



SAMPLE CURRICULUM



ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM SAMPLE

Introduction

LifeWise Academy utilizes the basic structure and focus of The Gospel Project curriculum. This curriculum, originally produced for Sunday school and small group applications, has been licensed by LifeWise and reformatted to suit the needs of a released time program. The LifeWise curriculum is designed to take students through the entire Bible, beginning in Genesis and ending in Revelation. Tied to each lesson is a specific character trait that, as we are changed by the gospel, becomes more evident in our lives.

The LifeWise Threefold Focus

Each LifeWise lesson presents one Bible passage and links to the gospel and the students' character with an intentional focus on three areas:



Head (Bible lesson): We focus first on simply knowing what the Bible says, what happened in the story and what we learn about God, ourselves or the world through each passage.



Heart (Jesus Connection): We examine how the Bible story ties into and points to the big picture of the gospel. We consider our failures, sinfulness and need of a savior, as well as Jesus' victory in accomplishing what we could not achieve for ourselves.



Hands (LifeWise Quality): We explore ways students can live out the changed character the gospel produces. More than sending the students out to merely "try harder to be good," we show how, as the gospel transforms our hearts, Jesus changes our desires, actions and character to be more like His.



Using the Elementary Curriculum

Each LifeWise lesson includes multiple components and activities so the teacher can choose what works best for their classroom. Teachers have the freedom to design a lesson plan and schedule what works best for their students, environment and time constraints.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The colored stars in each year's column indicate the suggested lessons to teach for abbreviated time frames.

Year One Lessons	Bible Story	LWQ	4yr	3yr	2yr	1yr
LWL 1: God Created the World	Genesis 1:1-25	Gratitude	★	★	★	★
LWL 2: God Created People	Genesis 1:26-2:25	Respect	★	★	★	★
LWL 3: Sin Entered the World	Genesis 3	Obedience	★	★	★	★
LWL 4: Cain and Abel	Genesis 4	Responsibility	★	★	★	
LWL 5: Noah and the Ark	Genesis 6-9	Patience	★	★	★	★
LWL 6: The Tower of Babel	Genesis 11:1-9	Humility	★	★	★	
LWL 7: God's Covenant With Abraham	Genesis 12-18	Hope	★	★	★	★
LWL 8: God Tested Abraham	Genesis 22	Sacrifice	★	★	★	
LWL 9: The Promise Reaffirmed	Genesis 25-26	Trustworthiness				
LWL 10: The Stolen Blessing	Genesis 27-28	Generosity				
LWL 11: Jacob's New Name	Genesis 32-33	Submission				
LWL 12: Joseph Sent to Egypt	Genesis 37, 39-41	Perseverance	★			
LWL 13: Joseph's Dreams Came True	Genesis 42-46, 50	Forgiveness	★			
LWL 14: God Rescued Moses	Exodus 1-2:10	Hope				
LWL 15: God Called Moses	Exodus 2:11-4:17	Compassion				
LWL 16: The Plagues	Exodus 5-11	Humility				
LWL 17: The Passover and Exodus	Exodus 12-15:21	Reliability				
LWL 18: The Wilderness Test	Exodus 15:22-17:7	Contentment	★	★	★	★
LWL 19: The Ten Commandments	Exodus 19-20, 31:18	Submission	★	★	★	★
LWL 20: The Golden Calf	Exodus 32-34	Truthfulness	★	★		
LWL 21: The Tabernacle Was Built	Exodus 35-40	Wholeheartedness	★	★	★	
LWL 22: God Gave Rules for Sacrifice	Leviticus 1-27	Initiative	★	★		
LWL 23: Joshua and Caleb	Numbers 13-14	Confidence	★	★	★	★
LWL 24: The Bronze Snake	Numbers 20-21	Mercy	★	★	★	



LESSON 6: HUMILITY

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Genesis 11:1-9

SAMPLE

THE TOWER OF BABEL



- ◆ Genesis 11:1-9
- ◆ Big Picture Q&A: What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law.
- ◆ Key Passage: Revelation 4:11 – Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.

JESUS CONNECTION



People chose to give glory to themselves instead of God. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him (Revelation 7:9-10).

LIFEWISE QUALITY



HUMILITY – Refusing to think of myself as more important than I am.

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Following the flood, God wanted to have a fresh start. God commanded Noah in Genesis 9:1 to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” This command echoes the one given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. God intended the paradise of the garden to spread into the whole world, but sinful people had other desires. Genesis 10 accounts for the nations that spread out in the land after the flood (Genesis 10:32). The people moved east and settled in a valley. This story continues the cycle of disobedience to God and a choice to sin that will be a constant reminder of our need for a Savior.

In Genesis 11:2, Scripture indicates that instead of filling the earth as God commanded, these people devised a plan to build a city and a large tower into the heavens. Read Genesis 11:4. The people's motive was clear: “Let us make a name for ourselves.” The people didn't want to be scattered. They didn't believe God would give them what was good if they obeyed Him. They sought to obtain for themselves what they believed was good.

The people tried to build a monument with its top in the heavens, but they succeeded only in separating themselves from God and from each other. God confused their language and scattered them over the earth. They were unable to finish building the city, so the city was called Babel—which sounds like the Hebrew word for “confused”—because there the Lord confused the people's language.

