

SESSION 1

GOD, THE CREATOR

BIBLE STORY: David Praised God the Creator (Acts 13:21-23; Psalm 104)

TODAY'S POINT: God is the marvelous Creator.

BONUS VERSE: Psalm 104:24

BIBLE BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

It is wonderful to spend time in nature. The cold, exhilarating snow of winter, the fresh mountain air in springtime, the summer ocean breeze, and the beautiful fall colors give us opportunities to experience God's handiwork. When we see the varieties of birds, the colorful insects, the delicate flowers, and the powerful creatures God has made, we understand that He is infinitely intelligent, loving, and mighty. Studying our world shows us that the power He possesses to create also holds everything together. (Colossians 1:17) Even more amazing, our infinite and marvelous Creator sacrificed so that we can have a personal relationship with Him for eternity. (John 3:16)

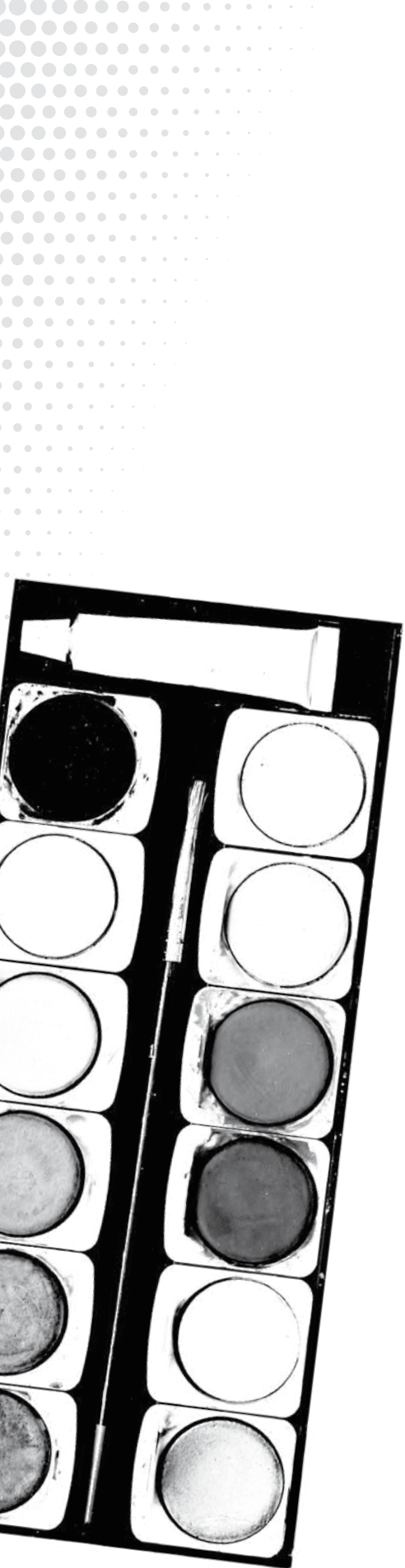
When God created Adam and Eve, He said "it was very good indeed" (Genesis 1:31). However, it did not take long for them to disobey Him, which brought the curse of sin to the entire human race. (Genesis 3) After mankind had sinned, God used the imperfect nation of Israel as part of His plan to bring our promised Messiah, Jesus, into the world to save us. (Genesis 3:15) King David's leadership was part of that plan.

David recognized that God is the creator, ruler, and sustainer over all, and it led him to worship God as Creator. We can learn a lot from King David about how we should worship and relate to God. David understood his place in creation, and he celebrated God as the King of the universe. God created David to be a king, but God is the true King of everything.

GOD WORKED THROUGH DAVID AS PART OF HIS PLAN TO BRING JESUS (ACTS 13:21-23)

From the beginning of creation, God has always been in control and working to bring about redemption for His creation. The Bible is one beautiful, seamless tapestry—weaving God's plan of redemption and restoration for His creation despite their sinfulness. We see in the Old Testament that God's intention for Israel was for them to be set apart from the nations around them. God wanted to be their king, but the people rejected God and demanded that they have a human king like the pagan nations around them. (1 Samuel 8:5-9)

So God gave them Saul as king, a man of impressive physical stature. (1 Samuel 9:2) Despite his physical qualities, Saul showed a perpetual lack of faith in God and regard for following God and His commands.



