

# The Good Life | Week One

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> 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.*

*<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.*

Genesis 1:1-5

## Two working premises:

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*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of His hands.*

Proverbs 19:1 (HCSB)

## Three ways God revealed his nature in creation:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

God is \_\_\_\_\_ from creation, but is  
\_\_\_\_\_ in his creation.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

*Now this is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in Him.*

1 John 1:5 (HCSB)

**All that God created was for God's \_\_\_\_\_ and man's \_\_\_\_\_.**

1:10 (land and sea) And God saw that it was good.

1:12 (plants and vegetation) And God saw that it was good.

1:18 (sun, moon and stars) And God saw that it was good.

1:21 (sea creatures and birds) And God saw that it was good

1:25 (animals) And God saw that it was good.

1:31 (man and woman) God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

## **How was Paradise Lost?**

**They doubted God's \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"*

*<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"*

Genesis 3:1-3

**They doubted God's \_\_\_\_\_.**

*"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

*<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

Genesis 3:4-6a

**Rather than trusting in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Creator,  
the woman decided to consider the \_\_\_\_\_ of  
the creation.**

**They disobeyed God's \_\_\_\_\_.**

*She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

Genesis 3:6b-7

**The Good Life was lost when man pursued \_\_\_\_\_  
over \_\_\_\_\_.**

*The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup> since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*

*<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.*

*<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.*

Romans 1:18-25

**Faith is not the \_\_\_\_\_ of doubt, but rather  
faith \_\_\_\_\_ doubt.**

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What has the search for “the good life” looked like for you? How has this changed through different seasons of your life?
2. Pastor Carl said, “God's greatest provision for man was the provision of himself.” When you hear that, how does it challenge your idea of what “the good life” really is?
3. In relation to the creation story, could you conclude that God has our best interest at heart? How so?
4. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit in the garden, what was it that they were really after? What do you think led them to conclude they didn't already have what they wanted/needed?
5. When you hear the term “worship,” what comes to mind?
6. Often our search for “the good life” causes us to pursue created things over Creator God. How have you seen that play itself out in your life? In American culture?
7. As a follow up to question 6, how do these things take root in your heart and affect decision-making in your everyday life?
8. What steps can you take in the next 30 days to focus your pursuit on God rather than created things? Write these down below (finish on your own if necessary).

### **Additional Question For Personal Reflection:**

In your own words, why is God worth devoting your life and actions to?  
(Answer this question for yourself in addition to your devotional time this week.)

# Week One | Weekly Devotionals

*Each week during The Good Life journey you will continue to dive deeper into what was presented in the large group gatherings by spending time reading from the Bible and evaluating what you read through a series of daily devotions.*

## Day 1 | Creation

### **Read Genesis 1**

1. What do you think it means that before there was anything, there was God? What does that reveal about God?
2. How does God create? What does this suggest about his power? Does this give you more confidence in God's Word (that is, the Bible)?
3. Is there a specific rhythm and order that you see in the creation account?
4. In Genesis 1, God demonstrated order, power, and goodness through creation. Do you see any of these qualities in God today and, if so, in what ways?

### **Point of Interest:**

The creation account reveals that each element of creation serves a unique purpose and/or is created "according to their various kinds." Nothing is done by accident or happenstance, yet is created to serve an intended purpose by the Creator.

### **Read John 1:1-4**

5. To whom is John referring when he describes "the Word?" What does John tell us about the Word? How does this passage tie back to the creation account in Genesis 1?

## Day 2 | Creation of Man

### ***Read Genesis 1:26 - 2:25***

1. How does God create Adam versus how he created everything else? What does this suggest about God's ability to create and his perspective on mankind?
2. What role does God give Adam in the garden?
3. How does God create Eve? What role is she given?
4. How does God make humankind distinct from the rest of his creation?

#### **Point of Interest:**

The **imago Dei (Latin translation of "image of God")** is a term applied uniquely to humans which denotes the symbolic relation between God and humanity. The term has its roots in Genesis 1:27, wherein "God created man in his own image." This scriptural passage does not mean that God is in human form, but rather, that humans bear the image of God in their moral, spiritual, and intellectual nature. Thus, humans mirror God's divinity in their ability to actualize the unique qualities they have been given, and which make them different from all other creatures.

5. What does being created in the image of God teach us about our potential as human beings?
6. What changes for you when you realize you bear the image of God?

## Day 3 | Boundaries That Create Blessing

### ***Read Genesis 2***

1. In your life, how have you typically responded to rules?
2. Why do you think God puts boundaries on humanity from the very beginning?
3. What do boundaries suggest about God's ability to provide? How does he specifically provide in these verses?
4. What do you think that God wanted to teach Adam and Eve by placing boundaries on them?
5. Think through the creation account in Genesis 1-2. How had God already shown Adam and Eve that he would take care of him?
6. Why are we typically so hesitant to trust the boundaries that God places in our lives? What do boundaries teach us about God as a Father?

## Day 4 | The Fall

### ***Read Genesis 3; Romans 2:3; and Romans 6:23***

1. In Genesis 3, how did the serpent twist God's original command from Genesis 2:16-17?
2. How did the serpent attempt to portray God to Adam and Eve?
3. What is it about the fruit that tempts Eve to eat it? What did Eve do immediately after she eats the fruit?

#### **Point of Interest:**

Genesis 3:8 describes the level of paradise and proximity that Adam and Eve experienced in the garden of Eden with God. They were so close to God, physically and relationally, that they could hear him walking around the garden. This verse gives us a description of the peace and presence Adam and Eve had with God. This perfect paradise would come to an end as soon as Adam and Eve took their first bite of the fruit.

4. What did Adam and Eve realize after they ate the fruit? How did they respond and what did their response suggest?
5. Why did God have to send Adam and Eve out of the garden?

### ***Read James 1:13-18***

6. What is it that tempts us? What does this mean for you and me?
7. What does James say is the result of sin? How does this compare to what God commands Adam and Eve in Genesis 2?
8. What are some ways that we try to cover up our sins? What is the problem with doing this?

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY:**

- What is the significance of what God does in Genesis 3:21?
- Look back at James 1:13-18. What you find yourself focusing on consistently is ultimately what your mind will desire. What are some actions you can take to change what you desire for the better?

## Day 5 | Pursuing Creation vs. The Creator

### ***Read Romans 1:18-32***

1. After reading this passage in Romans, how do you feel about the description that is painted of humanity?
2. What is the problem with pursuing created things over the Creator? How does this rob us of the "good life," that is, the life that God intends for us full of purpose and hope?
3. What do you think it means that God gives people over to their desires?
4. What does it mean to worship something?
5. How do we essentially doubt God's goodness when we pursue (worship) created things over the Creator?
6. What is the result of our sinful desires and actions? What are the implications of this?
7. Despite our desires, how can we be brought back into a relationship with God?

### **FOR FURTHER STUDY:**

- Why is it so easy for us to be distracted by earthy things?
- Read Colossians 1:15-23. What does this indicate is the purpose of all creation? How do we tend to get this backward?
- Think back to a time you pursued something that you thought would satisfy you, only for it to leave you empty and searching. Be honest and open with yourself when answering this question.