

SAMPLER:
CREATION LESSON

CONNECT
BIBLE

NRSV

HOW IT WORKS

The Connect Bible is used for both Holy Moly Sunday School and Connect Tween Sunday School. Age-appropriate activities make it easy (and fun!) for kids to explore scripture.

JOHN 1:29

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was

his own,⁶ and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,⁴ full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,⁶ who is close to the Father's heart,⁶ who has made him known.

John 1:1
THE WORD:
Another name for Jesus. Jesus was the living Word of God.

ICONS
Theme icons help kids remember the theme for each lesson.

INSTANT ACTIVITIES
Without even leaving the page, tweens dive into quick activities that reinforce the lesson's theme.

BUILT IN NAVIGATION
Easy-to-spot visuals direct kids to other Bible stories related to that same theme.

Creation
John 1:1-5
Wait—this sounds familiar! The book of John opens with a line that parallels Genesis 1:1. By using these same words, John's readers would have known he was telling a new kind of creation story.

Underline verses 1-5. Then write or draw about what God is creating.

< Genesis 1:1-5 Psalm 104:14-23, 30 >

^a Or "through him. And without him not one thing came into being that has come into being. ^b In him was life ^c Or He was the true light that enlightens everyone coming into the world ^d Or to his own home ^e Or the Father's only Son ^f Other ancient authorities read It is an only Son, God, or It is the only Son ^g Gk bosom ^h Or the Christ

GENESIS



Who wrote this?

Many say Moses wrote all five books in the Pentateuch. But Genesis was compiled from about 900–500 BCE, making it impossible for Moses to have been the only writer. Since Moses played such an important role in these stories, he is named the writer in tribute.

Why was this written?

Genesis is written to tell the story of the Creator of heaven and Earth choosing to become involved in the life of Israel, the Hebrew people. Genesis contains the stories of the beginning of the whole creation and the beginning of the relationship between God and God's people. This book sets the stage for all that is to come in the stories and books to follow as God and God's people journey together in relationship.

What's the connection?

In Genesis we see the beginning of everything—including Abraham and the nation of Israel, a story line that lasts throughout the Bible. Israel will be important because the faith of its ancestors, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah, as well as the future of Israel's descendants, including Jesus. (You'll read about this genealogy in Matthew 1.)

How does this work?

First, we see the good of creation and everything in it, including humans. Then we watch how things change as sin enters the world. This book chronicles the stories of a handful of God's faithful people as they try to figure out how to live with each other and God in the midst of sin. Genesis sets the stage for the unfolding of God's story with God's people.

Where should I go from here?

- God creates the universe, including Adam and Eve (chapters 1–3).
- Noah listens and builds an ark. God sends a flood, then promises never to do it again (chapters 6–9).
- God makes a promise to Abraham (chapter 12).
- Jacob faces sibling drama (chapter 27) and a name change (chapter 32).
- Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery (chapter 37) but he ends up a ruler in Egypt (chapters 39–41).

SIX DAYS OF CREATION AND THE SABBATH

1 In the beginning when God created^a the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God^b swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶ And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹ And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth,

¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make humankind^c in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth,^d and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

²⁷ So God created humankind^c in his image, in the image of God he created them;^e male and female he created them.



Creation



This is a plus sign.

The word plus comes from a Latin word that means more. Plus can also mean something is good or positive. The Red Cross emblem looks like a plus sign. This symbol is used to protect people and buildings that offer humanitarian and medical aid during war. In Genesis 1, God looks at creation and says, “It is good.” That’s a pretty positive thing!

Genesis 1:1-5

Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 tell two somewhat different stories about creation. In Genesis 1:1–2:4, God speaks, and creation comes into being. Each day, God creates something new, and it is very, very **good!**

- Day 1: Day and night
- Day 2: Sky
- Day 3: Land and sea. Plants, trees, vegetation.
- Day 4: Sun, moon, and stars.
- Day 5: Sea creatures and birds.
- Day 6: Animals covering the earth. People.
- Day 7: God rested.

Genesis 2:5-25 tells another account of creation. God makes the heavens and the earth and forms a man out of the dirt. God causes the man to fall asleep and then forms a woman out of his rib bone. In this story of creation, God is hands-on. Instead of speaking stuff into existence, God sculpts, plants, shapes, and creates the garden, animals, and people. And it is very, very **good**, too!

Highlight or underline Genesis 1:1-5. Draw a plus sign next to each place in Genesis 1 where God sees that creation is good.

