

Frequently

Asks

Questions

**From Genesis to Revelation
and Important Things in
Between**

by Anne Bosarge

An IMPACT Small Group- FAQ- From Genesis to Revelation and Important Things in Between

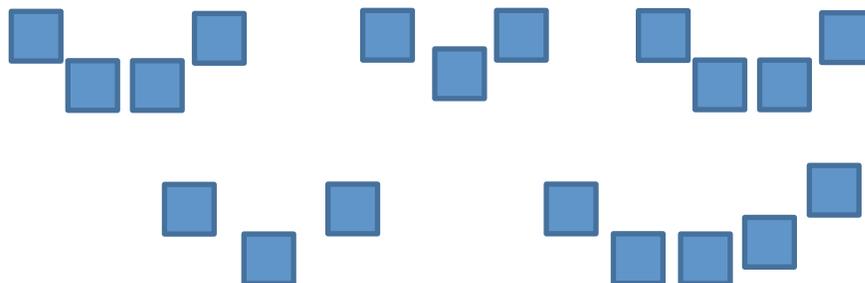
Parents may find themselves intimidated by the thought of having faith conversations with their kids. What if kids ask things they can't answer? What if parents tell them the wrong answer... will that mess them up for life? Many parents feel they don't know enough about the Bible in order to teach it to their kids. In this IMPACT small group, parents and kids will explore answers to questions about the Bible, faith, and life. They'll delve into the beginning of the world, learn more about God the Father, follow Jesus' life and ministry, discuss Salvation, the purpose of the church, and events in the book of Revelation. After each session, kids and parents will go home with six FAQ cards that will prompt them to dig deeper at home and discover more answers to some other Frequently Asked Questions.

Setting the Stage for an IMPACT Small Group

IMPACT small groups are unique! Usually churches are really good about separating parents and children into age-appropriate environments and communicating with these two audiences separately. In an IMPACT group, parents and kids have the opportunity to learn together. This ensures that both groups hear the same message at the same time, and have a chance to put new knowledge and techniques into action before they get home. By allowing families the chance to interact at church, you're building bridges to communication at home where the rubber meets the road.

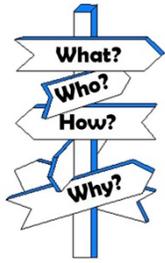
Because this is a very relationally-rich experience for parents and kids, you'll want to provide a learning environment where families communicate and interact with each other. As you prepare to choose a location for your small group, keep the following suggestions in mind:

1. **Open Space-** Many of these lessons include games that parents and kids will participate in together. Make sure you hold your class in an open environment- preferably without any tables. Pull in chairs that can be easily moved during games if necessary.
2. **Chair Arrangement-** Make sure families sit together and are talking to each other during discussion times. Arrange the chairs in small groups of chairs based on the number of parents and kids in each family group. An example seating arrangement for five families is below.



3. **Technology-** It's extremely helpful to have a visual prompt of what you're discussing- both to keep you on track as the leader and to help keep families engaged. Try to choose a room with a projection system and a screen.
4. **Timing-** Choose a time of the year that seems to be less busy for your families. If you have lots of kids in your church who play football, don't offer this small group in the fall in the middle of football season. Make sure to schedule it at a time that best meets the needs of the families in your church. Does it work best to meet before or after dinner? Try to keep your groups to no more than one hour.

5. **Organization-** You'll need to be as organized and prepared as possible. You will only have one hour to teach each lesson and these lessons are jam-packed with great activities! It's also important that families have enough time for discussion as well. Fill up a bucket or plastic caddy for each family group with all the supplies they'll need throughout the lesson. That way you won't waste time passing out and collecting supplies.
6. **Target Age-** These classes are intended for parents and their elementary aged children. Consider offering childcare options for siblings preschool age and under. Because the topics and strategies presented are targeted toward the development level of an elementary school child, younger children end up becoming more of a distraction and prevent learning and growth from taking place.



Session 1- Genesis- In the Beginning

Materials- empty jar with lid, barrel of monkeys, Bibles, birthday hat for each person, white paper, pipe cleaners- one per person, yarn, pens, homework cards

Introduction- Who created everything in our world? That's right! God created everything! Do you ever wonder how and why we were created? We're going to explore some questions people often ask about the beginning of the world.

Question 1- How did God create the earth?

