

Read: Genesis 1:1-2:3

The Triune God Created All Things

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Once upon a time, there was a beautiful princess who lived in a tower...”

“Once upon a time, there was a brave boy who traveled into a dark forest...”

For centuries, storytellers have started out fairy tales, folk tales, or adventure stories with those famous words, “Once upon a time...” Something amazing or unbelievable, breathtaking or terrifying happened long ago “once upon a time.” The storyteller captures our attention with those familiar words as he or she tells an ancient tale of good and evil, fear and courage, love and adventure. We love stories like that, but we know that they are just made up stories. In fact, those words “Once upon a time...” make us think that the story we are about to hear is just a fairy tale.

The very first verse of the Bible does not start out with “Once upon a time...” Instead, it starts out with “In the beginning...” Sadly, many people still think that what they are about to read is as much a fairy tale as any imaginary princess or adventure story. They think there is no way that God could have created the universe in six days.

If you take a closer look at the first chapter of Genesis, you will see some of the reasons why this account is no fairy tale. What we find is the history of how God did something amazing. He created the universe for his greatest creation—people. See God the Father at work, using his unlimited power to create light and day, sky, land and seas, plants and trees. See God create the sun, moon, planets, and stars. See God create all the sea creatures and every animal that flies. See God create all the animals that live on the land. Then see God create man and woman with the greatest care. Why? God has loved us from the very beginning, not as the greatest animals, but as his most precious creation.

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit was there, so was God the Son. How? The apostle John tells us, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... Through him all things were made...” (1:1,3) When John speaks of “the Word,” he means Jesus. Jesus was there “in the beginning,” giving life where before it did not exist. The triune God was there “in the beginning,” creating the heavens and the earth. The triune God has graciously given us life. We are God’s special creations, carefully created and dearly loved. Praise God that there is nothing imaginary about that!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What did God use to create the universe?
- What do you love most about God's creation? Why?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What are the differences between "Once upon a time" and "In the beginning?"
- What makes us God's special creation unlike all the plants and animals?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Explain this verse that speaks about the creation of the universe: "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." (Hebrews 11:3)
- If you know that you and everyone around you are God's special creation, how will that change the way you interact with other people?

Closing Prayer:

O triune God, how amazing is the universe that you have created! How even more amazing to know that you care even about me! Use your Word to guide me to trust in you and all that you have done for me. Amen.

Hymn: CW 194:1,2 – Oh, that I Had a Thousand Voices

Oh, that I had a thousand voices to praise my God with thousand tongues!
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices, would then proclaim in grateful songs
To all, wherever I might be, what great things God has done for me.

Dear Father, endless praise I render for soul and body, nobly joined;
I praise you, Guardian kind and tender, for all the daily joys I find
So richly spread on ev'ry side and freely for my use supplied.