This week, you have the opportunity to tell the students you teach about God's better plan: His plan not for people to reach up to Him, but His plan to reach down to people by sending His Son, Jesus, to live the perfect life we couldn't live and die the death we don't want to die. That is the gospel. Pray that the students you teach would have open hearts to receive it.

BIBLE TIMELINE & REVIEW (3 MIN)

Let's check out our timeline. In the beginning, there was nothing but God. God created everything for His glory. He made land, the stars, plants and animals. God created people in His own image; everything God created was good! But the people God created sinned. Adam and Eve's sin separated them from God, and Cain's sin separated him from God and people. A few generations later, God saw that sin had spread throughout creation, so God sent a great flood to wipe away all living things. Can anyone remember why God chose to save Noah and his family? (*Noah had faith in God.*) What instructions did God give to Noah? (*Build an ark, store food, take animals on the ark.*) How did God help Noah? (*He told him how to build it and brought animals to the ark.*) After the flood was over, God commanded Noah to do two things. Do you remember what they were? (*Multiply and fill the earth.*) Our story today is about a time when people sinned again. This Bible story takes place many years after Noah and the ark.

SESSION STARTERS (5-10 MIN)

Great and Famous (Older Students)

- ◆ Guide students to sit in a circle to play a guessing game. Think of a person who is or was famous. Choose a player to begin by asking a yes-or-no question about the person. After you answer the question, the player may guess the person's identity. If the player guesses incorrectly, the next player may ask a yes-or-no question. Challenge students to figure out the famous person by asking 20 or fewer questions.
- ◆ What makes a person famous? People who are famous are very well known and talked about. Today's Bible story is about some people who wanted to make a name for themselves. They wanted to be famous!

Would You Rather? (Younger Students)

- ◆ Have students stand in the center of the room. Explain that you will give them two options. As you give the options, point to one side of the room for the first option and the other side of the room for the second option. They will move to the side that corresponds with their choice.
 - ◇ Would you rather play baseball or perform a song?
 - ◇ Write a story or spend time with friends?
 - ◇ Build something or draw something? Go to school or go to sports practice?
 - ◇ Play an instrument or plan a party?
- ◆ God has given us gifts and abilities to use to give Him glory. God created people to give glory to Him alone. In our story today, a group of people built a tower for their own glory instead of God's. Let's hear more about it.

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY/BIG PICTURE Q&A (5 MIN)

Revelation 4:11

Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.

Brick Hunt and Stack (Older and Younger Students)

- ◆ Cut rectangles from red or brown construction paper to simulate bricks. Before the session, write one word of the key passage on each brick and hide them around the room. Guide students to find each brick and work together to tape the bricks on the wall in order to form a tower.
- ◆ Our tower reminds us that God is the only One who is worthy of glory because He created us. He is the reason that we live! God created people to give glory to Him alone.

Big Picture Q&A

Q: What is sin?

A: Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

BIBLE STORY (10 MIN)

The Tower of Babel | Genesis 11:1-9

After the great flood, God told Noah and his sons to grow their families and fill the earth. Noah's sons got married and had children. Their families grew, and **the people started to travel through the land.**

At this time, everyone in the world spoke the same language. **One day, the people traveled through a valley.** They liked it there, **and they decided to live there.**

"We don't want to be scattered all over the earth," they said. "Let's build a city and a tower so big that it touches the sky. The tower will make us famous!"

The people were not doing what God had told them to do. They wanted to be as important as God. They were saying "Look how great we are," instead of "Look how great God is." They wanted glory for themselves instead of God. **But God is greater than anyone. God created people to give glory to Him alone.**

The people made bricks out of clay and baked them in the fire to make stones. Then, they **used** the **stones** to start building the tower.

God came down to look at the tower. God said, "If they are doing this, **they will keep thinking up more bad things to do. We need to stop them."**

So, God mixed up the people's words. Instead of everyone speaking the same language, everyone spoke different languages. **When people tried to make plans, they could not understand what other people were saying.** If one workman said, "Hand me another brick," nobody else knew what he wanted.

The people had to stop building the city. Families had to move away from each other to live with people they could understand. God made it so the people did just what He had told them to do after the flood. They were scattered all over the world. **The city with the unfinished tower was called Babel** (BAY buhl). **Because the people chose to disobey God, their sin separated them from one another.**

JESUS CONNECTION



People chose to give glory to themselves instead of God. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him (Revelation 7:9–10).

LIFEWISE QUALITY (3–4 MIN)

HUMILITY – Refusing to think of myself as more important than I am.

Living LifeWise

Because God is King, we can show humility by choosing not to act like we're more important than God or other people.

Character Connection

The people of Babel were full of pride. They built a tower to prove how great they were. They even thought they were greater than God!

One way to tell if we're humble or proud is to look at how we treat other people. Being humble means that we show other people that we think they are important. How do people who think they are better than everybody else treat others? (*Brag, be mean, cut in line, always want their way.*)

Jesus shows us what humility looks like because, even though He's God, He came and died for us. And He will help us be humble just like He is. We don't have to die for other people, but we can show them they're important. What would it look like to be humble in these situations?