Before we get started with our first question, let's work together as a family to create something. Here are the rules- 1. You can't use anything you came in with. 2. You can't use anything in the room. 3. You can't use anything at all. I'll give you 10 seconds- GO!

What's wrong? You weren't able to create anything? Well, that brings us to our first question, "How did God create the earth?" For that, we're going to look in our Bibles at the very first verses in the Bible. Read Genesis 1:1-2 as a family and see if you can answer that question.

We know God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. Verse 2 says the earth was formless and empty. It's hard for us to imagine something being empty, isn't it? Take a look at this sealed jar. Do you see anything in it? We know there is air- but we can't see anything else. That's how everything was before God created the Earth. He made it all out of nothing. That's pretty hard to understand, isn't it? But that's what the Bible says, and because we believe in a big, amazing, awesome God, we know anything is possible for Him.

People who don't know God have a hard time understanding how God can make everything from nothing at all, but Christians who have come to know God's power and greatness can accept and know God is mighty enough to speak stars into existence and command trees and plants to come forth.

Question 2- What is evolution and why do some people believe we came from monkeys?

Evolution is a theory in which some people believe all creation started because of two tiny specks of dust exploding together to create a particle that grew and changed over time to create an even bigger particle that divided and created more particles until it became what we see today in our world. They believe a long time ago there were no humans on the earth, and that as animals continued to change, monkeys eventually evolved into humans.

It's really hard for some people to believe God is so powerful and mighty that He can speak and things are created from nothing. Some people refuse to believe the creation story in the Bible is true so they look for an explanation somewhere else. Let's turn to the Bible and see what it says about how people were created. Look up Genesis 1:27 in your Bible and talk with your family about what it says about how God created people.

Do you think God is like a monkey? I don't either! This verse says we were specially created in God's "image." This doesn't mean God looks exactly like us, but it does mean that humans aren't just really smart animals. Humans are special because we were created with feelings, emotions, and a soul capable of having a relationship with God. Monkeys were created by God, but the monkeys didn't eventually turn into humans over time.

I'm going to give each family a barrel of monkeys. I'd like you to work with your family to think of different ways we are different from monkeys. Each time you think of a way, get a monkey out of the barrel and hook it on to another one. See how many monkeys you can put in one chain before time runs out. You will have 3 minutes!

Talk about it with your family: What were some of the differences? Are we the same or different than monkeys? How are we different from other animals as well?

Question 3- If God created everything, then who created God?

I have a birthday hat for each one of you. Put it on and talk about your favorite birthday memory with your family.

Our birthdays celebrate the beginning of our life on earth. Jeremiah 1:5 says, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." God tells us He was there from the beginning- forming us and making a plan for our lives. So what was the beginning of God's life? Does He have a birthday?

What I'm going to tell you now is very hard for humans to understand. God was not created. That's very hard for us to comprehend because everything else we know has a beginning and an end. Look at this piece of yarn I'm holding. Do you see a beginning and an end? Of course! Our world is ordered around the concept of time. How many ways do we keep track of time? (calendar, clock, stopwatch, hourglass, etc.) But have you ever thought about the fact that God is the one who created time? Beginnings and endings are things God created, but that doesn't mean God has a beginning and an end. We are limited by time, but God is more powerful than time. Let's take a look at John 1:1-3 and 1 Timothy 1:17. Read these verses with your family and talk about what they tell us about God's beginning and end.

It tells us God was already there in the beginning of the world. He didn't have a beginning- no one created Him- He always has been. And it also says God will never die- He will live on forever and ever- that's called "eternity." So who created God? Nobody! He always has been alive and always will be.

Question 4- Why did God make people?

Let's read Genesis 1:26-27 again. People are God's special creation, much more important than monkeys! These verses give us two reasons God put us here on earth. The first is to have a relationship with Him. He made us different from animals- we can communicate with each other and with God. We can have an intimate friendship with our creator. Animals don't have the same ability. They may be able to feel, but they don't have emotions and are not capable of a relationship with God like we are. If this is one of the reasons you were made, what are some things you do to be friends with God? I'll give you a piece of white paper. You'll need to fold it in half and draw a line down the middle. On the left side of your paper write, "Be friends with God." Under that heading write some things you can do to become better friends with God. (prayer, reading the Bible, going to church, etc.)

What was the other reason we were created according to that verse? (To take care of God's creation.) Many people in our world today take God's creation for granted. They don't realize this was one of the reasons we were put here on Earth!

