

Thank him that he provides sunshine, rain, food, clothing and shelter in abundance.

Pray that he teaches you to depend on him as your caring Father, not being anxious about your needs.

#### Thursday: Creatures

Read:

- Psalm 8:1-4.
- Psalm 24:1-2
- Romans 9:19-24

#### QUESTIONS

1. Who possesses the world and all that is in it?
2. Where does Psalm 8:1-4 place humanity?
3. In Romans 9:20-21 what right does the creator have, and what right does the creature not have?
4. How does the teaching of Romans 9:21 (also vv. 22-24) reinforce your creaturely nature, and your total dependence on God for all things?

#### PONDER

Consider the implications of these truths: that you have been made by God, made for God, and you are owned by God, who has the right to create anything (even you!) for his own purposes.

#### PRAYER IDEAS

Pray that God would remind you of your creatureliness and teach you to depend on him.

Thank him that as ruler he is completely and always good. Pray for his continued mercy in your life.

#### Friday: Revelation

Read:

- Acts 17:22-31
- Romans 1:18-25

#### QUESTIONS

1. How does God reveal himself?
2. To whom does God reveal himself?
3. What can be known about God from creation?

#### PONDER

In Romans 1, what is the problem with this revelation in creation?

What word do sinful creatures need (e.g. Rom 10:17; Jas 1:21)?

#### PRAYER IDEAS

Praise God that he reveals his glory and goodness in the things he has made.

Pray that he will open your eyes to appreciate his glory in creation.

Confess to God the ways that you have suppressed his truth, and exchanged it for a lie.

Pray that God's powerful gospel would continue to go out and bear fruit.



# 15 Steps through the Bible

## Creation

It's easy to think the Bible's teaching on creation is for children or apologetics. But the idea of creation pervades Scripture from beginning to end, and grounds much of our knowledge of God and of ourselves.

As Calvin said in Institutes of the Christian Religion, "Let us not be ashamed to take pious delight in the works of God open and manifest in this most beautiful theatre".

This first of our 15 Steps Through the Bible is designed to help you see some of the implications of the truth that God is creator, but is primarily to help you listen carefully and with awe as God speaks of his marvellous works, mighty wisdom, and strength. May you not just take delight in the creator's works, but in the creator himself.

#### PRAYER

Here's an opening prayer you might like to use:

*Heavenly Father,  
I praise you that you are the good creator—wise, powerful and righteous. I thank you for your delight in and care of your creation. Please teach me to live rightly as your creature, and to worship you alone, my creator and provider.*

#### The Bible

Let's consider the creation of the world:

God made the world and everything in it, and he made humans in his own image. The first humans were Adam and Eve. As Creator of the world, God is the ruler (or king) of it. However, God blessed Adam and Eve and appointed them to be rulers over his creation.

#### GENESIS 1:31-2:1

*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.*

#### More detail

What does Creation tell us about God?

Of course, much more can be said than we can cover in this overview, but the following points are important.

#### Who God is

We see that God is the ultimate being. He is before all things, and the creator of everything.

#### GENESIS 1:1

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

#### JOHN 1:1-4

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

## What God does

God creates a good world which pleases him. He gives life, and gives humans a real purpose in life: to live in loving relationship with God and each other, and to rule over the world.

### GENESIS 1:27-31

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."<sup>29</sup> Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.<sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.*

## How God works

God creates by his word, such is his power.

### PSALM 33:9

*For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.*

### HEBREWS 11:3

*By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

Trust (or 'faith') in God the Creator is essential. Our good and powerful God created a world which belongs to him and which is in relationship with him. He loves this world and will not abandon it.

### QUESTIONS

1. What does Genesis 1:31-2:1 tell you about the extent of God's power?
2. Read through the 'More detail' section. What's something that strikes you about what God reveals here?
3. What authority does God grant humanity?

### PONDER

If God is your creator, how does he deserve to be treated?

Do you treat him that way?

### PRAYER IDEAS

Thank God for creating the heavens and the earth to have order and purpose. Praise him for setting humanity apart as special.

Ask God to help you appreciate the goodness and order of his creation, and to live rightly in it as his image-bearer.

- Further Readings

### Monday: Power

Read Psalm 104

### QUESTIONS

1. How does God treat those immense and wild parts of creation in verses 1-4?
2. How does God interact with the seemingly uncontrollable sea and the vast earth (vv. 5-9)?
3. In the four stanzas of verses 10-23, what does God create, and what is its purpose and benefit?

### PONDER

What does this Psalm teach us about God's ongoing involvement with the earth and all that is in it?

### PRAYER IDEAS

Praise the Lord for his majesty and lordship over creation! Thank him for all his works—acknowledging that he provides food, water, shelter, and times for all his creatures, and that he gives life and takes it away.

### Tuesday: Purpose

Read:

- Acts 17:24-25
- 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- Ephesians 1:3-10

### QUESTIONS

1. What need does God have for creation (Acts 17)?
2. In 1 Corinthians 8 (also Col 1:15-17) what reason is given for God's creating? What does the word 'for' suggest?

3. In Ephesians 1:9-10 where is God directing creation?

### PONDER

Why has God created the world and all that is in it, including you? What does that mean for how you view yourself and your life?

### PRAYER IDEAS

Thank God that he has a good goal and purpose for creation. Thank God for the reminder that it (life, the universe, everything) is not about us but him.

Praise God that he is bringing all things together in Christ.

### Wednesday: Providence

Read:

- Matthew 5:43-48
- Matthew 6:25-34

### QUESTIONS

1. In these verses what is God directly involved in?
2. Who are the recipients of the creator's love and care?
3. Knowing this truth about God the creator and provider, what does Jesus encourage his listeners to do, or not to do?

### PONDER

Is God's providential care as creator something that you forget? Do you find comfort in his provision of the mundane everyday things?

### PRAYER IDEAS

Thank our heavenly Father that he cares for his creation and especially people. *(more on the next page)*