- ◆ You and two other classmates volunteer for the same job.
 - ◆ You have an argument every day after school with your sibling about who gets to play video games first.
 - ◆ After losing the game in gym class three times, your team finally wins a round.
 - ◆ Your teacher asks you to do something during indoor recess, but you wanted to play a game.
-

BIBLE STORY REVIEW (5 MIN)

- ◆ **What did God tell the people to do?**
He told Noah and his sons to grow their families and fill the earth, Gen. 9:1
- ◆ **What did the people do instead?**
Their descendants built a big tower, Gen 11:4
- ◆ **Why did the people build this tower?**
To show how great they were, Gen. 11:4
- ◆ **Why was God unhappy with the people?**
They disobeyed God's commands, Gen. 9:1, 11:2

- ◆ What did God do to make the people spread out like He had commanded them?

He mixed up their languages so that they could not understand each other, Gen. 11:7-9

- ◆ Why did God create the world?

God created the world and everything in it for His glory.

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES (5-10 MIN)

Missions Connection (Older and Younger Students)

- ◆ God told the people to spread out, but they didn't obey Him. He confused their languages so that they would spread out to live among people who spoke the same language. Do you think it would be difficult to build a tower if we all spoke different languages?
- ◆ Form two groups. Provide building materials like paper, tape, straws and craft sticks. Explain that both groups will build in silence with the materials they have been given. After five minutes, declare the tallest tower the winner.
- ◆ God confused the languages of the people and spread them out. They stopped building a city to bring themselves glory. Even today, people speak many, many different languages. Some people don't even have access to the Bible because it is not in their language yet. It was hard to build a tower, but it would be really hard to tell someone about Jesus without being able to use words they understand! Let's take a minute to pray for the people all over the world who haven't heard about Jesus.
- ◆ Pray that God would raise up missionaries to go to these people groups and teach them about Jesus.

Activity Pages & Recap Cards (5-10 min) (For in-class or take-home use)

- ◆ World Languages (Older Students)
 - ◇ Answers: *Spain, Spanish; Cameroon, French; South Africa, English; Saudi Arabia, Arabic; China, Mandarin.*
- ◆ Word Confusion (Younger Students)

Prayer & Requests (3-5 min)

Lord God, we praise You because You created all things. You created us for Your glory. Father, forgive us for the times we think of ourselves as greater than You are. Forgive us for wanting credit for things that You do. Thank You for not leaving us alone. Thank You for coming down to us through Your Son, Jesus. Help us to trust Him every day and give You the glory You deserve. We love You. Amen.

Journal Page

Write a prayer of thanks and recognition to God, giving Him glory. God created people to give glory to Him alone. We give God glory when we show or tell about how great He is. God deserves our worship. He is so good!

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Who mattered more to the people—themselves or God?
- How have you been tempted to use your talents to make people think you are great?
- How can you use your talents to show how great God is?



THE TOWER OF BABEL

GENESIS 11:1-9

MAIN POINT: GOD CREATED PEOPLE TO GIVE GLORY TO HIM ALONE.

After the great flood, God told Noah and his sons to grow their families and fill the earth. Noah's sons got married and had children, and the people started to travel through the land.

At this time, everyone in the world spoke the same language. One day, the people traveled through a valley, and they decided to live there.

"We don't want to be scattered all over the earth," they said. "Let's build a city and a tower so big that it touches the sky. The tower will make us famous!"

The people were not doing what God had told them to do. They were saying "Look how great we are," instead of "Look how great God is." But God is greater than anyone. God created people to give glory to Him alone.

The people used stones to start building the tower. God came down to look at the tower. God said, "They will keep thinking up more bad things to do. We need to stop them."

So God mixed up the people's words. When people tried to make plans, they could not understand what other people were saying.

The people had to stop building the city. Families had to move away from each other to live with people they could understand. The city with the unfinished tower was called Babel. Because the people chose to disobey God, their sin separated them from one another.

Jesus Connection: *People chose to give glory to themselves instead of God. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—people from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him. (Revelation 7:9-10)*

Key Passage: *Revelation 4:11 – Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.*

SAMPLE

FOLD

WORLD LANGUAGES

Can you guess the official languages of these countries? Write the language below the country's name. (Languages: Arabic, English, French, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish)

SPAIN _____

SAUDI ARABIA _____

CAMEROON _____

SOUTH AFRICA _____

CHINA _____

MAIN POINT MIX-UP

These words are all mixed up! Can you make sense of them? (Hint: The first letters are in the correct positions.)

GDO CEDARET
POLEEP TO
GEVI GROYL
TO HMI AEONL.



**Where did
the people
settle?**

**How tall did
the people
want the
tower to be?**

**What did the
people use
to build the
tower?**

**Why did the
people want
to build a tall
tower?**

**Besides the
tower, what
else did the
people build?**

**How did God
stop the
people from
building?**

**Where did
the Lord move
the people?**

**What was
the city
called?**

**Why did
God create
the world?**

in a valley

**They wanted
to build a
tower with its
top in the sky.**

bricks

**He confused
their
language.**

a city

**to make a
name for
themselves**

**Babel
or
Babylon**

**God created
the world and
everything in it
for His glory.**



WORD CONFUSION

INSTRUCTIONS: Unscramble the words to complete the main point.

GOD _____ (RETCADE)

PEOPLE TO GIVE _____ (LGROY)

TO HIM _____ (OENAL).

KEY PASSAGE:
Revelation 4:11 – Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:
• What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law.

BIBLE STORY:
THE TOWER OF BABEL
• People disobeyed God by choosing to settle together instead of filling the earth.
• People built a tower, intending to bring themselves glory instead of God.
• God mixed up their languages and scattered them.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:
• Who mattered more to the people—themselves or God?
• How have you been tempted to use your talents to make people think you are great?
• How can you use your talents to show how great God is?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:
• List the talents and abilities you see in family members.
• Go further: Choose a way to use your talents to show God's greatness.