^a Or when God began to create or In the beginning God created ^b Or while the spirit of God or while a mighty wind ^c Heb adam ^d Syr: Heb and over all the earth ^e Heb him

JOHN



Who wrote this?

Credit for this gospel is given to “the disciple that Jesus loved,” but without a name. It could have been John, a disciple of John, or even another disciple of Jesus who wrote it. Though we don’t know *exactly* who wrote it, we do know that the author gives us a clear picture of God living with us, and Jesus’ connection to God.

Why was this written?

The author of John tells us the purpose of the gospel in chapter 20:30-31: So that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you might have life in his name.

What’s the connection?

John’s gospel is the most unique of the four. John does share some stories from Mark and from the Q source. But John does not include many stories from the other three gospels, and John does include stories that no other gospel has. More than in any other gospel, Jesus spends time here talking about who he is as the Messiah, the Son of God. The opening of John recalls the beginning of Genesis, revealing Jesus as present in creation from the beginning. The letters of 1, 2, and 3 John continue the themes of love and unity from this gospel. And many letters of Paul remind us of Jesus’ message to live humbly and serve others.

How does this work?

John focuses on Jesus’ teachings about himself, which he does in seven “I am” statements. This gospel also focuses on Jesus’ ministry and eventual trial, death, and resurrection. In fact, John’s description of Jesus’ passion is longer than any of the other gospels. It even offers multiple stories following Jesus’ resurrection.

Where should I go from here?

- Walk with Jesus as he keeps the party going at a wedding (chapter 2:1-11).
- Jesus raises his friend Lazarus from the dead (chapter 11:1-44).
- Jesus prays for himself, his disciples, and all believers (chapter 17:1-26).
- Hear some of Jesus’ “I Am” statements (chapters 6:35, 8:12, 10:7). (Can you find all seven?)
- See Jesus crucified . . . (chapter 19:17-24)
- And raised! (chapter 20:1-8).

JOHN 1:29

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life,^a and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.^b

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was

his own,^c and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son,^d full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,^e who is close to the Father’s heart,^f who has made him known.

John 1:1
THE WORD:
Another name for Jesus. Jesus was the living Word of God.



Creation

John 1:1-5

Wait—this sounds familiar! The book of John opens with a line that parallels Genesis 1:1. By using these same words, John’s readers would have known he was telling a new kind of creation story.

Underline verses 1-5. Then write or draw about what God is creating.



< Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 104:14-23, 30 >

^a Or ³through him. And without him not one thing came into being that has come into being. ⁴In him was life ^b Or He was the true light that enlightens everyone coming into the world ^c Or to his own home ^d Or the Father’s only Son ^e Other ancient authorities read It is an only Son, God, or It is the only Son ^f Gk bosom ^g Or the Christ

PSALMS



Who wrote this?

This collection of writings comes from many unknown authors. Some psalms are labeled “of David” or “of Asaph,” but this doesn’t mean those people wrote them. Some psalms are associated with various authors because of the content of the psalm itself. For example, Asaph presumably had some role in the worship and/or music of the temple, so those songs attributed to Asaph were used for worship. The book of Psalms was written over many hundreds of years. Thus it is impossible to date and author each psalm individually.

Why was this written?

Psalms were used by ordinary people of faith as well as important people such as kings. Some were used for community worship. Psalms are radical because they express raw emotion. Can you yell at God? The writers do. Can you sing God’s praises at the top of your lungs? The writers do. So that gives all of us permission to share with God exactly how we feel. God wants us to share everything, *absolutely everything* with God—and Psalms shows us how to do just that!

What’s the connection?

The feelings expressed in these writings tell about the life of faith. There is joy and laughing, but also pain and suffering. The psalms summarize the overall story of the Bible. Because of this, Martin Luther said that the book of Psalms could be called “a little Bible.”

How does this work?

The word “psalms” means praises. Each psalm is a piece of literature in its own right. Some are songs, some prayers, some words used for worship, and some poems. This book contains 150 psalms divided into five books (kind of like the Pentateuch).

Where should I go from here?

- Sing a song of trust in God (11).
- Offer a prayer for help (42).
- Say a prayer for forgiveness: Psalm 51
- Make a complaint to God (55).
- Celebrate joyful worship (84).
- The psalmist praises the inescapable God (139).

