we have responsibilities in this world—two in particular that we'll discuss today—and both of these can be spoken of in terms of relationship.

**TRANSITION:** Today, we will learn what it means that God created us for relationships. With whom do we have our relationships? How are they to function? Based on your Bible study this past week, we are going to chart the ways we were created to relate to God and others.

#### RECAP

**ASK:** What was one key idea that stood out to you as you prepared this week?

**SAY:** To prime the pump for today's study of God's creation of human beings in Genesis 2, you will remember that God formed the first man out of the ground and breathed life into him. Then the Lord placed this man in the garden of Eden, providing for him all the food he would ever need. But then God identified that the man needed something more—companionship—which resulted in the creation of the first woman from a rib the Lord took out of the man.

**TRANSITION:** From here, based on the Scriptures, let's chart out what it means to relate to God and others as we were originally created to do.

2

3



**Listen to session-by-session training every week on**

Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, or Spotify  
[ministrygrid.com/gospelproject](https://ministrygrid.com/gospelproject) · [gospelproject.com/leader-training](https://gospelproject.com/leader-training).

Notes

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

### GROUP ACTIVITY

**CHART:** Direct your group to page 7 in their Personal Study Guide (PSG), where they will find a table with the headings "GOD" and "OTHERS." Recreate this table on a board in your room so you can record the group's findings as they interact with the Scripture text.

Created for Relationships	
Based on Genesis 2:7,15-25, how should we relate to God? How should we relate to others?	
GOD	OTHERS

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 2:7,15-17.

**ANALYZE:** Call for the group participants to identify ways we ought to relate to God based on this passage. Encourage the participants to ground their responses in the text. Record the group's conclusions along with the appropriate verse number in the table on the board throughout this activity. Encourage participants to record these in their PSG as well.

**DISCUSS:** As necessary, prompt your group to discuss the following: What are some implications for the way we should relate to God based on the breath of life in verse 7? (*gratitude for our life*) Because we were made from the dirt in verse 7? (*humility*) Based on the mention of work in verse 15? (*faithfulness in our work to honor our Creator*) Based on the provision of food for the man in verse 16? (*remember our dependence upon God; thankfulness for His care*) Based on the presence of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in verse 17? (*faith-filled obedience to God's commands*)

**TRANSITION:** Briefly summarize the group's conclusions regarding our relationship with our Creator God.

Notes

# Features

## 1. Head, Heart, Hands

The *Leader Guide* provides content to help the leader connect the session learning to the Head, Heart, Hands application questions in the *Personal Study Guide*.

## 2. Next Steps

For further application ideas, the leader is encouraged to challenge group participants to respond in at least one of three ways, including praying Scripture and seeking out evangelism opportunities.

## 3. Praying Scripture

As a model for the idea and prompts in the *Personal Study Guide* for praying Scripture, the leader is encouraged to close out the session by praying through a section of a psalm that relates to the core passage of the session.

Notes

### GROUP EXPERIENCE

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 2:18-25.

**ANALYZE:** Call for the group to identify ways we ought to relate to others based on this passage from Genesis 2, encouraging them to ground their responses in the text. For example: provide community for others (v. 18), honor the uniqueness and fundamental equality shared by all humanity (v. 23), honor the sanctity of marriage (vv. 24-25).

**SAY:** The primary human relationship in focus in this passage is that of marriage between man and woman, but that is not the sum total of our relationships with other human beings, which include children, family, and friends, to name a few. Some people do not get married, yet they were created by God not to be alone either. We all have a responsibility to contribute to community with others.

### DEBRIEF

**What insight did you learn from the input of others in this activity?**

**How does our relationship with God impact our relationships with others, and vice versa?**

### SUMMARIZE

Lead the group to review the key concept, inviting them to share ways today's group experience helped them better understand the relationships for which God created His image-bearers.

### HEAD, HEART, HANDS

Walk the group through the Head, Heart, Hands section in the PSG (p. 8). If running short on time, specifically highlight the **Head** section in this week's study, inviting volunteers to share their responses to the question in this section.