The Tower of Babel
L 6 | HUMILITY



SAMPLE

SAMPLE



L 6 The Tower of Babel | HUMILITY

GOD CREATED PEOPLE TO GIVE GLORY TO HIM ALONE.

LIFEWISE
ACADEMY
✦ ✦

POWERED BY THE GOSPEL PROJECT



HUMILITY

Refusing to take of myself or more important than I am.

THE TOWER OF BABEL Genesis 11:1-9

PICTURE 8:1 A: What is left to be building God's tower?
KEY CONCEPT: People often do not give to God the things He desires. They do not give their hearts, all of their strength, time, and resources together with all things to glorify Him and serve Him. (Matthew 23:23)
KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 11:1-9 "The Lord and God were angry at man because they had not one heart and one language."
LIVING LIFESHIP: Remember God is able to give you the heart and language you need to glorify Him and serve Him.



COMPASSION

Love in action, showing I care for helping someone who is suffering.

GOD CALLED MOSES Exodus 2:11-17

PICTURE 8:2 B: What is your heart? God is looking for people who love Him.
KEY CONCEPT: God called Moses to reveal His plan. The call of Moses leads to a great calling and purpose. The call of Moses leads to a great calling and purpose. The call of Moses leads to a great calling and purpose. The call of Moses leads to a great calling and purpose.
KEY PASSAGE: Exodus 2:11-17 "The Lord saw that the Egyptians were mistreating the Israelites."
LIVING LIFESHIP: Call for others to COMPASSION and help to show COMPASSION to others.



THE GOSPEL PROJECT

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE STORY LINE OF THE BIBLE

POWERED BY THE GOSPEL PROJECT



COMMITMENT

Doing what I say I'll do.

GOD REMINDS THE PEOPLE OF HIS COVENANT Deuteronomy 1:5-23-28:45a 5-6 8-9-11

PICTURE 8:4 What is the promise to give God?
KEY CONCEPT: God has His promise to give His people. He has His promise to give His people. He has His promise to give His people. He has His promise to give His people.
KEY PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 1:5-23-28:45a 5-6 8-9-11 "The Lord said to Moses, 'I have heard the words of the people who are speaking against you.'"
LIVING LIFESHIP: Remember God's promise to give His people. He has His promise to give His people. He has His promise to give His people. He has His promise to give His people.

Sample
CURRICULUM

LIFEWISE
Middle ⚡ School

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM SAMPLE

Introduction

LifeWise Academy utilizes the basic structure and focus of The Gospel Project curriculum. This curriculum, originally produced for Sunday school and small group applications, has been licensed by LifeWise and reformatted to suit the needs of a released time program. The LifeWise curriculum is designed to take students through the entire Bible, beginning in Genesis and ending in Revelation. Tied to each lesson is a specific character trait that, as we are changed by the gospel, becomes more evident in our lives.

The Foundation

The full middle school curriculum is contained in three years, for a total of 112 lessons.

- ◆ **Year 1:** The Law and the Prophets (38 lessons)
- ◆ **Year 2:** The Life and Teachings of Jesus (35 lessons)
- ◆ **Year 3:** Living Out Jesus' Mission (39 lessons)

The LifeWise Threefold Focus

Each LifeWise lesson presents one Bible passage and links to the gospel and the students' character with an intentional focus on three areas:



Head (Bible Lesson): We focus first on simply knowing what the Bible says, what happened in the story and what we learn about God, ourselves or the world through each passage.



Heart (Jesus Connection): We examine how the Bible story ties into and points to the big picture of the gospel. We consider our failures, sinfulness and need of a savior, as well as Jesus' victory in accomplishing what we could not achieve for ourselves.



Hands (LifeWise Quality): We explore ways students can live out the changed character that the gospel produces. More than sending the student out to merely "try harder to get good," we show how, as the gospel transforms our hearts, Jesus changes our desires, actions and character to be more like His.

Lesson Components

Because each LifeWise program and classroom is unique, teachers can customize their lesson plans based on what works best for their students, as long as they teach the threefold focus. The following is a general overview of the components included in each lesson:

- ◆ Bible Review
- ◆ Introductory & Reinforcement Activities
- ◆ Bible Lesson
- ◆ Discussion Questions
- ◆ Jesus Connection
- ◆ LifeWise Quality
- ◆ Take-Home Worksheet
- ◆ Extended Lesson Resources

