

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

COFFEEHOUSE FIVE CHURCH
COUNTER CULTURE
HUMAN LIFE
GENESIS 3:1-24
10/29/2017



MAIN POINT

We oppose sinful practices like abortion, slavery, and pornography because they distort the value of human life.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

In what ways does our society demonstrate how it values human life? In what ways does our society show that it does not value human life?

How does the gospel compel action related to issues of human life?

God is the Creator of all things, and human beings are the pinnacle of His creative work. Before sin entered the world, God created man and woman and said that it was "very good." Human beings alone bear the image of their Creator. Each of us has a relationship with God that is distinct from all other created things. Though sin has marred the image of God in human life, we continue to recognize life, from beginning to end, as a precious gift from a God who loves us. From the unborn baby to the most elderly adult, human life is a good gift from God that the gospel compels us to defend.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 1:1; 20-31.

What are the spiritual and practical implications of saying God is the Creator of all life?

Instead of saying things like "let the earth" and "let the waters," what did God say when creating humankind? Instead of speaking to creation, to whom was He speaking? Why does this matter?

What likeness do men and women uniquely share with God? What does it mean that we are made in the image of God?

How were man and women set apart with a distinct position among the created order? What did God declare at the end of the sixth day?

God created human life, so He determines its worth and value. Man isn't simply a more sophisticated or better adapted creature. We aren't distinct from other created things by a matter of degree. Humans are created in the image of God. We share a special relationship with God that no other created being experiences. Because of this, all human beings, from the beginning to the end of life, have dignity and worth.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 3:1-24.

Genesis 3:1 is the first question in the Bible. Why is this significant?

Read 6:23. How does Paul use the word "wage" in this verse? What are the consequences of sin?

How did sin affect Adam's relationship with God? With Eve? With creation? How have you seen these relationships corrupted in your own life?

Re-read Genesis 3:15. Where do we see the gospel in these verses? How did God plan to use a human to redeem all humans?

In Genesis 3:1, Satan turned a command from God to a question about God, and the results were immediate. Sin has caused each of us to reject God's Word, spurn God's authority, and deny God's character. Sin has destroyed our relationship with God, other people, and the rest of God's creation. It led to immediate spiritual death and will lead to eventual physical death. Yet, tucked into the middle of one of the most devastating chapters in the Bible, we see the hope of the gospel: that a seed from a woman would crush the head of the serpent.

How has sin distorted your own view human life?

What hope does the gospel promise to victims of abortion, slavery, pornography, and other issues that devalue human life?

What are the costs of not standing up for the value of human life?

We oppose abortion because it destroys the beauty of human life, work to end slavery because it denies the equality of human life, and fight pornography because it denigrates the dignity of human life. These issues and many more devalue the intrinsic worth of human beings. Because human life matters to God, it should matter to His church. The gospel calls us to counter culture on these issues because we have confidence in every life that God has chosen to create.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How is the view of human life we talked about today different from the popular cultural views of human life? What makes a Christian view of human life counter cultural?

Virtually no one you encounter is likely to agree with or be sympathetic towards human slavery, while many will have more lenient, accepting, or affirming view points on topics like abortion and pornography. Why must we oppose all three no matter how our culture regards them? How can you consistently affirm the value of human

life?

Practically, how can you consistently affirm the value of human life in all your choices?

PRAY

Pray that we would be a people who value human life from the womb to the grave. Thank God for giving you life and the ability to know and follow Him. Ask God to burden your heart for the dignity and the sanctity of human life.

COMMENTARY

GENESIS 1-11 .

GOD'S CREATION GOAL (1:1–2:25)

Primeval history describes the accounts of the creation, the fall, the flood, the tower of Babel, and the distribution of the human race. It embraces all those facets of human experience that led up to and necessitated the call of Abraham to covenant service to the Lord.

The two accounts of creation (1:1–2:3 and 2:4–25) are designed respectively to demonstrate the all-wise and all-powerful sovereignty of God (first account) and His special creation of humanity to rule for Him over all other created things (second account). Though the creation stories are fundamentally theological and not scientific, nothing in them is contradicted by modern scientific understanding. Genesis insists that all the forms of life were created “after their kind” (1:11–12, 21, 24–25); that is, they did not evolve across species lines. Most importantly, the man and the woman were created as “the image of God” (1:26). In other words, humanity was created to represent God on the earth and to rule over all things in His name (1:26–28). God’s desire was to bless humanity and to enjoy relationship with them.

SIN'S CONSEQUENCES/GOD'S GRACE (3:1–11:32)

The privilege of dominion also carried responsibility and limitation. Being placed in the garden to “work it and watch over it” represented human responsibility (2:15). The tree in the midst of the garden from which humans should not eat represented those areas of dominion reserved to Yahweh alone. The man and woman, however, disobeyed God and ate of the tree. They “died” with respect to their covenant privileges (2:17) and suffered the indictment and judgment of their Sovereign. This entailed suffering and sorrow and eventual physical death. God had created man and woman to enjoy fellowship with Himself and with each other. Their disobedience alienated them from God and each other.

The pattern of sin and its consequences set in the garden is replayed throughout Genesis in the accounts of Cain, the generation of the flood, and the men of Sodom. The fall means that we humans are predisposed to sin. Though God punishes sin, sin does not thwart God’s ultimate, gracious purpose for His human creation. Embedded in the curse was the gleam of a promise that the offspring of the woman would someday lead the human race to triumph.

The consequences of sin became clear in the second generation when Cain, the oldest son, killed Abel his brother. Just as his parents had been expelled from the presence of God in the garden, so now Cain was expelled from human society to undertake a nomadic life in the east. Embedded in the curse was the gleam of grace, the “mark on Cain,” symbolizing God’s protection.