

13. A Book of Beginnings

Small Group Lesson

Without a solid understanding of the beginning of the Bible, our teenagers may miss the point to the rest of the story. This lesson will help set the context for your teenagers' understanding of Scripture as they interact with the opening chapters of the Bible and consider the importance of the "written account" of God's movement in the world.

Lesson Objectives

1. WHAT: Followers of Jesus benefit from a healthy understanding of the beginning of God's story and its impact on our lives.
2. WHY: When we miss the beginning, we miss the reasons why the rest of the story is important and how it helps solve the problems the story reveals.
3. HOW: Students can begin to understand the importance of the entire Bible and its impact on their lives as they interact with not only the beginning of the story, but also make connections to other parts of Scripture.

Primary Scripture: Genesis 5:1-2

Secondary Scriptures: Genesis 5:22-24 and Luke 3:23-38

If you miss the beginning of a story, you often miss why the rest of the story is important. Or you miss the introductions of key characters. Or you miss why things happen the way they do and why they needed to happen in the first place. Let's take a few minutes to talk about the beginning of God's story, and see how it prepares us for everything else in the Bible.

1. We write down things that matter

The opening words of Genesis 1 are simple but amazing: "In the beginning." Do you prefer a story with a slow, quiet beginning, or a wild, crazy beginning? Why?

Genesis 5:1 says, "This is the written account of the descendants of Adam." What's the value of having a "written account" instead of just trying to remember everything that's happened in the past?

Genesis is a "written account" of God's story—in what ways has it been valuable to look back on your own story through words or pictures or video?

Genesis is a book of beginnings—in fact, the word Genesis literally means “beginnings.” It tells about the beginnings of the world and of humanity. We meet some amazing people in Genesis, and we’ll talk more about some of them as we continue in this series. Having this “written account” allows us to learn from those people and to begin exploring the story of God.

2. We pass along things that matter

Tell us some details about your family history: How long your family has lived in this place? Where are your ancestors from? Do you have any famous ancestors in your family tree? Talk about these kinds of things.

Look through the rest of Genesis 5—it’s a long list of Adam’s descendants. Why would the Bible include a list like this?

What are some important stories about your extended family that your parents have passed down to you?

Why is it important for each new generation to study the Bible and discover the amazing story of God’s love?

Based on what you know about the beginnings of God’s movement in the world, what do you know for sure about him?

Here in Genesis 5, we read about Adam’s descendants—and one day, one of those descendants will be Jesus. And elsewhere in Genesis, we discover some big moments in humanity’s history—how Noah built an ark, how God tested Abraham’s faith, and how Joseph was sold into slavery but ended up saving his entire family from famine. Through it all, we read about how God’s love remained faithful, even when humanity wasn’t faithful to God.

3. We can center our lives on things that matter

By talking about the beginning of God’s story, we can begin to understand some important details that bring clarity to the rest of the Bible. Genesis tells us how God created the world to be perfect, but sin made the world broken. Genesis begins pointing us toward Jesus, revealing our need for forgiveness and salvation and a restored relationship with God—things that truly matter.

What Bible truth has meant the most to you in your life?

What do you think matters most to Jesus, and why?

If some things in life obviously matter more than others, why do we often struggle to get our priorities straight?

When Jesus is at the center of our life, we're living the way he created us to be—but what are some things that compete for that center place in our lives, and why?

BGroup Questions

1. What part of today's conversation surprised you most? Why?
2. What have you learned today that can help bring clarity to the rest of the Bible—the story of God?
3. How does this beginning help you understand what the rest of the Bible is trying to tell?

TAKE ACTION: Memorize this Scripture this week! *"This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings, he made them to be like himself" (Genesis 5:1).*

****Leaders, leave 3-5 minutes for prayer at the end of your group time.**