This resulted in God removing Saul and commanding His prophet Samuel to anoint David as Israel's next king. (1 Samuel 15–16)

David did not possess the physical qualities Saul did when he was anointed, but God chose David not for what others saw in him, but for what God saw—a man after His own heart. (1 Samuel 13:13-14) Godly, selfless character and disciplined obedience are far more important measures of leadership to the Lord than the outward appearance the world pursues. (Psalm 78:70-72)

This brief summary of Israel's history demonstrates the step-by-step unfolding of God's plan that was realized in King David but later fulfilled in the promised Son of David—Jesus Himself. (Acts 13:23) God worked through David's life as part of the redemptive story, but David was not the culmination of the story. David would carry out God's will for his part in the story. Jesus would fulfill it.

DAVID UNDERSTOOD THAT CREATION GLORIFIES GOD (PSALM 104)

Psalm 104 stands as evidence of David's deep love of God and his devotion to Him. When David looked at the beauty of creation, he understood that God was demonstrating His infinite power and care to humanity. But even more than enjoying the creation God made, God wants us to see and know Him through the world He made. (Romans 1:18-20) He intends for creation to point us to a deeper love for Him.

GOD IS THE INFINITE CREATOR AND SUSTAINER (PSALM 104:1-4)

The Holy Spirit led David to begin this Psalm with a majestic description of God. He describes God's clothing as "majesty and splendor." Notice that King David used very specific language in these first four verses that describe the majesty of kingship. "He wraps himself in light" is reminiscent of many descriptions of God as light throughout His Word. It also reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the world. (John 8:12) David's descriptions of fire, wind, and clouds all give credence to the immeasurable power and glory of God. King David recognized his place before God—the true King of everything.

GOD ESTABLISHED THE EARTH AND CONTROLS THE WATERS (PSALM 104:5-9)

David gave some fascinating language in these verses to describe God's authority and the reliability of the world God made through the third day of creation. First, we see that God established the earth and that it will never be shaken. This is a reference to God's stability over His creation. As we read, we can also visualize God distinguishing the boundaries of land from the waters that covered the face of the earth. (Genesis 1:9-13) We see God's continuing care for His creation and the psalmist's worship of the God who established, controls, and sustains all things.

GOD LOVES AND PROVIDES FOR HIS CREATION

(PSALM 104:10-30)

Recognizing the God of creation led David to worship God for all the ways He provides for His creation. The water God made provides life to every creature. The grass, trees, and all creatures that live on land or in water belong to the Lord and depend on Him. He provides for them and they all exist to give Him glory. People are also God's creation, and He loves and provides for us. We are made to worship God, to marvel at who God is, and learn about our Creator through His creation. Like David, as we recognize who God is in and through His creation, it should lead us to deeper worship, humility, and gratitude for who God is and how He loves us.

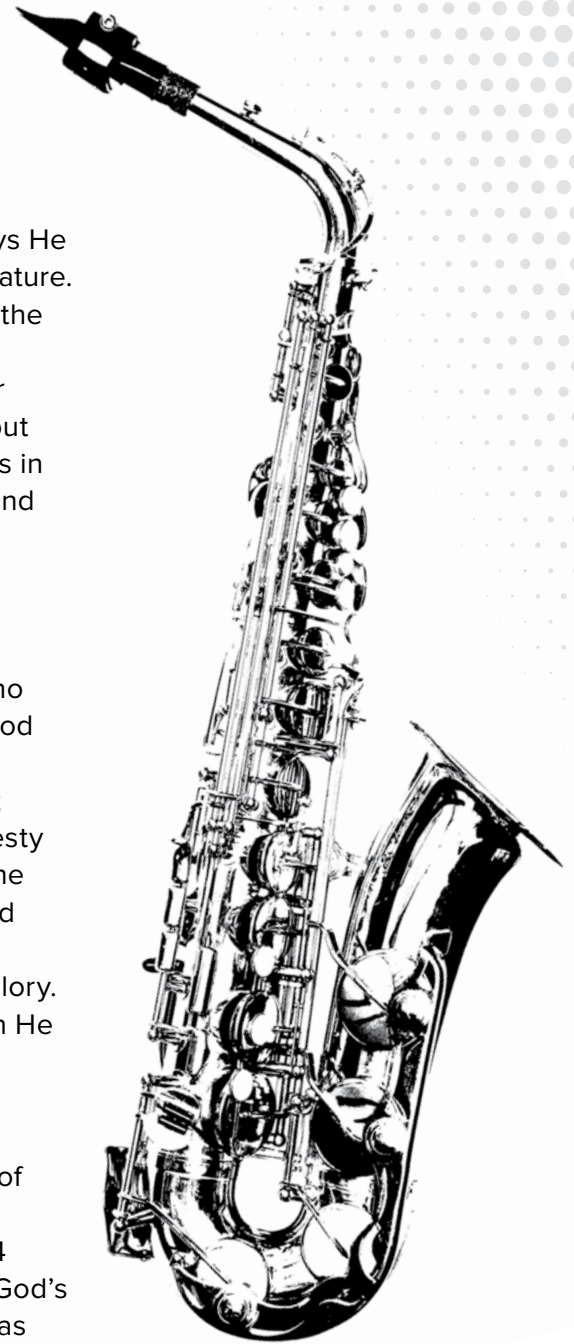
GOD'S POWER AND LOVE

(PSALM 104:31-35)