1

 **HEAD:** Some people read the first chapters of Genesis and dismiss them as meaningless. Some read them as an influential legend or myth. But Christians and the church should read these as true history that grounds some of our most foundational beliefs. We were created for relationships with God and others, and how we enter and maintain those relationships will depend on what we believe about the creation of humanity in the beginning.

**What are some ways your life should change if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity?**

 **HEART:** We've all experienced a sense of loneliness at times in our lives, and some have felt this more pronounced than others. So we can all testify to the truth of God's words that it is not good for human beings to be alone. But there are ways that we may intentionally isolate ourselves. In our sin, we can prefer the isolation of darkness. We may also fear the light of God and

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

fellowship with others for the potential shame and guilt we may feel because of our sin. Yet God sent Jesus and raised up His church for a community of believers to find forgiveness, grace, and the joy of fellowship together.

**What in your life leads to isolation? How can the community of Jesus in the church help you to resist temptation? To enjoy fellowship?**



**HANDS:** God created human beings in His image to reflect His character in the world. We do this in part through our relationships and our work. God Himself set the precedent for both of these, being the triune God in perfect unity who did good work throughout the days of creation. How we work and how we relate should honor our Creator; these also become opportunities to point wayward human beings to our good God and to His Son who saves and restores us to His image.

**How will you reflect God's image in your work and relationships with others this week?**

#### NEXT STEPS

2

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this week's session.

- Read Psalm 148, noticing how every aspect of God's creation should praise their Creator. Pray through Psalm 148 focusing on praising God for His work of creation.
- Reflect on your relationships and work to see how they align with God's design for humanity.
- Share with a friend how the gospel helps us fulfill our purpose as God's created image-bearers.

Invite volunteers to share praises for answered prayer in the past week and prayer needs for this week. Encourage them to record these in the space on page 8 in their PSG so they can pray for others throughout the week.

#### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

#### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

3

**CLOSE:** Pray with your group through Psalm 148:7-14 as you close.

Notes



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You will seek me and find me  
when you search for me with  
all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13 (CSB)

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COMMENTARY

NEW!

01

CREATION  
AND  
COVENANT

COMMENTARY

  
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ADULTS

FALL | 2024

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## Features

### 1. How It Works

The commentary can function in one of two ways:

- 1) As a commentary to supplement the *Leader Guide* for additional study and preparation.
- 2) As a large-print personal study guide for the teacher and all group participants.

### 2. Context

For further application ideas, the leader is encouraged to challenge group participants to respond in at least one of three ways, including praying Scripture and seeking out evangelism opportunities.

### 3. Daily Readings

The daily reading suggestions for each week will help the learner read through the Bible chronologically over a three-year period.



**1** UNIT 1 • SESSION 1

# GOD CREATED HUMANITY

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:7,15-25

**2** **Context:** In the beginning, in Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. In six days, God created the domains of sky, sea, and land and filled them with lights and living creatures. But for all the wonder of the created world around us and the universe beyond us, the Lord made human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. We were created, both male and female, uniquely in the image of God. The world was created for humanity and humanity for the world, a realm to steward together in God's name. And God declared it all to be "very good" in His sight. In Genesis 2, the Scripture zooms in on the creation of the man and woman God made in His image.

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

**3** **DAILY READINGS**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 1:</b> Genesis 1:1-13	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 4:</b> Genesis 2:4-17
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 2:</b> Genesis 1:14-2:3	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 5:</b> Genesis 2:18-25
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 3:</b> Psalm 8	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 6:</b> Psalm 148

1

Actual page size of Commentary: 7.5" x 9.5"



**God created humanity as special and with purpose (Genesis 2:7,15-17).**

<sup>7</sup> Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. . . . <sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.”

**All People Are Valuable, Made in God’s Image**

In Genesis 1, in the beginning, there was God. Everlasting, ever-present, ever-powerful, ever-holy, ever-loving. He exists as the triune God, and in the beginning, He created the heavens and the earth. Everything started with Him, and nothing exists except through Him (John 1:3). He continues to sustain all things to this day. We are talking about the triune God as we see that the Word—the Son—was from the beginning (John 1:1) with the Father and with the Spirit.

