

Creation: The Beginning of Life as We Know It

Family Devotions for Week 1

Day One: The Creation Story

1. Think of a time when you created something that you put a lot of work into and were very proud of. It can be something like a time you built something out of Legos, made a piece of art, or created a new and innovative process at work. What kind of feelings did you experience as you worked on it? How did you feel when it was finished?

2. Now think of something that you created that you put a lot of work into, but it went wrong somewhere in the process. Maybe it is a recipe you tried that didn't work, a sport or activity you tried, but found out you weren't good at or a risky decision you made that didn't work in your favor. How did you feel about that creation? How hard did you try to fix it or make it work?

As we go through The Story, we see that the "upper story" or God's story is one of creating us, us not obeying Him, and He loving us and staying faithful to us while trying to restore our relationship with Him. As you study "God's story" keep in mind the emotions you have felt watching your own creations succeed and fail.

3. Take some time to think about all the wonderful things God made for us to enjoy. What is your favorite animal in all of creation? What is your favorite spot in nature? Who is your favorite person in the world? Take some time as a family to thank God for creating those things and people.

4. Everyone talks about how God rested on the seventh day after creating the world and how we should take times of rest as well. But why do you think God, who could have created the world all in an instant, instead took six days to create it? Is there anything we can learn from His example?

Day Two: The Fall

1. Think about the saying "Curiosity killed the cat." What exactly does that mean? Can you think of a time when that saying applied to something in your life? How do you think it relates to Eve eating from the Tree of Knowledge? Curiosity may have fueled her temptation to eat from it, but what else could have encouraged her to act on that temptation? How does Proverbs 3:5-6 apply here?
2. The Bible says in Genesis 3:6, "She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it." If Adam was with Eve when the serpent tempted her, what should Adam have done before Eve even reached up and took one of the fruits? Has there ever been a time in your life when you have stood by and watched someone do the wrong thing? Talk about what happened and how you could have handled the situation differently.
3. God knew that Adam and Eve had sinned when He called out, "Where are you?" and Adam answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." God knew this because He saw shame and fear from Adam and Eve, emotions that they hadn't experienced previously. Why do you think sinning made them feel shame and fear? If God does not intend for us to feel shame and fear, then who or what does intend for us to feel those things?
4. Think of the story of Cain and Abel. Cain brought just enough offering to God to fulfill the requirement. Abel brought the best He could to God instead of just the bare minimum. Why did God look with favor on Abel's offering and not Cain's? Then we see that Cain becomes angry and jealous of Abel and kills him. Have you ever been angry because someone has given more or done something better than you? Are you really mad at the person or mad at or ashamed of yourself? How does God's reaction in this story point to Jesus' message later of being more concerned about the heart of a man than with the law?

Day Three: Noah and the Flood

Activities and Extra Credit

1. Have you ever done something for Jesus that non-believers think is crazy? Perhaps you forgave someone who purposely hurt or abused you. You may have taken a bonus check and gave it away instead of spending it on yourself. Maybe it's just that you give up your Sunday mornings every week to go to church. How much courage does it take to do those things when others don't understand, or even make fun of you for them? From where do you get that courage (hint: Deuteronomy 31:6)? In Matthew 5:10-11, what does God promise when you stand firm and do what God says, even when others make fun of or are mean to you?
2. This story upsets many people because they focus on all the people that God killed when He flooded the earth. They ask, "How could a loving God just wipe out all those people He created? Why didn't He just have Noah become an Evangelist and tell everyone about God?" Turn that around and think instead about how God is showing His faithfulness and love to Noah and his family. If Noah's family were the only righteous people in the land, what kind of evil was God potentially protecting them from? How was God protecting the lineage of His people by flooding the earth and protecting only Noah and his children? How is this a sign of God fighting to protect His creation, which He loves? How does this continue the theme of God trying to restore man's relationship with Him, which is later fulfilled by Jesus?
3. In this story, God uses rainbows as a reminder of the covenant He makes with Noah. He says every time a rainbow appears in the clouds, He will be reminded of the covenant. Is there anything in your life that every time you see it reminds you of God? Perhaps something that reminds you of God's love, God's faithfulness or God's majesty? If you don't have something in mind, spend some time brainstorming what in your life can serve that purpose.

1. Find some quiet time outdoors with God. It can be in your yard, in the woods, at a park or even outside on recess or in some green area during lunch at work. Spend at least 10 minutes (or as long as you want) just sitting in God's creation, quietly marveling at His work and just telling Him how awesome of a creator He is. Come back as a group and share what each person experienced. Think about building outdoor quiet time into a regular part of your schedule.
2. This week, look you for an opportunity to do something for another person so that they can have time to rest. This could be doing the dishes for your mom so she can put her feet up after dinner. It could be offering to rake your neighbor's leaves so they can spend the time doing something they enjoy. It could be offering to care for an elderly or sick relative so that the person who normally cares for them can have some time away. Make time of rest a priority in your life by helping others to find that time. Don't forget to take some time of rest for yourself as well!
3. Find a copy of the movie, *Evan Almighty*, and watch it for a family movie night. Talk about how the movie shows how hard it would be today to do something crazy for God like building an ark. Talk about the feelings and situations Evan goes through as he follows God's command. Do you think you could do what he does to follow God's orders?
4. Plan a trip to the Creation Museum in Petersburg, KY. It is expensive, but they often run deals on tickets.

Question without an easy answer: As a family, discuss your views on evolution. How do you reconcile science with what the Bible says? Is there anything you question from the science side or the Biblical side? Research another point of view from yours and talk about your reaction to it.