

MODULE 1: THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE

This module provides a personal context and a basis for life skills development. By understanding your past, you will have a better grasp of your potential. By understanding how you fit within God's creation, you will realize the love and grace that surrounds you as you go forward, and that you were created for a purpose.

SESSION 1: WHERE DOES YOUR STORY BEGIN?

Key Ideas for This Session:

- God has been a part of the world from the very beginning.
- God created everything.
- You are part of the story of creation and connected into it.
- Key verse: Psalm 139:13

For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb.

Who Are You?

We all like stories. Some of us can remember the things we heard from our parents or even our grandparents about growing up. Some of us might know stories that go way, way back in history concerning our family and our people. We are part of and connected to all of this and we also have our own account—the story of our life. During the next few sessions, we will think about our story, how it began and how we would like it to go.

The Bible is a book that is full of stories that are all part of the overarching account of humanity. The Bible begins at the very beginning and each of our stories tie into it.

The Beginning of Our Story:

Read Genesis 1:1-27

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness He called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶ And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁷ So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

⁹ And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters He called “seas.” And God saw that it was good. ¹¹ Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let

the birds increase on the earth.”²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” ²⁷ So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.

What are your thoughts about this story?

Do you see yourself linked to this story in some way? Yes/No (Explain)

The Bible teaches that every human being is a descendant of the first humans who were created by God. What this means is that you and I are also descendants of those who God created. That is where our story begins, and it means that we are connected to the human race and to God. It also means that we are not an accident—we exist because God created humans in the first place.

As the story in Genesis continues, we discover that some people stay connected or in relationship with the Creator and some do not. Some people love and respect God, others do not. God created people to be in relationship with Him—and to love Him. But He also gave them the freedom to love or not to love.

Why do you think God doesn't force us to love Him?

God wants our love to be from the heart. He does not want us to love Him out of obligation, but because we simply want to be in relationship with Him. If love is required or forced, it is not love.

The Bible is a story of God loving His people. His original creation shows how much He cares for His people. But there are many twists and turns in the story as people reject God and try to do their own thing.

How might you see this story reflected in the story of your own family and people?

Although connected to this big story, your story makes you unique and different from every other human being—and there is much more to you than any one aspect of your life.

So, What's Your Story?

Your story is like a creation story that gives shape to who you are. Your family, extended family, community, school, and early experiences are part of this and contribute to who you are as an individual.

If you are comfortable doing this, take some time to think about some of your happiest memories:

What is one of your best childhood memories and why?

Who was a positive influence on you and why? (E.g., mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend)

Did faith or church play a part in your childhood? If yes, how?

Do you remember anything positive about your community (E.g., school, church, or neighbourhood) from your childhood?

From the story of creation, we see that God intended for our lives to be good, full of love and purpose. Yet shortly after the world was created, sin got in the way. Through the ages, sin has caused corruption on every living being and on the world itself. It has come between people and a Creator who loves them.

Your story weaves in and out of this larger story too. As a result, you may have many more sad memories than happy ones. Yet God loves us and promises to be with us through both the good and the bad times. God also promises a future where sin will no longer exist.

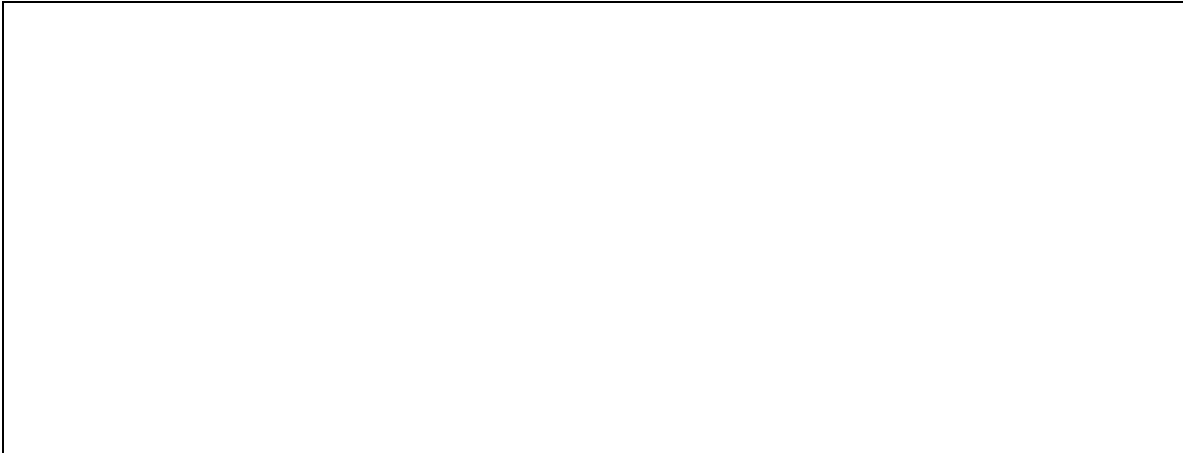
Psalm 139:8

If I go up to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in the depths, You are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast.¹¹ If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” ¹² even the darkness will not be dark to You; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to You.

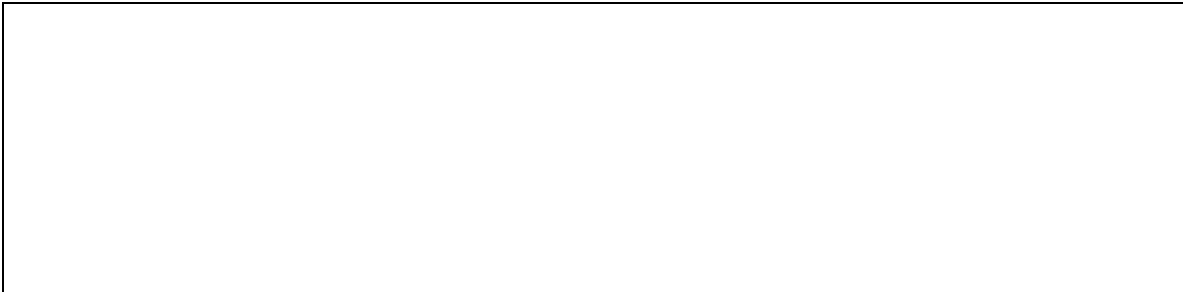
What promises from God do you see in these verses?

Break into small groups and discuss the following if there is time, or think about these topics this week:

- *As you feel comfortable, exchange a family story with a trusted friend. Notice how each of your stories is unique.*
- *Read through the story of creation (Genesis 1:1-27) and visualize it— imagine how it came together, in what order and with such care. Draw it below or on a separate piece of paper and exercise your own creativity!*



- *In your opinion, what is the most amazing thing created in nature? Describe it, draw it and write down what you find so fascinating about it. Read Psalm 19:1.*



- *Reflect on Psalm 139 to learn of the care God took in creating you and how He knows you inside and out and loves you.*