It’s important to start with God because without a belief in an all-supreme, all-good creator being, there is no foundation or purpose to anything good in this life. Why have morals and virtues? Why see dignity in humankind? Why treat each other with love? Why hate all types of evil? Why care for the earth? Yes, we can come up with tertiary reasons for doing so, but it will ultimately come down to the fact that God designed it all, created us, and gave us a purpose in His world.

So when we come to chapter 2 in Genesis, the creation of humanity (an expansion of Genesis 1:26-30),

Notes

# Features

## 1. Christ/Gospel Connection

The Gospel Project for Adults will help learners see how the Scriptures, from beginning to end, point us to Christ and His gospel.

## 2. Reflection Questions

The questions found in the *Commentary* match up with the questions found in the personal preparation section of the *Leader Guide* and *Personal Study Guide* to help facilitate the multiple uses of the *Commentary*.

Notes

1

### CHRIST Connection

First Corinthians 15:45-49 quotes Genesis 2:7 and makes an explicit comparison between “the first man Adam” and “the last Adam,” or Jesus. The former is a man of dust, and we all take after his image, being descendants of Adam by birth. The latter is a man of heaven, and we will bear His perfect image through faith in Jesus crucified for our sins and raised again.

we see God putting value and purpose in His people—men and women—He gave purpose and value to them both.

In verse 7, when God created the first man, Moses wrote that the Lord God “formed the man” and “breathed the breath of life” into him. First, God “formed the man out of the dust of the ground.” Using the Hebrew word play of *adam* for “man” and *adamah* for “dust,” Moses humbles us in reminding us that we are made from dust, and to dust our physical bodies will return (Gen. 3:19). In our material being, we are temporal—here today, gone tomorrow. But God not only formed us from the ground, He “breathed the breath of life into [the man’s] nostrils” (2:7). And with this breath, God formed our spirit, our soul. Imagine breathing into someone else, as with rescue breathing or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation—what an intimate act that involves being extremely close to that person. Even if Moses was using human terms to describe this event, the breathing of life into man’s nostrils conveys a closeness, a bond, and a relationship unique from any other of God’s creations. Humanity is God’s special creation filled with the breath of the living, almighty God, making us into “a living being.”

**What are some ways you can use your breath to honor the God who created you in His image?**

2

To make this connection clearer—that God is intimately invested in us—going back to the beginning of this section of Scripture in verse 4, the phrase “LORD God” (*Yahweh Elohim*) is used for the first time. Before this, God was referred to only as “God” (*Elohim*). But in verse 4, the use of the word “Yahweh,” God’s personal name (see Ex. 3:14-15), shows “the personal

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

covenant name of God who relates to and redeems his people. . . . Beautifully, Yahweh-Elohim combines the Creator and Covenant-Redeemer aspects of God into one magnificent name.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus starts the personal relationship that exists between humanity and God. He is our Maker. We are not only His beloved creation, we are part of His beloved family, and God will stop at nothing to keep us in relationship with Him, even at the cost of the crucifixion of His beloved Son. Because we are His special creation and He was intentional in creating us to be in relationship with Him, we find our value and worth in being made in God’s image. We also find value in all people as they too are made in His image. As such, God gives us a foundation for why we are to love all people, treating everyone with respect, care, and honor because they are made in His image. From the unborn child to the broken murderer to the poverty-stricken refugee to the undisciplined orphan—we are called to love, grieve for, care for, and serve them all.

When we demean others, say crude jokes, disrespect God’s image-bearers, or don’t uphold the sanctity of life in others, we are ridiculing God’s workmanship. We dishonor God and His creation when we cannot see the *imago Dei*, the image of God, in every person. Every human being has value and worth, even those who don’t yet know Christ. For God so loved us all that He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us and restore our relationship with Him.