- 19 You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows its time for setting.
- 20 You make darkness, and it is night,
when all the animals of the forest
come creeping out.
- 21 The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.
- 22 When the sun rises, they withdraw
and lie down in their dens.
- 23 People go out to their work
and to their labor until the evening.
- 24 O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
- 25 Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.
- 26 There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to
sport in it.
- 27 These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
- 28 when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are
filled with good things.
- 29 When you hide your face, they are
dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they
die
and return to their dust.
- 30 When you send forth your spirit,^a they
are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.
- 31 May the glory of the LORD endure
forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
- 32 who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they
smoke.
- 33 I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I
have being.
- 34 May my meditation be pleasing to him,

for I rejoice in the LORD.
35 Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

PSALM 105

GOD’S FAITHFULNESS TO ISRAEL

- 1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his
name,
make known his deeds among the
peoples.
- 2 Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.
- 3 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the
LORD rejoice.
- 4 Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually.
- 5 Remember the wonderful works he has
done,



Creation

Psalm 104:14–23, 30

Psalm 104 was originally written in the Hebrew language. In this Hebrew version, it isn’t clear whether the writer was writing about God’s creation in the present or past. What do **you** think?

Circle words in these verses
that tell what God created.
Underline words that tell what
God is creating today.

< John 1:1–5

Revelation 21:1–5 >

^a Or *your breath*

REVELATION



Who wrote this?

Revelation is often grouped with the other books with John in their name. However, it is doubtful that the author of the Gospel of John and John 1, 2, and 3 is the same person who wrote Revelation. The author may have been a part of a “John community” that traced its roots back to the apostle John. This author was probably Jewish, because of his frequent references to the Old Testament. He connects himself to prophets such as Ezekiel and Daniel, calling his own work a prophetic book (1:3; 22:7). Also, this John probably traveled, because he has a familiar relationship with seven different emerging church communities in modern-day Turkey.

Why was this written?

Revelation is written to give hope and strength to the “seven churches that are in Asia” (1:4), at a time when it was really hard to be hopeful. Christians feared persecution from Emperor Domitian and the Roman government. This letter offers words of caution and encouragement.

What's the connection?

Revelation was written for Christians as they endured some of the same trials the Israelites did when the books of Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations were written. Common threads between all these books are persecution, oppression, and leaders who decided what the people could and could not worship.

How does this work?

Revelation is written to real people in real cities. Though the content seems quite bizarre at times, the symbolism helps to tell the story of good versus evil in challenging times. The opening chapters are addressed to specific cities. They address the unique problems faced by each. Chapters 4–20 are full of heavenly visions and war. Chapters 21–22 describe the sure promise of the new Earth and new Jerusalem. The words at the end of Revelation are.

Where should I go from here?

- Jesus is God (chapter 1:9-18).
- God sits on a throne (chapter 4:1-11).
- John describes a hopeful vision of a new world (chapters 21:1–22:6).

great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books. ¹³And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to what they had done. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; ¹⁵and anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home^a of God is among mortals.

He will dwell^b with them; they will be his peoples,^c and God himself will be with them;^d ⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”

⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. ⁷Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ⁸But as for the cowardly, the faithless,^e the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared



Creation

Revelation 21:1–5

How cool—God is making all things new! Underline or highlight verse 5. Then write 3 things God is making new in your life.

→ **New #1:**

→ **New #2:**

→ **New #3:**

< Psalm 104:14–23, 30

VISION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰And in the spirit^f he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal. ¹²It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites; ¹³on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

^a Gk the tabernacle ^b Gk will tabernacle ^c Other ancient authorities read people ^d Other ancient authorities add and be their God ^e Or the unbelieving ^f Or in the Spirit

COPYRIGHT & CREDITS

Writers: Austin Ariail , Kevin Alton, Louis R. Carlozo, Erin Davis, Tara Lamont Eastman, Laura Gentry, Rachel Griffin Baughman, Laura Larsen, Rebecca Ninke, Justin Rimbo, Alexis Twito, Erik Ullestad, Jon Wasson, Darin Wiebe

Illustrators: Bill Ferenc, Brian Jensen

Designer: Spunk Design Machine

Typesetting: Blue Heron Bookcraft

Proofreader: Peachtree Editorial

sparkhouse team: Eileen Z. Engebretson, Tory Herman, Deb Hetherington, Sue Hinton, Alisha Lofgren, Dawn Rundman, Ivy Palmer Skrade, Bethany Stolle

Editorial team: Louis R. Carlozo, Erin Davis, Margaret Ellsworth, Alexis Twito

Review team: Mike Baughman, Karl N. Jacobson, Matthew J. Marohl

ho!y
mo!y

CÖNNECT

wearesparkhouse.org

