

# Study: LifeGroup

Date: June 4, 2023

Text: Genesis 1:1—2:4a; Psalm 8

Theme: Alignment...with the God of Creation

## Belong

If you have access to a computer, play the video clip of the Apollo 8.

- Do you remember this event?
- Does someone in your family remember this?
- What general impact do you think this had on the American population?

Our feelings and behavior always flow from our deepest beliefs. Put theologically, this truism says that what we really believe to be true about God informs how we perceive ourselves and the world around us, which drives how we feel and act. The reverse is also true: if you want to know what you really believe, explore what your actions and feelings say about your perceptions and paradigms. Our beliefs and our actions should align, but often don't. Wrong ideas about God generally lead to wrong responses to life, just as a car out of alignment will drive you right into the ditch. The texts in this series say some powerful things about the God we claim to worship and challenge us to align our daily lives.

## Believe

Read Genesis 1:1-31.

- What do you think God intended for this new creation and all the creatures within it?
- “God’s voice” is the catalyst for all this creative wonder!

3–5...God spoke: “Light!” And light appeared.

6–8...God spoke: “Sky! In the middle of the waters; separate water from water!” God made sky.

9–10...God spoke: “Separate! Water-beneath-Heaven, gather into one place; Land, appear!” And there it was.

11–13...God spoke: “Earth, green up! Grow all varieties of seed-bearing plants, Every sort of fruit-bearing tree.” And there it was.

14–15...God spoke: “Lights! Come out! Shine in Heaven’s sky! Separate Day from Night. Lights in Heaven’s sky to give light to Earth.” And there it was.

16–19...God made two big lights, the larger to take charge of Day, the smaller to be in charge of Night; and he made the

stars.

20–23...God spoke: “Swarm, Ocean, with fish and all sea life! Birds, fly through the sky over Earth!” And it happened!

24–25...God spoke: “Earth, generate life! Every sort and kind: cattle and reptiles and wild animals—all kinds.” And there it was!

26–28...God spoke: “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature so they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, and, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.” God created human beings; he created them godlike, reflecting God’s nature. He created them male and female. God blessed them: “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth.”

29–30...Then God said, “I’ve given you every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth; And every kind of fruit-bearing tree, given them to you for food. And there it was.

31..God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good! It was evening, it was morning—Day Six. Heaven and Earth were finished, down to the last detail.

- Discuss the dynamic wonder of God’s creation.

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- Is there something to be learned from the order of creation; the day to day progression?

## Become

Read together this paraphrase of Psalm 8 by Leslie Brandt...

“O God, how full of wonder and splendor You are! I see the reflections of Your beauty and hear the sounds of Your majesty wherever I turned. Even the babbling of babes and the laughter of children spell out your name and indefinable syllables. When I gaze into star-studded skies and attempt to comprehend the vast distances, I contemplate in utter amazement my Creator’s concern for me. I am dumbfounded that You should care personally about me. And yet You have made me in Your image. You have called me Your child and chosen me to be Your servant. You have assigned to me the fantastic responsibility of carrying on Your creative activity. Oh God, how full of wonder and splendor You are.” Amen.

# Devotionals: Daily Walk on the Rock

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Theme: Alignment...with the God of Creation

## Day 1: Monday—The Trinity

Last week, we celebrated Pentecost; yesterday was Holy Trinity Sunday. As we approach new texts and a new series, let's begin by looking at our one God, who is revealed as Father, Son, and Spirit. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9; John 14:5-11,26; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and Colossians 2:9. Understanding the triune nature of God is beyond our comprehension, yet the testimony of Scripture is true. Notice also the eternal nature of God as Father, Son, and Spirit, as you consider John 1:1-3,18; 17:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:9b-10; and Hebrews 9:14. Meditate on the greatness, power, love, and glory of God. Pray Heber's lyrics, "Holy, holy, holy... God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!"