#### **All People Have Purpose in Work and Service**

Next, the LORD God “placed” man into “the garden of Eden” (Gen. 2:15). Eden was first mentioned in verse 8:

Notes

4

Notes

**Voices from  
THE CHURCH**

*“Human dominion over the rest of creation is to be an exercise of kingship that reflects God’s own kingship. The image of God is not a license for arrogant abuse, but a pattern that commits us to humble reflection of the character of God.”<sup>4</sup>*

—Christopher Wright

“the LORD God planted a garden in Eden.” The word “Eden” may be from a Semitic language meaning “a place of abundant waters,” and its common Hebrew meaning is “delight.”<sup>2</sup> Unknown in location, it was a paradise for God’s creatures. It was luxurious, abundant, and good.

The first man was “to work it and watch over it” (v. 15). Again, God’s intentions are clear. He is to have a relationship with His people, and they will find value in being His, enjoying the work of being the caretakers of the created world as well as partnering with Him in His redemptive mission to the world. “Work” and “watch over” in this context can also mean “serve” and “guard,” respectively.<sup>3</sup> We are to serve God and His people and guard and protect all that is His, knowing that it all belongs to God and we are mere stewards.

But in giving us purpose in our work and service, God elevates us, gifting us with responsibility and the privilege to work with Him. Being all-powerful, God could do it all Himself. But God knows we will find joy and value in joining Him in His work. And at this point, before sin entered the world, we see the value of work in glorifying God in taking care of His creation. After sin in the garden, we also see the importance of working alongside God even more, as He allows us, even in our sinful selves, to join Him in being a part of His redemptive plan in bringing people back into relationship with Him through sharing with others about the sacrificial work of Jesus on the cross. We all have purpose and value in the work that we do for God and for His glory.

***How can our work today reflect our status as stewards under God’s ultimate authority?***

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

Whether you are a teacher, accountant, doctor, personal trainer, plumber, secretary, or pastor, there is value in your work as you do it for God's glory and are intentional about using your influence for kingdom purposes. We are all stewards of God's creation, His world. In doing our work well and seeing it as part of bringing glory to God, we are fulfilling the command to work and watch over God's creation.

#### **All People Have Freedom to Choose**

Like any good parent, God then gave instructions—what to do and what not to do. He gave man the freedom to enjoy food from “any tree of the garden” (v. 6) except one. Just one. All the other trees, all the variety, all the abundance, man could have and enjoy. God's generosity and lavishness was immense! God only gave Adam one limit: not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for he would surely die.

God gave humanity free will, the freedom to choose abundant goodness in obedience or death in disobedience. This is the first mention of death in the Bible. Death would be a result of disobedience, of sin, of man's actions to do what God told him not to do. Choosing to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would mean choosing to dictate good and evil for oneself—a common sin for many of us today. We think our wisdom is better than God's; we think we can define what's right and wrong. We want to do things our own way, thinking it's our own life, our own interests, our own money, our own desires. We should be able to decide to do whatever we want. That is the sin that says, “I am my own god; there is no other.” But we are wrong. We are not wiser than God.

Notes

Notes

We do not know better than Him. We do not have a right to do whatever we want.

We were warned, but we have brought punishment upon ourselves. Yet in God's graciousness and mercy, He provided a way out through Jesus. Because He overcame sin, death, and hell, Jesus made a way for us to be redeemed and restored in our relationship with the Father. For unlike Adam, Jesus, the second Adam, became a life-giving spirit who gives us life forevermore (1 Cor. 15:45). Even though humanity chose disobedience, God showed grace and mercy.

**God created human beings to be in community with others (Genesis 2:18-25).**

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him."

<sup>19</sup> The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man. <sup>24</sup> This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

### Women Are Made Equal in Value with Men

Throughout the creation story up to this passage, everything was seen to be “good,” all of God’s creation and the order of all things. But here in verse 18, God said, “It is not good for man to be alone.” Because God made us in His image, the triune God, who eternally exists in a relationship of three Persons, knew that man needed relationships, and He was intentional in making “a helper” for the man.