This psalm culminates in heartfelt praise for God when David realized who God is and all He has done. David summarized his observations about God and creation in verses 31-32: "May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works. He looks at the earth, and it trembles; He touches the mountains, and they pour out smoke." Consider the majesty of God as the earth itself responds to God the Creator. David modeled the response we should have as God's people. Observing God's creative and sustaining power should lead us to rejoice in who God is. We should ask God to give us hearts of worship and lives that influence others for His glory. (Matthew 22:37-39) We should also long and pray for Jesus' return, when He will remove sin, injustice, and sadness and make all things new again.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION

- What about creation stirs you most to worship God? Different aspects of God's creation touch the hearts of the variety of people He has made. Spend some time enjoying God's creation. Consider reading Psalm 104 outside in nature and, as you read, look around you to see aspects of God's power and His love. Spend some time thanking God for the ways He has demonstrated His power, love, and faithfulness to you.
- How does knowing God is in control change the way you respond to your circumstances? It is easy to get discouraged when we spend too much time thinking about how big our problems are instead of how infinitely powerful God is. Consider your responses to challenges in your life this week. Do your responses reflect your belief that God is in control and sustains all things? Take any burdens or struggles you have to the Lord and ask Him to help you trust Him. Recommit to trusting God and living for His glory.



SESSION 1: LESSON PLAN

GOD, THE CREATOR

BIBLE STORY: David Praised God the Creator (Acts 13:21-23; Psalm 104)

TODAY'S POINT: God is the marvelous Creator.

BONUS VERSE: Psalm 104:24

BEFORE THE SESSION

- Prepare your heart through prayer and personal study. Study the Bible Backgrounds (pages 7–9) and the “Session 1 *Biblical Illustrator* Articles.”
- Recruit adults to serve as small group leaders and rotation leaders (registration, snacks, recreation, crafts) as needed to manage your Adult VBS Bible Study.
- Pray daily for the small group and rotation leaders and their ministry in Adult VBS. Pray each day for the adults who will attend VBS.
- Prepare all kit and printable items. Instructions for preparation can be found at the bottom of each item.
- Decorate the Adult VBS room as described on page 6.
- Be sure the “VBS Scripture Poster” (kit item 2), the “God’s Plan of Salvation Poster” (kit item 3), the “Motto Poster” (kit item 4), “Session 1 Poster” (kit item 5), the “Acts 4:12 Poster” (kit item 10), the “Kingdom of David and Solomon Poster” (kit item 11), and the “David’s Flight from Saul Poster” (kit item 12) are on the focal wall.
- Plan to have music playing during arrival. **OPTIONAL:** Include appropriate devices for visual enhancements such as the “Biblical Content PowerPoint®.”
- Provide name tags for each adult small group leader and adult attending VBS.
- Check with VBS Director for VBS registration guidelines and paperwork.
- Choose one of the theme-related refreshments from the *VBS 2022 Snack Rotation Recipe Cards* (9781087750057) each day of Adult VBS.
- Check with the VBS Director and church staff for announcements that should be made during the session.
- Provide Bibles, learner guides, and pens for adults at every VBS Session.

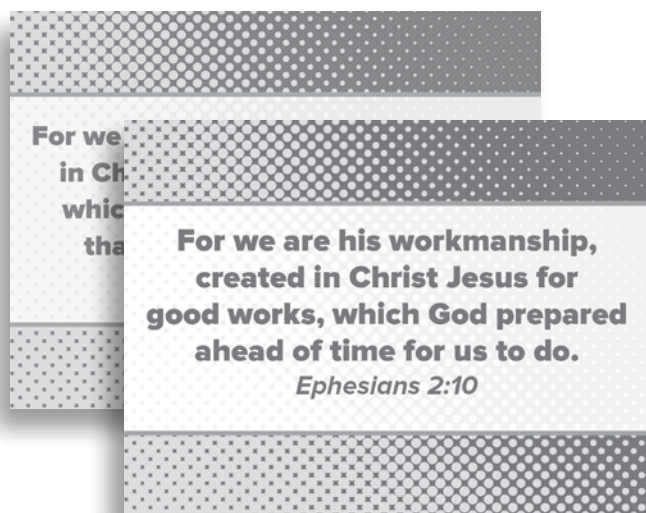


REGISTRATION & SNACKS (10 MINUTES)

