

**THE STORY — Week 4**  
**Divine Partnership**  
**Who are we & Why are we here**

**Our Rules for the Road**

1. The Bible was written for me but not to me.
2. The Bible is a library with different literary genres (**Narrative**, Poetry & Discourse)
3. The Bible must be read in Context (Ancient, Situational & Biblical)
4. The Bible must be read with an understanding of language and words (Repeated words drive dominant themes)
5. The Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus

**I. The Divine **Creator** — Is a Personal (relational) God**

**Genesis 1:1** *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

- ***Elohim* was always there...**
- ***Elohim* is a personal God/relational presence... Triune**
  - **“God: *Elohim*” - 29 times**
  - **Verse 2 “*Ruakh/Spirit*”**
  - **Verse 26 “Let us”**
- ***Elohim* is the creator of all things... “*Bara*” only used of God (used 5 times, 3 of which are about Adam)**

**II. The Divine **Creation** - Is a Practical (resourceful) Gift.**

**Genesis 1:2** *“Now the earth was **formless** and **empty**, darkness was over the surface of the deep...”*

**The Days of Creation solve the problem in Verse 2:**

**Formless/Tohu**

**Empty/Vohu**

<p><b>Day 1: Light dispelling the darkness</b> “And God Said” Light and Dark / Day and Night Evening and Morning: Day One</p>	<p><b>Day 4: Fills the light with lights –</b> Sun, moon &amp; stars “And God said...” Light separate and rule day and night Evening and Morning: Day Four</p>
<p><b>Day 2: Separated the water from Chaos</b> waters “And God said...” The dome separates ... the waters above ... the waters below Evening and morning: Day Two</p>	<p><b>Day 5 Fills the waters &amp; the skies with</b> creatures. “And God said...” Creatures in the water ... birds by the water above ... fish in the waters below Evening and morning: Day Five</p>
<p><b>Day 3: Separates from the water dry land</b> “And God said...” The waters below gather The dry land emerges Plants and seeds emerge from the ground Evening and Morning: Day Three</p>	<p><b>Day 6 Fills the land with living creatures</b> and mankind “And God said...” Land creatures emerge from the dry land Humans appointed to rule Provided with trees, plants, and seeds Evening and morning: Day Six</p>

All of the creation that God chose to reveal, is about how it relates, practically, **to us**, it is **for us; God’s gift to us**.

**Romans 1:20** "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 men are without excuse."

**1 Timothy 4:4** "For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer."

(See Psalms 8 and 19)

III. The Divine **Crescendo** (The **Climax** to the 1st narrative) — Is a People created to represent Him.

**Genesis 1:26-27** "Then God said, 'Let us make **mankind** in our **image**, in our **likeness**, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.' So God **created mankind** in his own **image**, in the **image** of God he **created** them; **male** and **female** he **created** them."

## The Imago Dei

Imago Dei is Latin meaning the **image of God** and is one of the most vital and foundational beliefs within Christianity.

Out of the creation **only mankind** (Adam = humanity; male & female) is said to be in God's image.

Two key responsibilities rise out of being God's Image Bearers

Who we are & Why we are here.

1. **Reflection** - To reflect who God is. We are to mirror who God is.

This is only possible when light is introduced. Without light there is no reflection.

The metaphor of light is grounded in Genesis 1:2 and is NOT the Sun, but is God's very presence. It is in our relationship with Jesus that we are empowered to reflect who God is.

Colossians 1:15-16 (NIV84) "The Son is the **image** of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him."

Colossians 1:13-14 "For he has rescued us from the **dominion of darkness** and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

1 Peter 2:9 "But you are a **chosen people**, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of **darkness** into his wonderful **light**."

John 12:36 "Whoever walks in the **dark** does not know where they are going. Believe in the **light...** so that you may **become children of light**."

This is God's agenda for you.

2 Corinthians 3:15-18 "Even to this day when **Moses is read**, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the **Lord's glory**, are being **transformed** into **his image** with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

## 2. Representation

**Genesis 1:28** “God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase (multiply) in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’”

IV. The Divine Cooperation - Is a Partnership (responsible) to represent Him.

Notice the contrast between the blessing on the animals on day 5 (verse 22) & the blessing on the humans on day 6 (verse 28).

**Genesis 1:22** “And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply...”

**Genesis 1:28** “God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply...”

Only to the humans does God speak to. The animals have no choice; they will be fruitful and multiply. To humanity he calls us to obey out of choice.

Jesus tells his follower/disciples

**John 13:34-35** “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

**John 14:15** “If you love me you will obey what I command.”

**John 15:16-17** “I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit - fruit that will last.... This is my command: Love each other.”

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

Take a few minutes to check in with each other to see how everyone is doing, then do the following mixer and questions.

**Ice Breaker/Mixer Q:** Can you recall a time when you overheard someone telling someone else, or even a group of people, how special you are to them? Please share?

1. See if anyone can name all five of the principles for interpretation (Rules for the Road).
2. Ask if anyone can articulate if any of these principles are making a difference in how they are reading or understanding the scriptures?
3. Genesis 1 gives hints to the doctrine of the trinity, can you think of any other passages that reflect God a triune?
4. Setting the first 3 days of creation alongside the second 3 days is an example of Hebrew literature, which is almost always trying to draw the reader into the kind of reading that is slow and meditative, where we learn to compare and contrast. What stands out to you from this exercise in comparing and contrasting?
5. The crescendo or climax of this first narrative unit is in verses 26-28. What strikes you as you consider mankind being God's most prized feature of creation?
6. How does the idea of being made in God's image (the Imago Dei) meaning that we are called to be reflections of God impact your purpose and spiritual calling?

**Journal or SOAP any of the passages from each day of reading, or answer any of the small group or "Quick questions" as a journal entry.**

**Monday:** Re-read Genesis 1 and reflect on all we have learned. Read it with a narrative eye—notice how often the main character (God) is mentioned, notice the plot conflict in verse 2 and the way the days of creation address that conflict. Then, give space to consider how the description of mankind (remember that Adam's name means "Mankind") is a part of the plot conflict being resolved.

**Tuesday:** Read once again Psalms 8 and specifically look for how the writer speaks of mankind.

**Wednesday:** Read Psalms 19 and look for Genesis 1. Write as many points of Genesis 1 connections as you can find.

**Thursday:** Read and SOAP 2 Corinthians 3:15-18 with Genesis 1 in mind.

**Friday:** Read John 15:1-17 and think through how we are still being called to be God's representatives.

**Quick Questions:**

What do you think about the idea of Imago Dei?

Google articles on Imago Dei and read and reflect on what you find.

How do you think we should treat other people if they too are made in God's image?