It is good to note that the word “helper” is not a word for servant or someone subservient. At times the Bible uses this word to describe God, for He is our helper (Deut. 33:26; Pss. 33:20; 124:8). And what is translated “corresponding,” “fit,” “meet,” or “suitable” is actually two prepositions put together, one meaning “like or as” and the other meaning “opposite or against.”<sup>5</sup> In creating woman, God was making someone “like an opposite” to man, a counterpart of sorts to balance and be of help to him.

***What are some ways God’s people should honor God for the good gift of gender as male and female?***

When Adam was given the task to name all the animals as God brought them before him, he probably noticed something odd—buck and doe, rooster and hen, boar and sow, yet “no helper was found corresponding to him” (Gen. 2:20). So God made a woman from man’s rib—not from his head to lord over her or from his feet to be beneath him<sup>6</sup>—but from his side, under his arm, to protect, to shelter, to love, to co-rule and co-reign, to complement each other. So as man was made in the image of God, so was woman—both were made in the image of God (1:27). And God “brought her

Notes



8

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to the man” like a father at the marriage altar presenting his daughter. God presented her to man, and in the first human words mentioned in Scripture, man proclaimed his oneness with her and her equal value in saying, “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” (2:23).

Though many still debate the roles of men and women in our society and in our churches, one thing is not debatable: Both men and women have equal value and purpose, made uniquely to complement each other. Both are made in the image of God, and as such, they should be seen as equal in value and honor. There is no room for debate about that factor.

#### **Men and Women Are Uniquely Designed for Marriage**

Moses, inspired by God, now inserts a truth about marriage: “This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.” It was customary for the woman to leave her family to join her husband’s family in ancient times,<sup>7</sup> but in flipping this idea around, stating how a man leaves his parents, Moses was speaking of a prioritization. The man should leave his parents, who were once his ultimate human priority, and now see his wife as such. And as he leads and loves his wife beyond all others (except for God, of course), the setting is clear for the analogy of the church as the bride of Christ.

The strong bond that a husband has to his wife leads to God’s command for them to “be fruitful and multiply” (1:28). God’s call for a husband and wife to procreate, to multiply on this earth, also reflects our call today to make disciples, to grow God’s family on this earth as the church, His bride. And the stress on oneness and unity in becoming “one flesh” should

#### **GOSPEL Connection**

The exclusive relationship between husband and wife pictures the plan of God for Christ and the church to be united together as one through the perfect sacrificial death of Jesus to cleanse us of our sins and make us holy (Eph. 5:22-33).

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

also apply to the covenant, both for the husband and the wife and the church and Christ. We cannot have other loyalties, other preferences, and wandering eyes. There should only be one other for us, for in marriage we are now one. We break our covenant when we try to belong to other people or things.

On a side note, our current times see a distorted deviation to God's intended structure and creation. As men and women were made equal to multiply and subdue the earth, because sin has now entered the world, we see gender identities being confused and unnatural promiscuities that dishonor God and that God did not intend. But this is not new to God or to our times as Paul addressed it in Romans 1:24-27. We succumb to our earthly desires in our sin outside of God's will and submit to lesser joys rather than the real joy He has for us in His intended order. Yet also because of the sin and brokenness of this world, we find infertility and divorce and broken families and loneliness. All things that God never intended but occur because sin entered the world. In such matters, we grieve and long for Jesus's return that wholeness may return to our relationships as God had intended all along.

***How can your group help others who feel lonely and isolated?***

Singleness may be a physical or emotional struggle for some, but for others it can be lifted up and encouraged if devotion and service to God is the motive. A single person devoted to God can do much for God's mission. Jesus was single Himself, of course. A single person in the church can find his or her fulfillment with Christ in devotion and service to Him. They can multiply God's people and kingdom in disciple-making,

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**THEOLOGY**  
Connection

**MAN:** Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation.

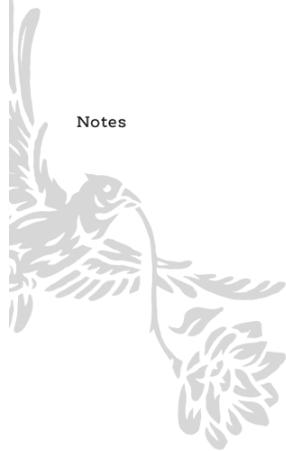
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# Features

## 1. Theology Connection

The Gospel Project for Adults will help learners see how the theology of the Christian faith is drawn from the truth of God's Word.