- Play “How Marvelous You Are” as adults enter the room. Complete a “Registration Form” and name tag for each participant.
- Encourage adults to get to know each other while they are enjoying the prepared snack.
- Transition adults to the small group tables you set up when the session is ready to begin. Make sure each small group has an even mix of first-time attenders with seasoned attenders so small groups remain a dynamic and positive learning environment.
- Explain that each group will explore the biblical content together all week. Give adults a few minutes to introduce themselves.

GET ACQUAINTED (20 MINUTES)

- Introduce yourself, the other designers (small group leaders), and the Spark Studios theme and content.
- Call attention to the “VBS Scripture Poster” (kit item 2). See page 3 for the VBS Scripture. Explain that this is the key verse for the week.
- Encourage adults to turn to page 3 in their learner guides and find the “God’s Creation Shows His Majesty” activity. Give your group time to find examples of things in nature that show the power and majesty of God. Have someone from each group prepared to present the results they discussed.
- Spend a few minutes going through the responses and getting to know each another.
- Encourage your group that they’ve done a great job with this activity. Tell them that you will continue getting to know one another more this week as you work to discover God’s design to forgive us and to bless us with a relationship with Him.



REGISTRATION & SNACKS PREP

- ☐ Printables
 - “Registration Form”
- ☐ Snack items
- ☐ Name tags (1 per adult)
- ☐ Markers (1 per adult)
- ☐ *VBS 2022 Music for Kids*

LEADER TIP

- Make sure every member of your group is personally welcomed. Pay attention to include every member of the group in your discussion.

GET ACQUAINTED PREP

- ☐ Leader kit item 2
- ☐ *VBS 2022 Adult Learner Guides* (1 per adult)
- ☐ Pens (1 per adult)

LEADER TIP

- Use the information on page 3 to help you describe the theme and biblical content.

CREATE INTEREST PREP

- ❑ Leader kit item 5
- ❑ *VBS 2022 Adult Learner Guides* (1 per adult)
- ❑ Pens (1 per adult)



BIBLE STUDY PREP

- ❑ Leader kit item 11



LEADER TIP

- Be sure to make reciting this week's memory verse a part of your gathering time every day. Offer a prize for those who can recite the verse from memory. Adults can memorize Scripture too!

CREATE INTEREST (10 MINUTES)

- Ask adults to turn to page 6 in their learner guides.
- Direct your group to work through the "Ways God's Creation Reveals His Power" activity.
- After groups have completed their work together, lead adults in discussion of what they've found. Note that everything they've talked about in God's creation points to the power and majesty of God. Because God created everything, we can turn to Him with our lives and for guidance with our daily needs.
- Call attention to the "Session 1 Poster" (kit item 5) and read the session title and point.
- Say: "Today, we are going to see that God is our marvelous creator. He made everything, every last detail, according to His perfect design. He has infinite power, and He is in control. He also cares for our every need."

BIBLE STUDY (50 MINUTES)

- Designate one of the designers (small group leaders) to pray before reading the Scripture.
- Distribute Bibles if needed. Point out that pages 4–5 in the adult learner contain Bible background material to help them remember this session. Display item 11 to give more context of King David's kingdom.
- Direct adults to turn to page 7 and be prepared to record their observations on the Design Discoveries page.

Acts 13:21-23

- Invite a designer to read Acts 13:21-23.
- Lead adults to record observations on the Design Discoveries page of their learner guides (page 7).
- Say: "We are going to learn more this week about why God called David a man after His own heart and why David chose to praise God as his creator."
- Ask the following questions
 - ★ Why do you think most people tend to look at the outside of a person instead of the inside?
 - ★ Why does God look at the heart instead?
 - ★ What does God teach us through His choice of David about the type of character He's looking for?

Psalm 104:1-9

- Invite a designer to read Psalm 104:1-9.
- Lead adults to record observations on the Design Discoveries page of their learner guides (page 7).
- Provide additional information from the Bible Backgrounds and from the *Biblical Illustrator* article, “God Created: A Word Study.”
- Take time to explore the idea that God created the universe from nothing. Ask: “If God created everything, does that mean He also has the power to control everything today?”

