

Small Group Discussion Guide — January 9, 2022

- Series: More than Words
 - Sermon: The Big Picture
 - Scripture: Genesis 1:1 through Exodus 40:38
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THE LONG ROAD TRIP

We've all made long road trips where all that mattered was getting to destination on time, haven't we? You remember the time you drove all night to get home by Christmas Eve, maybe, or the time you had to drive across part (all?) of the country to start a new job on specific date. And when you got there, you realized you didn't really see anything along the way. All that mattered was making good time, and you did make good time. But that is about as far as it went.

Yes. Reading the entire bible in 90 days might feel like embarking on a very long journey in a very short period of time. And you might be concerned that because you have to make good time, you won't have time to stop along the way and admire the sights or to consider what they mean.

Think of Sunday sermons as an invitation to pause and behold - to hear our guide, who has made this trip a number of times before, share a few of the sights we might have missed in our haste. Like David is sharing snapshots he's taken on his many trips, and offering why these particular snapshots seem to be the most important. How they connect to the overall landscape. How they help to bring the Big Picture into focus.

Our hope for the discussion guides is to help you, as leaders, to explore those snapshots with your groups, and we hope you find them to be useful.

Of course, there are different ways to go about this, and you should feel free to take a different approach in your group, if you'd like. Perhaps it makes more sense for you to summarize the entire week's readings, and see where that leads. Or perhaps there is a single theme that emerges that you will want to explore with your group. All that we ask is that you remain in prayer, and let the Spirit lead as you take this journey with your small group.

We are ever grateful for your loving service to God's beloved children.

CONNECT

1. What are your thoughts and feelings as we begin this journey together?
2. What, do you suppose, is meant by the series title, *More than Words*?

ENGAGE

1. **Read Genesis 1:1.** Which word stands out to you as the focal point of the verse? What does the verse suggest about God? About earth? About order? About time? What does it say about our place in God's universe?
2. **Read Genesis 1:27-28.** What does it mean to be made in God's image? What does that suggest about our relation to Him and with Him? David said that, "All creators reveal themselves in what they create." What does that say about you? About the person sitting across from you right now, and the manner in which God views them?
3. **Read Genesis 3:6-7.** The serpent promises that man will be "like God, knowing good and evil," if only we eat of the tree in the middle of the garden. What does the serpent's temptation

suggest about the relationship between God and man prior to the fall? What are the relational consequences of having succumbed to the temptation to be “like God?”

4. **Read Genesis 12:1-3.** Try to imagine yourself as Abram. God is making amazing promises, but He begins by saying you must go...to the land that he *will* show you (at some point). Again, what does this tell you about the relationship between God and man, whom He (again) created in His image?

APPLY

1. David talked about what he called the “really BIG” idea of this section: TRUST. God is inviting his children into a life “saturated and soaked in relationship with Him.” In your own words, trace the arc of trust from the creation, through the fall, and to God’s promise to Abram. Where do you see man doubting God’s character, and where does this lead? Where do you see man trusting God’s character, and where does that lead?
2. How does this theme of TRUST apply to the rhythms of your own life? In your long term plans? In your weekly and day-to-day activities? In the tiny moments that fill so much of our time? What tangible steps might you take to lean into your loving Father this week, to trust and depend on his guidance and provision?

PRAYER

Hallowed Father, wider than the universe and deeper than time, how awesome are your words - the very words of creation. I stand in awe of the sublime beauty of your world, and the delicate care with which you made each of your children in your image. How grateful for the reminder that we are your beloved, and may I always remember that you are the center of all things. That I am not, and cannot be like you, and my striving to know all things, to be all things, is to reject the perfect peace that you offer to those who swim in your boundless love. Teach me to embrace your lordship, and to trust more fully in your promise. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

GOING DEEPER

If anyone in your group attended or listened to the Sunday night discussion, feel free to incorporate questions and thoughts here.

Also, use the [resource webpage](#) throughout the series for additional help.

SUPPORTING VERSES

Psalms 24:1-2

Acts 17:28

2 Corinthians 11:14

Genesis 3:14-15

QUOTATIONS

“We look in a mirror to see what we look like physically and outwardly. We can go to a psychiatrist to see what we look like emotionally and inwardly. But we go to the Bible to see what we look like in relationship with God. In the mirror of Scripture, we are faced with the person created by God alienated from God, and sought out by God.”

Eugene Peterson

“Scripture cannot be used. It is God’s word calling us to a personal response. The word of God addresses us, calls us into being. The only appropriate response is a reverent answering. It is always more than we are, always previous to us, always over us...”

Eugene Peterson

“The Bible is, after all, God’s gift to the world through his Church, not to the scholars. It comes through the life of his people and nourishes that life. Its purpose is practical, not academic. An intelligent, careful, intensive but straightforward reading — that is, one not governed by obscure and faddish theories or by a mindless orthodoxy — is what it requires to direct us into life in God’s kingdom.”

Dallas Willard