Notes



thus fulfilling God's creation order and mandate to multiple and fill the earth. Singleness should not be seen as a lesser form of what God intended. God values the single person pursuing Him as much as the married person pursuing Him.

### **In Christ, There Is No Shame**

To end Genesis 2 and to transition to chapter 3, Moses wrote that at this point, "the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame" (Gen. 2:25). There was an innocence and trust of the Father, like little children, that the man and woman had. In their flesh at this time, no demented thoughts ran through their minds. Sin had not entered the world, and thus, shame had not entered the world.

This reminds us that shame will one day be no more. Jesus died to save us and forgive us to take away our guilt and shame. For "there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). For "what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering" (8:3). As we will read later, with the fall came sin through the flesh. But with Christ, He "condemned sin in the flesh"; therefore, our guilt and shame died with our sin in Christ.

Though we still sin and have guilt and shame in this life, at Christ's return and the resurrection of our bodies, we will find ourselves sinful, guilty, and shameful no more. All because of Jesus. All because of His sacrifice out of His love for us. In studying Genesis then, we find the origin story of our creation and sinfulness. But it sets us up for the hero of the story: Jesus. He is and will always be the hero of the story.

**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

And though His story has not yet arrived in Genesis, in essence, it already has because He was there as part of the Trinity, in the midst of it all, creating and sustaining. From beginning to end, the story of Scripture, the story of the Bible, is about Jesus and His pursuit of us. To this day, He is still pursuing His creation, His people, because of His love for them.

## HEAD 1

What are some ways your life should change if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity?

## HEART

What in your life leads you to isolation, and how can the community of Jesus in the church help you to resist temptation? To enjoy fellowship?

## HANDS

How will you reflect God's image in your work and relationships with others this week?

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Notes

# Features

## 1. Head, Heart, Hands

The Head, Heart, Hands questions match up with the questions in the *Leader Guide* and *Personal Study Guide* to help facilitate the multiple uses of the *Commentary*.



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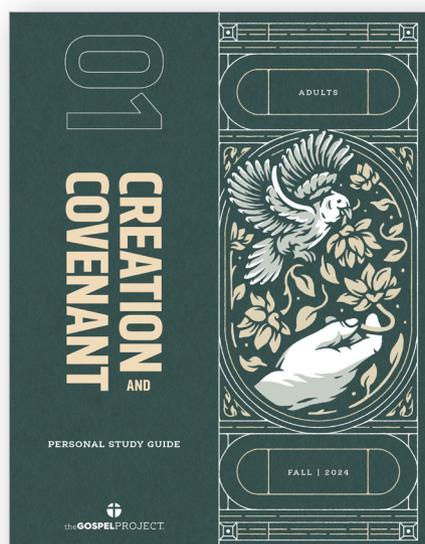
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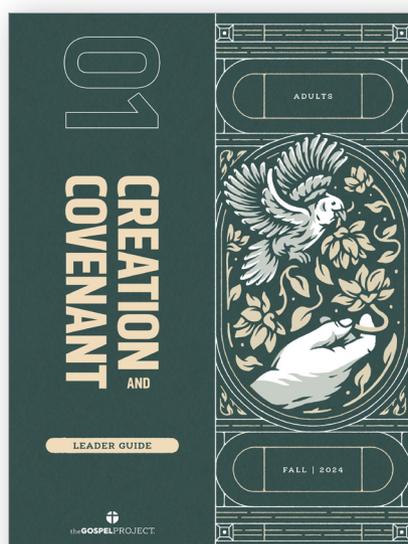


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“The Gospel Project for Adults has helped our church see the grand narrative of the Bible. Our people have been able to see what the gospel story is and how it all fits together.”

Jordan Reese, Englewood Baptist, Rocky Mount, NC

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