Psalm 104:10-30

- Invite a designer to read Psalm 104:10-30.
- Lead adults to record observations on the Design Discoveries page of their learner guides (page 7).
- Provide additional information from the Bible Backgrounds and from the *Biblical Illustrator* article, “Creation: Beyond Genesis.”
- Take time to explore the idea that creation itself points people to God. Even if you didn’t have the Bible, what evidence is there that there is a loving, powerful, intelligent Creator? Spend time listening to your group’s responses and discussing their answers.

Psalm 104:31-35

- Invite a designer to read Psalm 104:31-35.
- Lead adults to record observations on the Design Discoveries page of their learner guides (page 7).
- Provide additional information from the Bible Backgrounds.
- Ask the following questions.
 - ★ How do you respond to God when you think about how He has created you and all the ways He has blessed you?
 - ★ How does that affect the way that you approach the challenges in your life?
- Share with your group that the reason David responded in praise to God when he observed creation was that he enjoyed a personal relationship with God. David made many mistakes in his life, yet he kept turning back to God and found forgiveness, restoration, and a new start.

BIBLE STUDY PREP

- ☐ Leader kit items 3, 10 and 11
- ☐ Printables
 - “God Created: A Word Study”—*Biblical Illustrator* article
 - “Creation: Beyond Genesis”—*Biblical Illustrator* article
 - “Response Cards”
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ VBS 2022 Adult Learner Guides (1 per adult)
- ☐ Pens (1 per adult)




LEADER TIP

- Use the *Biblical Illustrator* articles from the printable items to enhance adult learning of the Bible passages this week. Consider making copies of the articles for your group members to take home for further study.
- Assure adults you will keep all “Response Cards” confidential.

- Be sure to have mature believers available to counsel any adult who has questions or is seeking guidance.

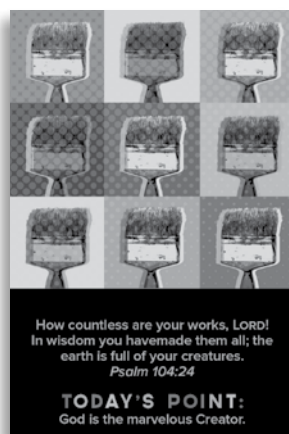


- The  icon identifies an opportune time to share the gospel with adults as led by the Holy Spirit.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you discernment about how God is working in the members of your group. Be sensitive to their responses to the application questions.

APPLICATION PREP

- ☐ Leader kit item 5
- ☐ VBS 2022 Adult Learner Guides (1 per adult)
- ☐ Pens (1 per adult)



LEADER TIP

- Be prepared to have additional conversations about faith and the gospel after the session.

- Say: “God wants us to enjoy the same type of personal relationship with Him that David did. We are going to continue exploring what a relationship with God looks like this week and how all of us can keep turning to Him.”

- Now is a great time to encourage your group to be sure they know Jesus and they have a relationship with Him. Go through the “God’s Plan of Salvation Poster” (kit item 3) and invite group members to respond to the gospel in faith. Use the “Acts 4:12 Poster” (kit item 10) to show that God will forgive people of their sin when they call on Him. Have “Response Cards” ready for those who make decisions during your group so that you can follow up. Encourage any adult who is interested to continue these conversations with you or other leaders throughout the week.

APPLICATION (20 MINUTES)

- Call attention to the “Session 1 Poster” (kit item 5). Read Psalm 104:24 and then lead the group to read it together.
- Say: “Today we learned that God chose David because he was a man after God’s heart. Because he had a relationship with God, David responded to his observations of the universe with praise and wonder toward God. When David sinned, he knew that he could turn to God, ask for forgiveness, and receive pardon and redemption.”
- Continue: “We are going to continue to discover that Jesus came so that we can enjoy the type of personal relationship with God that David did. As we said a few moments ago, you, too, can enjoy this kind of a relationship with our Creator. Once we know Him, we are to honor Him with lives that worship God and lead others to Jesus like David did.”
- Guide small groups to turn to page 8 in their learner guides. Lead them to discuss questions 1–3 as a group and to record their responses. Then, encourage adults to answer questions 4–5 individually.
- Take time (adjust according to the amount of time you have remaining) to discuss their responses. Ask your group members if they have any additional questions from today’s Bible passages and take time to answer them.

CLOSURE (10 MINUTES)

- Call attention to the “VBS Scripture Poster” (kit item 2). Lead the group in reading the verse together.
- Close the session with a prayer thanking God that He created everything and that He wants us to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. Be ready for individual conversations after the session.