Year One Lessons

Character Trait

God's Good World	Gratitude
God's Good People	Respect
Sin and God's Good News (The Fall)	Obedience
Sin and God's Grace (The Flood)	Confidence
Sin and God's Authority (Babel)	Humility
Suffering and God's Presence (Job)	Contentment
God Makes a Promise (Abraham)	Hope
God Foreshadows His Promise (Isaac's Sacrifice)	Sacrifice
God Provides for His Promise (Rebekah)	Kindness
God Renews His Promise (The Birthright)	Patience
God's Mercy to a Deceiver (The Blessing)	Mercy
God's New Name for Jacob	Teachable
God Redeems Betrayal (Joseph)	Self-Control
God Redeems Adversity (Joseph)	Perseverance
God Overrides Evil with Good (Joseph)	Forgiveness
God Hears His People (Moses)	Compassion
God Frees His People (Moses)	Courage
God Delivers His People (Moses)	Reliability
A Test in the Wilderness (Moses)	Contentment
A Law for God's People (10 Commandments)	Submission
An Image of Idolatry (Golden Calf)	Loyalty
A Place for God's Presence (Tabernacle)	Wholeheartedness
A Picture of Atonement (Day of Atonement)	Mercy
The Rebellion of God's People (The 12 Spies)	Confidence
The Promise of God's Presence (Moses' Farewell)	Commitment
The Promise of Victory (Battle of Jericho)	Boldness
The Pictures of God's Authority (Miracles of Elijah)	Trustworthiness
The Gifts of God's Power (Elijah Taken to Heaven)	Wholeheartedness
The Vision of God's Strength (Elisha and the Invisible Army)	Kindness
A Rebellious People Receive Mercy (Jonah)	Compassion
An Unfaithful People Receive Love (Hosea)	Love
An Idolatrous People Receive Judgment (Assyria destroys Israel)	Patience
God Promises a Suffering Servant (Isaiah)	Sacrifice
God Receives the People's Repentance (King Josiah)	Responsibility
God Declares a New Covenant (Jeremiah)	Forgiveness
God Answers a Confused Prophet (Habakkuk)	Joy
God Disciplines a Rebellious People (Babylon destroys Judah)	Humility
God Pictures a Future Hope (Ezekiel)	Hope



GOD'S GOOD WORLD

God created all things good.

JESUS CONNECTION



John said about Jesus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created." (John 1:1-3). Jesus is the very Word of God. He created all things, and all creation holds together in Him (Colossians 1:17).



LIFEWISE QUALITY

GRATITUDE - To appreciate what someone has done or given to me.



BIBLE REVIEW

MSSL 1 The Bible is Trustworthy | 1-2 Min

In our first lesson, we learned that the Bible claims to be inspired, perfect and true.

- ◆ What does it mean that the Bible is "inspired?" (*God inspired, or guided, men on what to write down through the influence of the Holy Spirit.*)
- ◆ What evidence is there that the Bible is perfect and true? (*God is perfect, therefore His Word must be perfect; None of the prophecies predicted in the Bible have been proven false; archeology and history verify many statements in the Bible.*)

Today, we will read and discuss God's account of how the world began in the book of Genesis.

SESSION STARTERS

Something New | 10 Min

- ◆ Provide a variety of supplies (paper/pencils, art supplies, musical instruments, etc.) and challenge students to create something new: a picture, poem, song or other project. As they work, explain that human beings have been given the ability to make or build amazing things (from art to jet planes) out of pre-existing materials. Only God can truly *create*, or bring forth something out of nothing, which is exactly what happens in today's story.
- ◆ Invite volunteers to briefly share what they made and why they made it. Ask the students how they would explain the difference between making and creating.

BIBLE LESSON: GOD'S GOOD WORLD | 10–20 Min

Genesis 1:1–2

To begin, let's ask an important question: **Where did the universe and everything in it come from? It's a big question that every world religion and worldview has to answer.** Some claim that an impersonal spiritual force or some natural process, such as evolution, brought the world and everything in it into being.

But in **Genesis 1:1**, the Bible says that **"In the beginning, God created."** These five words stand out from all the other creation stories in one major way. **According to the Bible, God personally and intentionally created everything ("the heavens and the earth") out of nothing, from the Latin *ex nihilo*! God didn't need raw materials to create like we do. He isn't a master Shaper or chief Designer of an already-existing universe—in every way, He is the Creator.** No other religion makes this claim.

So **the Bible's account begins with *who* created everything (Gen. 1:1–2) and continues with *what* He created (Gen. 1:3–25).**

Genesis 1:3–26

What did God make? On Day 1, He spoke light into existence and separated it from darkness, creating day and night. On Day 2, He created the sky. On Day 3, He formed seas and dry land and covered the earth with plant life. On Day 4, He created the sun, moon and stars to provide light and mark days and seasons. On Day 5, He filled the sky with birds and the water with sea life. And on Day 6, He made animals to fill the earth and mankind to be masters over it.

Genesis 1:3–26 (cont.)

So why is Genesis 1 important? First, it demonstrates God's power. He simply spoke, and everything appeared. Can you do that? Of course not! **The amount of power and energy necessary for God to do what the Bible claims He did in creation is beyond our understanding.** Our minds simply cannot grasp the magnitude and power of a God who could simply say, "Let there be ..." and suddenly, everything is.

Consider the stars. Astronomers estimate there are about 100 million stars in our galaxy and about 10,000 galaxies in the observable universe. Multiply these numbers, and you get a 1 followed by 24 zeros (1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000). Yet God spoke each of these stars into existence with a single word, and He knows the name of each star (Is. 40:26).

