

**Time: Creation** (Gen 1:1-5, 14-19; John 3:16-17)

1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." There was an evening, and there was a morning: one day. (Gen 1:1-5, CSB)

How does God define the start of a day?

When does the day start for us?

2. Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for seasons and for days and years. They will be lights in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth." And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night—as well as the stars. God placed them in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth, to rule the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. Evening came and then morning: the fourth day. (Gen 1:14-19, CSB)

How do you keep track of days? What are calendars based on? How are they made?

3. What is God's relationship to time?

4. For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have **eternal life**. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17, CSB)

The Lord God said, "Since the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever." (Gen 3:22)

If mankind was created, how is eternal life possible? Always try to use the Bible to help you understand questions you might have about it. A good teacher can help you find the answers.

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**Teacher Notes**

The Bible presents many aspects of God that is difficult to understand, and this study introduces one concept from which kids can build upon as they learn more from God Himself (i.e. from God's word). In this lesson, the concepts of time, eternity, and timelessness are introduced, and they illustrate the beauty and elegance of God's Creation. This is a guideline on how this lesson may be taught. Adapt it to how you see fit for your children's attention span.

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How does God define the start of a day?

Help the student see that the Jews and Jesus followed God's timing of the day. A new day started in the evening (i.e. 6 p.m.); but, they never timed the hours of the night. In the morning, they timed daylight hours at sunrise by indicating the "third hour, sixth hour, ninth hour, eleventh hour," etc (Matt 20:3-6).

When does the day start for us?

Ask the student: how does the start of our day differ? This is to show that the next day for us begins at 12 a.m. not at 6 p.m. This observation is helpful so that the student can better understand the context of time in the Bible.

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How do you keep track of days? What are calendars based on? How are they made?

With His creation of the sun and moon, God provided the means to keep track of days, months, and years.

Review their understanding of calendar time, and explain that ancient calendars were based on the cycle of the moon – a day is the time it takes for the moon to go completely around the earth. The new moon indicated the start of a month.

Explain the problem of using a lunar calendar. The lunar calendar didn't match the seasons for planting and harvesting, because the time for the earth to circle the sun was a little longer. Adjustments were made to keep the lunar calendar synchronized with the solar calendar. A leap year, occurring every four years, is a year when there are 366 days instead of 365 – an extra day is added to February.

3. What is God's relationship to time?

This observation is important to help the student understand the meaning of "eternal." Because He created time, God is timeless and existed without a beginning. When a Being is without a beginning or end, He is considered eternal. Eternal means timeless without a beginning or end.

4. For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

The Lord God said, "Since the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever." (Gen 3:22)

If mankind was created, how is eternal life possible? Always try to use the Bible to help you understand questions you might have about it. A good teacher can help you find the answers.

This is to highlight a subtle detail. Believers can have eternal life – how can a Believer be timeless without a beginning or end? One method to teach this concept is to review the biblical text and follow the data and logic:

Re-read Genesis 1:1-5:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." There was an evening, and there was a morning: one day. (Gen 1:1-5, CSB)

Ask the student: what determines time? Help them understand that time is defined by a cycle of darkness and light.

Inform the student that when they read the Bible more, they will learn that when Believers die, their spirits go to heaven where there is no darkness. And at the end of human history, their bodies will be resurrected and reunited with their spirit in heaven. Because this occurs when there is no darkness, no sense of time is possible.