I'll give each family four pipe cleaners. You need to use each pipe cleaner to form something God created. You'll need to have four objects when you're done.

Now we're going to explore some different ways people treat God's creation. (Take one pipe cleaner creation from each group, take them apart and create something else with them. While you are doing this, explain the following...) Some people take God's creation and use it up. They don't replenish what they use and when it's gone, it is just gone. For example, someone who cuts down trees from an area but doesn't plant new ones. Another example might be someone who uses water to manufacture things, but doesn't clean the water so it can be used again. Do you think that's the way God wants us to care for his creation? No!

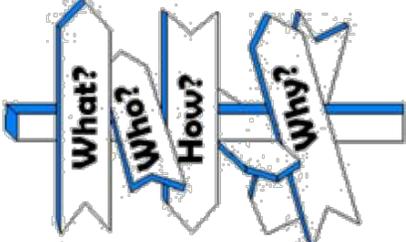
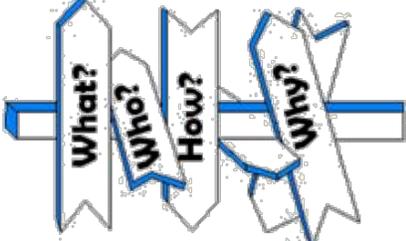
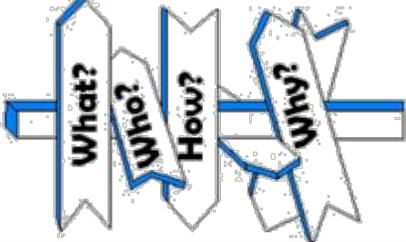
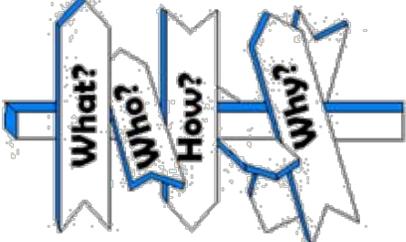
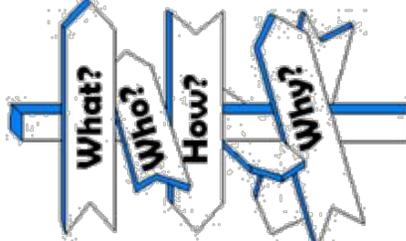
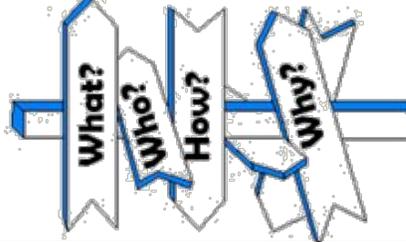
Sometimes people take God's creation (take one more pipe cleaner from each group) and use it, but they help replenish it so it won't run out. (Take apart the pipe cleaners and use them to create something new but give each group a new pipe cleaner). Some examples of this might be people who cut down trees, but then plant new ones. Another example might be people who use water to manufacture things, but clean the water when they're done with it so it can be used again. Do you think this is a good way to care for His creation? Yes!

Sometimes people just don't care for God's creation at all. (Collect one more pipe cleaner from each group). Put it on the ground and stomp on it. They destroy it and don't care about what happens to it. Some examples might be people who litter or people who dump dangerous chemicals into the earth. Do you think that's the way God wants us to care for His creation? No!

Last of all, there is another type of people. (Collect the final pipe cleaner and place these on a special place in the front.) They respect God's creation and care for it. They realize nature is a gift He gave us and it is our job to be good stewards and care for it. It's so important in fact, that it was the second reason we were placed here on earth!

On the right side of your paper, write, "Take care of creation." Now work together as a family to list ways that you will take care of God's creation.

Pray and Dismiss- I think you have many more questions about the beginning of the world and creation! I'll send you home with six FAQ Questions Cards to complete at home. See if you can dig into the Bible this week and find the answers to some more important questions. Next week, you'll need to bring a washed and cleaned jar with the label removed.

 <p>How did God make Adam? Genesis 2:7</p>	 <p>How did the animals get their names? Genesis 2:19-20</p>	 <p>How did God make Eve? Genesis 2:21-22</p>
 <p>What was the Garden of Eden like? Genesis 1:9-14</p>	 <p>How are we supposed to treat animals? Proverbs 10:12</p>	 <p>Does God control the weather? Psalm 77:17-18</p>