## Day 2: Tuesday—Alignment with the God of Creation

Our series theme uses the metaphor of alignment. Most understand the challenges of driving a car that is out of alignment, but do we consider that our lives might be out of alignment with what we profess to believe? As you read Genesis 1:1-3; Job 38:1-12; Psalm 8; John 1:1-4,14; and Revelation 4:11, ponder the holiness, glory, power, and majesty of God. Now spend time seeking God's heart as you look at your life, actions, thoughts, and priorities. Is your life in alignment with your belief in God, who is worthy of all worship, honor, and praise? Bow in humble repentance and submission to the One we hail as eternal Savior, Lord, and King. Thank God for loving you.

## Day 3: Wednesday—The Trinity in Creation

Look for evidence of God (Father, Son, Spirit) in creation as you read Genesis 1:1-2:4a [in 1:26, note "us/our," and ponder a plural unity]; John 1:1-5 [notice the word light here and in John 8:12; also consider that light floods the world before the creation of the sun, moon, and stars: Genesis 1:1-5,14-19]; Colossians 1:15-17 [firstborn can mean unique or preeminent in rank and authority; it does not necessarily indicate birth order]. Exalt and praise God as you observe the power and authority of God's voice (*Genesis 1:3,6,9...; Isaiah 55:10-11; John 1:1-4,14*). Does this lend insight into Jesus' authority (*Matthew 7:28-29; 9:6; 28:18-20; John 17:1-5*)? Praise our glorious, creator God!

## Day 4: Thursday—The Music of Creation: The Rhythm of Grace

Read Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Job 37:1-7a; 38:1,4-7; Psalm 8:1-9; 139:1-18,23-24; and Romans 1:20. Some of the creation narratives are expressed poetically; did you hear the rhythms of God's grace in the poetry or music of the pictures

of creation? We have spoken of God's power and glory made manifest in creation. Do you also see God's intimate love and grace? Consider how perfectly God suits creation to the needs of humans. Ponder the tenderness of God's grace and love (*Psalm 8:5; 139:13-14*). Worship God as you respond to God's love, glory, and grace.

## Day 5: Friday—Created for Purpose: Relationship

In the creation accounts, we see God's power and majesty; we also see God's loving-kindness. Genesis 1 gives us a view of creation as through a telescope; in Genesis 2, we see as if through a microscope. As you read Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:7-8,15-25, notice how people are created for relationship: fellowship with God and with one another. We see affirmations of this throughout Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Micah 6:8; Mark 12:29-31; John 13:34-35; and Colossians 3:1-4,12-14. Pray about how your relationships with God and others align with God's purposes.

## Day 6: Saturday—Created to Care for God's Creation

Many align their lives with the philosophy expressed in Henley's *Invictus*: "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul." But God's Word tells us to align our lives in accord with God's purposes. What do you learn about these in Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7-8,15-25; Psalm 24:1; Ephesians 2:10; 5:8-10; Colossians 1:16; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; and 1 Peter 4:10? We are not owners, but merely stewards, of God's creation, and we are to care for the earth and for each other. Do we respond to God's goodness with the obedience of faith, or, exercising free will, do we spurn God's goodness and grieve God's heart. Pray for wisdom as to how to align your life with God's purposes.

## Day 7: Sunday—Created for God's Glory

Begin with prayer, opening your hands and your heart; ask the Spirit to guide you into new understandings of what it means to live with God on the throne of your life. Meditate on the grandeur of God as witnessed in creation; ponder what it means to align your life with God's purposes. Ask yourself if God is your greatest treasure and your heart's delight. Consider how you can reflect glory back to the One who is totally worthy of all worship and praise. Read Psalm 8:1-9; 36:5-9; 40:5-8; 115:1; Isaiah 26:8-9a; 43:7; and Romans 11:36. Sing or pray lyrics attributed to Francis of Assisi: "Let all things their Creator bless, and worship Him in humbleness, O praise Him! Alleluia!"



St. Paul Lutheran Church

"Your Refuge from the Storm"