Second, the God revealed in Genesis 1 is both sovereign and good. **Sovereign** means that God alone controls all aspects of creation—from the smallest particle to the millions of living creatures on our planet. **Because He is the Creator and controls all things big and small, He is the rightful ruler.** (Point out the word "reign" inside of "sovereign.") **It is right for us to submit to Him, not just the things that are beyond our control, but in every area.**

But **God is also good.** How many times can you find the phrase "God saw that it was good" in Genesis 1? **Creation's goodness is an overflow of God's goodness, which is an important truth about the nature of the created universe and our role within it. Part of what makes God's creation good is that each piece perfectly fulfilled the purpose He designed it to do.**

Big Ideas

- ◆ **What you believe about creation does matter.** Did it come from an impersonal force or from a personal being? Those are two very different starting points that have significant impact on many other beliefs, and both require faith.
 - ◇ In Genesis, a personal God forms the universe and all that exists out of nothing. Rather than the universe existing because of natural causes that began a chain reaction, we learn that God began it all.
 - ◇ This truth is repeated in John 1:3, which tells us that all things were created by him, and Colossians 1:17, which affirms that all things in the universe are held together through Jesus.
- ◆ **When God created everything, He began with a formless void and shaped it with His Word. He is all-powerful and creative and works with purpose.** In the same way, our lives are formless and void until God’s Word comes in to bring life, peace, beauty and order. This is the promise of the gospel: when we trust in Jesus and allow God to change us, we are transformed deeply and eternally.
- ◆ **Genesis 1 reveals a God who is good and sovereign.** In the first chapter of the Bible, we learn that we don’t get to create a god that we want to see; God requires us to see Him as He is and submit to Him. Seeing who God is should humble us before Him, but it should also comfort our hearts and give us peace to go through life trusting that His wisdom, creative power and goodness will work all things for our ultimate good (Romans 8:28–29).

Discussion Questions

- ◆ How does knowing God as the Creator impact the way we see Him and our reasons for listening to Him and obeying or disobeying Him?
- ◆ God created all things from nothing because He is all-powerful. In what areas of life could this truth help you trust Him more?
- ◆ Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” What other explanations do people give for how the universe came to exist? What difference does it make if a Creator God made everything?

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Suggested Video | 5–10 Min

BibleProject Video: *Creation*; Full video: 7:12.

It Was Good | 5–10 Min

Write the word *good* on a white board or poster board. To explore why God would call each part of His creation good, ask students to brainstorm what it means for something to be good. Write their ideas on the board as they talk. If needed, use the following prompts:

- ◆ Was what God created bad or sinful in any way? No. When God created, there was no sin in it. It was whole.
- ◆ Is it beautiful and pleasant to the eyes? Yes. Think of the Grand Canyon or a sunset—creation is beautiful.

- ◆ Is it usable? Yes. Everything God made performed its intended purpose and design well.
- ◆ Was there any part of creation that God could have improved upon? No. When God created the world and everything in it, He created it perfectly. That's why He rested on the seventh day. He was completely finished with His work.



JESUS CONNECTION



John said about Jesus, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created.” (John 1:1–3). Jesus is the very Word of God. He created all things, and all creation holds together in Him (Colossians 1:17).



LIFEWISE QUALITY | 3–5 Min

GRATITUDE – To appreciate what someone has done or given to me.

Living LifeWise

Because God is the good and sovereign Creator, we can show gratitude to Him for all He has made.

LWQ Script

Throughout Genesis 1, God called His creation “good.” Everything He made fulfilled its purpose, brought Him praise and provided enjoyment to His people. But because of sin, human beings began to worship themselves and the world instead of God. Left to ourselves, we will always make the created world and its interactions more important than God. He invites us to a very different response: gratitude.

Gratitude is saying thanks to God for all that He created, the gifts He has given and His character qualities—He is good, all-powerful and loving, for example. Choosing gratitude helps us keep our view of the world in proper order (God first, people second, created things third). Even more, a thankful heart will prevent us from mistreating or taking for granted the things and people around us. Gratitude must be chosen and practiced, but it is possible. God wants us to be grateful for all He has done for us instead of taking it for granted, and His Spirit will help us respond to all that He's made with a heart of gratitude.

Take-Home Worksheet

- ◆ **Head Questions**
 - ◇ Why is it so significant that God created everything “good,” or perfectly?
 - ◇ What are some realities about the world God made that we can be thankful for?

◆ Heart Questions

- ◇ In Genesis 1:1–26, God reveals Himself as a God of order, purpose and design. How might those qualities help us respond to stress or anxiety about our circumstances or about the world?
- ◇ How we treat something shows what we really think about it. How do we treat something we are grateful for? How do we treat something we take for granted?

◆ Hands Challenge

- ◇ Choose one specific thing you will do today to preserve God’s creation as a way to show gratitude for what He has made. Record what you will do and how it demonstrates gratitude. (*Examples: Thank God for your friends and family, compliment a friend on a unique gift God gave them, pick up litter, use a reusable water bottle, etc.*)

EXTENDED LESSON RESOURCES

Bible Commentary for the Teacher

God revealed Himself in a mighty way from the beginning. Under inspiration from the Holy Spirit, important key truths were revealed in Chapter 1.

