

Nothing New Under The Sun

Week 1: God Created Everything

ICEBREAKER

What is the most beautiful location you have ever visited?

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever looked outside at the wonder of God's creation and marveled at the beauty and function of His design? To begin our summer series we will be taking time to appreciate the glory of God's creation and our place in the wonderful existence he created for us.

READ |

God the father, creator of heavens and earth, the great architect of everything made our world perfectly for us as His people to exist and thrive. His intelligent design is so perfectly in order that it takes far more faith to believe that it all happened by accident.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.
--Genesis 1:1-4 (ESV)

We could spend this whole series unpacking these four verses in all its complexity and deep meaning but one thing is made loud and clear: God loves order. From the chaos of the void God spoke light to give the world balance and then separated light from darkness to ensure that balance was maintained. Being created in God's image, we are made to create order and seek balance in our lives, families, communities and society.

What is one area of your life that you have created order in? How has that order brought more balance to your life? Where could you use more balance?

READ |

Proof of God's order and desire for balance are shown in the laws of nature which can be observed but never broken and are always true. One of these truths is that nothing can be created or destroyed, only repurposed. Biblically we learn this with "nothing new under the sun", but it still took science thousands of years to "prove".

Another of God's truths is the Law of Rhythm which states that everything changes and goes through cycles. People go through cycles too, so while history doesn't repeat itself, it sure does rhyme. All patterns of thoughts and actions are created by God.

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
--Colossians 1:16 (ESV)

Jesus is the order to life; all things were created by Him, for Him and in Him they hold together. As we learn to recognize our own patterns and how God created us, we can apply Christ's teachings to unlock the full potential for our life. God gave us His Word to help us choose to live in rhythm with Christ and find order and balance for our life.

What pattern of behavior have you noticed about yourself that you would like to change? What is one way you can grow closer to Christ to help with that change?

READ |

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

*a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
time to keep, and a time to cast away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.* --Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (ESV)

Much of the Wisdom in Ecclesiastes is understanding God's patterns and orders to life. God created everything for a season and for a reason. As believers in God's divine creation we must pray for and seek discernment in our walk.

When we are connected to our faith we can see how God is moving in our lives. When we understand the season He has us in we can be more discerning in not forcing our own timing or will. When we work in God's time we can accomplish all He has for us in our season.

A great way to determine what season you are in and identify the reason God has you there is by coming to church each week. Even with summer distractions we should stay connected because each week God may be sending a sermon just for you. However, if you are too busy with your own plans you might miss the message God is trying to deliver. Stay plugged in with a grateful heart and see how God moves in your life this summer.

*For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,
--1 Timothy 4:4 (ESV)*

What line from Ecclesiastes 3 stands out the most to you? Why? Are you willing to commit to attending church each week this summer? Why / Why not?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- Evaluate where you can have more order in your life this summer and make a plan to address it.
- Take some personal time to better understand how God wired you and see what needs to be changed.
- Make a plan with loved ones to attend service together this summer.

PRAYER: All mighty God, maker of heavens and earth, thank you for creating everything in this world with order and purpose. Thank you for giving me a mind to reflect, interpret and grow in who you made me to be through the experiences of my life. Give me peace and purpose this summer to explore your Will for my life to unlock my full potential in Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.

READ GOD'S WORD DAILY using S.O.A.P.

Day 1:

For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.

Hebrews 3:4 (NIV)

Day 2:

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Romans 11:36 (ESV)

Day 3:

Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NLT)

Day 4:

Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Psalms 124:8 (NLT)

Day 5:

Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker, those who are nothing but potsherds among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter,

'What are you making?'

Does your work say,

'The potter has no hands?'

Isaiah 45:9 (NIV)

TIPS FOR ONLINE SMALL GROUP

1. **HOSTING A SMALL GROUP MEETING ON ZOOM.** If you are interested in hosting a small group on zoom through New Hope Windward, let us know. Our small group team will help you get started. Zoom training is available.
2. **EMAIL INVITE.** Ensure to send out a calendar invite with the meeting details and how to connect to the meeting platform on zoom.
3. **REMINDER DURING THE WEEK.** Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting.
4. **START ON TIME & STICK TO YOUR TIME SCHEDULE.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time. Most small group meetings are held for about 60 minutes.
5. **ZOOM'S BEST PRACTICE.** Familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.
6. **DOWNLOAD ZOOM APP.** In order to participate in the Online Small Group, download the Zoom App from your iPhone or Android. You may also download the Zoom App from your laptop PC or iPad device.

TIPS TO IN-PERSON GROUP

1. **START & FINISH ON TIME.** Doing this will show your small group you value their time.
2. **BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE.** Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.
3. **CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT.** Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: "What is said in small group, stays in small group." **Nothing, nobody, never...** *"Share nothing, to nobody, never"* outside of the group.
4. **MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY.** Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by either calling and/or texting your host or responding to the zoom email invitation by accepting or declining. This will help your host to plan accordingly especially if it is an in person small group gathering.
5. **AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH.** Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.
6. **ASK FOR HELP.** The Small Group Ministry is here to help. Email smallgroups@nhww.org to ask any questions, request training or other assistance for your Small Group.