- ◆ **Capitalize on key biblical truths (Genesis 1:1).** The first seven words of Genesis chapter one establish some important key truths upon which the entire Bible is based:
 - ◇ **God is eternal.** God existed before there was a universe and will exist after the universe perishes (Heb. 1:10–12).
 - ◇ **God is the main character in the Bible.** He is the subject of the first verb in the Bible. He is the subject of more verbs and performs a wider variety of activities than any other being in the Bible.
 - ◇ **God is a Trinity.** The Hebrew word for God is plural, but the verb form of which God is the subject is singular. He is three divine Persons in one divine essence.
 - ◇ **God created everything uniquely.** God has done what no human being could ever do. In its active form, the Hebrew verb *bara'*, meaning “to create,” never has a human subject. In other words, *bara'* indicates a work that is uniquely God’s.
 - ◇ **God created everything from nothing.** He didn’t modify pre-existing matter to create the heavens and the earth but called matter into being out of nothing (Ps. 33:6,9; Heb. 11:3).
 - ◇ **God is self-sufficient.** God is not dependent on the universe, but the universe is dependent on God (Heb. 1:3).
- ◆ **Stick to the main point (Genesis 1:2).** Remember to stick to the main point as you study the creation account in Genesis.
 - ◇ The passage WAS written— under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit— to show us that God created the heavens and earth through His powerful Word.
 - ◇ The passage was NOT written to answer many other questions we force upon the text.
- ◆ **Define how God has revealed Himself (Genesis 1:3–26).**
 - ◇ **General revelation.** Creation’s purpose and design is to declare God’s glory and proclaim the work of His hands and reveal things about God that are invisible to us. Creation displays God’s eternal power and divine nature (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20) in a way we can understand it.
 - ◇ **Specific revelation.** God revealed His thoughts, character and intentions by sending and speaking to us through his Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1–2).

In Defense

Read other ancient creation accounts, and you won't find anything like the Bible's. In other accounts, the universe comes from something. One of the gods gives birth to the physical universe, or the world results as an accidental product of some cosmic battle. In one myth, the human race arises from the blood of one of the slain gods. In another, we are created from the remains of a dead sea monster. Most of the time, the human race appears to be an accident formed by larger divine forces that did not care about our creation or our destiny. Yet, in Genesis, everything started with one God who alone created everything out of nothing. He created with intentionality and ease. He took counsel from no one, not even the angels, whom He also created. It all came from Him, and He made it out of nothing.



GOD'S GOOD WORLD

God created all things good.

JESUS CONNECTION



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LIFEWISE QUALITY

GRATITUDE - To appreciate what someone has done or given to me.



BIBLE REVIEW

MSSL 1 The Bible is Trustworthy | 1-2 Min

In our first lesson, we learned that the Bible claims to be inspired, perfect and true.

- ◆ What does it mean that the Bible is "inspired?" (*God inspired, or guided, men on what to write down through the influence of the Holy Spirit.*)
- ◆ What evidence is there that the Bible is perfect and true? (*God is perfect, therefore His Word must be perfect; None of the prophecies predicted in the Bible have been proven false; archeology and history verify many statements in the Bible.*)

Today, we will read and discuss God's account of how the world began in the book of Genesis.

SESSION STARTERS

Something New | 10 Min

- ◆ Provide a variety of supplies (paper/pencils, art supplies, musical instruments, etc.) and challenge students to create something new: a picture, poem, song or other project. As they work, explain that human beings have been given the ability to make or build amazing things (from art to jet planes) out of pre-existing materials. Only God can truly *create*, or bring forth something out of nothing, which is exactly what happens in today's story.
- ◆ Invite volunteers to briefly share what they made and why they made it. Ask the students how they would explain the difference between making and creating.



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JESUS CONNECTION



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Seeing JESUS In Genesis



OLD TESTAMENT		NEW TESTAMENT	
The First Adam	Brought Death (Genesis 3)	The Second Adam	Brought Life (Romans 5)
The First Promise	The Promise of Deliverance from the Serpent (Genesis 3:15)	The Fulfillment	Jesus Destroys the Works of the Devil (1 John 3:8)
Abel's Blood	Cried Out for Justice (Genesis 4)	Jesus' Blood	Proclaims Forgiveness (Hebrews 12:24)
The Flood	Ark Rescued Noah's Family (Genesis 6-8)	Baptism	Christ's Resurrection Rescues Us (1 Peter 3:20-21)
The Promise to Abraham	Seed & Blessing to the World (Genesis 12)	The Fulfillment in Jesus	Seed & Salvation From Sin to the World (Galatians 3)
The Almost Sacrifice of Isaac	"The Lord Will Provide" (Genesis 22)	The Crucifixion of Jesus	"The Lamb of God" (John 1:29)
Jacob's Stairway (or Ladder)	The Promise of God's Presence (Genesis 28)	Jesus Is the Stairway (or Ladder)	The Fullness of God's Presence (John 1:51)
Joseph Suffered	According to God's Plan (Genesis 50:20)	Jesus Suffered	According to God's Plan (Acts 2:23)
Joseph Forgave	His Brothers (Genesis 45)	Jesus Forgives	Sinners (Luke 23:34)
Joseph Saved	People From Famine (Genesis 45)	Jesus Saves	People From Sin (Acts 2:36-41)

LIFEWISE

SAMPLE CURRICULUM



INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

LIFEWISE

constitute a story. There needs to be a connecting thread that helps us see how the events work together to form a narrative.

If you think about it, each of our lives is a story. They have a plot—a beginning, a middle, and an end, with lots of interesting characters and conflict along the way. The problem for us is that we don't know how exactly our stories are going to end or even what's going to be in tomorrow's chapter. Sometimes, our lives can feel like a series of random events. And what is the tone of our stories? Is life basically comic, tragic, or something in between? How can we make sense of our individual stories if we don't even know where they are going? To answer these questions, we need a metanarrative.

3. WHAT IS A METANARRATIVE?

► **OBJECTIVE:** You will be able to discuss the relationship between metanarratives, worldviews, and the meaning of life.

What's a metanarrative? Narrative means *story*, and *meta* means *beyond*. A **metanarrative** is *the story beyond the story; an overarching narrative that makes sense of the world*.

A metanarrative provides a single, overarching interpretation, or grand story, showing how different stories make sense within a larger story. For example, in the musical *Into the Woods*, the stories of Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Cinderella, and Jack and the Beanstalk are incorporated into the larger story of a couple's quest to have a child.⁶ This quest provides the metanarrative within which all the other stories fit together and make sense.

Not all metanarratives are fiction; there are nonfiction metanarratives as well. The history of the United States, for example, can be seen as a collection of related immigration stories. From the European traders who met the Native Americans already here, to the Pilgrims and Puritans who sought religious freedom; from the plight of enslaved Africans to that of Irish people fleeing the Great Famine in the mid 1800s; from Germans seeking farmland to Chinese building railroads, the story of America can be told as a great metanarrative encompassing the ways its diverse people sought freedom and opportunity.⁷

One of the most popular metanarratives in our culture today is the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). As one pastor and movie critic explains:

Every human being is hungry for a single overarching storyline that ties all of our smaller stories together. Since 2008, evidence for this hunger has been as close as your nearest cinema. That's when the release of *Iron Man* marked the genesis of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. . . . The MCU includes a multiplicity of individual narratives. Taken together, these storylines form a master narrative—a metanarrative—that turns out to be as vast as the universe itself.⁸





Suppose you knew nothing about the Marvel Cinematic Universe and the first movie you watched was *Captain America: Civil War*. You might have a hard time understanding exactly what was going on. But if you had watched all of the movies that came before it, you would be able to make much more sense of that particular movie. The Marvel Cinematic Universe provides the metanarrative that gives meaning to, and explains, how all of the individual movies fit together.

Before the MCU, there was the *Star Wars* metanarrative created by George Lucas. With *Star Wars*, Lucas wanted to tell “an old myth in a new way.”⁹ A myth is similar in many ways to a metanarrative. In ancient times, mythical stories about gods and heroes helped people to explain the world and the origin and history of a people. In *Star Wars*, Lucas uses the mythical story of the hero’s journey (in which a hero character sets out on a quest, confronts a challenge, and returns changed), to highlight the struggle between good and evil in the galaxy. Each character in the *Star Wars* universe has such a journey, but their stories all come together in the great battle between good and evil in the galaxy.¹⁰

Lucas believes that this mythical story, or metanarrative, can help us make sense of our own world. Lucas sees “*Star Wars* as taking all the issues that religion represents and trying to distill them down into a more modern and easily accessible construct.”¹¹

The concept of metanarrative is fundamentally wrapped up with the meaning of life. In *Star Wars*, the initially selfish Han Solo finds meaning and purpose outside of making money when he realizes that he has become part of a bigger story—resistance to the evil empire. Young Jakku scavenger Rey discovers her “destiny” when she realizes that she is an heir to the ancient Jedi tradition.

In the same way, we can see our own stories as part of a bigger story—a metanarrative that gives meaning and purpose to the seemingly random events of our lives.

4. WORLDVIEWS AS METANARRATIVES

- ▶ **OBJECTIVE:** You will be able to describe and critique the postmodern view of metanarratives.
- ▶ **OBJECTIVE:** You will be able to compare and contrast common non-Christian worldviews.

However, not everyone thinks that metanarratives can provide meaning to our lives. The term *metanarrative* was made popular by a 1979 book¹² on postmodernism, which argued that religious metanarratives can’t be trusted:

[Postmodernists] generally do not accept any overarching story that gives meaning to all of life. Instead, they focus on small, individual narratives that give meaning to their own lives. A metanarrative speaks of absolute, universal truth. An individual narrative speaks of what is “true for me” and “gives meaning to my life.” Postmodern thinking rejects . . . universal truth.¹³

5. In your own words, explain what happens in each of the six acts of the biblical outline. Use the chart in Chapter 5.8 of your textbook as a reference. Which act do you feel you understand the best? The least? [5.8]

6. Is the biblical metanarrative about individuals or the world? Explain. [5.8]

ACTIVITY

STORIES WITHIN A STORY



OBJECTIVE:

You will create a visual representation of the biblical metanarrative and where well-known Bible stories fit within it.

PREPARATION:

- Materials needed: Bible, paper, and pen or marker
- Time required: 20–25 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. On a piece of paper, draw a horizontal line and mark it with small vertical lines to show the main parts of the biblical metanarrative.
2. Place the following well-known Bible narratives on the line within the proper section of the metanarrative timeline.
 - Joseph is sold into slavery.
 - Adam and Eve are thrown out of the garden.
 - Jesus heals a blind man.
 - David defeats Goliath.
 - Jonah goes on a mission to Nineveh.
 - Paul and Silas are thrown in jail.
 - Esther saves the Jewish people.
 - The Israelites receive the Law at Mount Sinai.
 - Jesus returns on a white horse.
3. Present your work to the class.

CHAPTER 5.9–5.10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the Author of the Bible's great story get involved in the story? [5.9]

2. What can we do when we find troubling or difficult things in the Bible? [5.9]

3. What do you think C. S. Lewis meant when he said that Jesus' love for us is "quite relentless in its determination that we shall be cured of [our] sins, at whatever cost to us, at whatever cost to Him"? Is this good news or bad news? [5.9]

4. What can we learn about God's nature and character from reading the Bible as one grand story? [5.9]
