

Genesis 1 Lesson Plan: Creation Points to Christ

High School Theology - 45 Minutes

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify key themes in Genesis 1 that point forward to Jesus Christ
2. Explain how Lutheran theology views the relationship between creation and redemption
3. Analyze specific verses in Genesis 1 that prefigure Christ's work
4. Connect Old Testament creation language to New Testament descriptions of Jesus

Materials Needed

- ESV Bibles for each student
 - Whiteboard/markers
 - Handout with key verses
 - Lutheran Small Catechism (optional reference)
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Opening Prayer (2 minutes)

"Creator God, as we study Your Word today, help us to see how all of Scripture points to Jesus Christ. Open our hearts and minds to understand how Your work of creation reveals Your plan of salvation. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Hook/Warm-Up Activity (5 minutes)

Question for Discussion: "When you think about Jesus, what roles or titles come to mind?"

Write student responses on the board. Guide them toward titles like:

- Savior
- Redeemer
- King
- Lamb of God
- **Creator** (highlight this one)

Transition: "Today we're going to discover how Genesis 1 shows us that Jesus has been the Creator from the very beginning, and how His work of creation points ahead to His work of salvation."

Bible Reading & Context (8 minutes)

About the ESV Translation

The English Standard Version (ESV) was published in 2001 by Crossway and "created by a team of more than 100 leading evangelical scholars and pastors." The ESV Bible emphasizes "word-for-word" accuracy, literary excellence, and depth of meaning. The ESV retains theological terminology—words such as grace, faith, justification, sanctification, redemption, regeneration, reconciliation, propitiation—because of their central importance for Christian doctrine.

Lutheran Perspective on Genesis 1

Luther set forth an intensely personal view of God as the Creator, who fashioned all that exists ex nihilo (out of nothing) by speaking (Gen. 1). God is a God of conversation and community, who made his human creatures in his own image and desires fellowship with them.

Read Genesis 1:1-31 together (have students take turns reading verses)

Main Teaching: Christ in Creation (25 minutes)

I. Christ as the Agent of Creation (8 minutes)

Key Verse: Genesis 1:1 (ESV) - *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*

Connection to Christ:

- John 1:1-3 - *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."*
- Colossians 1:16 - *"For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible..."*

Lutheran Teaching Point: The Trinity was active in creation from the beginning. When we read "God created," we understand this includes the Son (Jesus) as the active agent of creation.

Discussion Question: "How does knowing that Jesus was the Creator change how you view Him?"

II. The Word That Creates and Redeems (7 minutes)

Key Pattern: Throughout Genesis 1, we see "And God said..." (verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26)

Connection to Christ:

- Jesus is called "the Word" (John 1:1, 14)
- Just as God's word brought creation into being, Jesus' word brings new creation (salvation)
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 - *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation."*

Lutheran Insight: Luther emphasized that God "created the world out of nothing in six days" and "left with us this general knowledge that the world had a beginning and that it was created by God out of nothing." This creative word points ahead to the gospel word that creates faith and new life.

III. Light Conquering Darkness (5 minutes)

Key Verse: Genesis 1:3-4 (ESV) - *"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."*

Connection to Christ:

- John 1:5 - *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*
- John 8:12 - *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

Theological Application: Just as God's first creative act was bringing light into darkness, Jesus' first work in our hearts is bringing spiritual light into the darkness of sin.

IV. The Image of God and the Perfect Image (5 minutes)

Key Verse: Genesis 1:27 (ESV) - *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."*

Connection to Christ:

- 2 Corinthians 4:4 - Christ is *"the image of God"*
- Colossians 1:15 - Jesus is *"the image of the invisible God"*
- Romans 8:29 - We are being *"conformed to the image of his Son"*

Lutheran Teaching: Humans were created in God's image, but sin corrupted that image. Jesus is the perfect image of God, and through Him, we are being restored to God's image.

Application & Discussion (4 minutes)

Reflection Questions:

1. How does seeing Jesus as Creator affect your understanding of His authority?
2. What does it mean that the same word that created the world also saves us?

3. How does knowing that Jesus will restore all creation (Romans 8:21) give you hope?

Lutheran Catechism Connection:

From the First Article of the Creed: "I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them."

This same Creator God is the one who redeems us through Jesus Christ.

Closing Prayer & Assignment (1 minute)

Closing Prayer: *"Lord Jesus, thank You for being both our Creator and our Redeemer. Help us to see You in all of Scripture and to trust in Your power to create new life in us. Amen."*

Assignment for Next Class: Read Genesis 2:4-3:24 and look for ways that the account of the Fall points ahead to our need for a Savior.

Additional Resources for Students

- ESV Study Bible notes on Genesis 1
 - Lutheran Study Bible commentary
 - Luther's Works, Volume 1 (Genesis Chapters 1-5) - for deeper study
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Assessment Opportunities

- Observe student participation in discussions
 - Check for understanding through question responses
 - Review assignment completion next class
 - Future quiz questions could include:
 - How does Genesis 1:3 connect to John 1:1?
 - What does it mean that Jesus is both Creator and Redeemer?
 - How does the image of God in Genesis 1:27 relate to our salvation?
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Differentiation Notes

- **For Advanced Students:** Provide additional cross-references to explore the connection between creation and new creation themes

- **For Struggling Students:** Focus on the main connection that Jesus is both Creator and Savior
- **For Visual Learners:** Create a chart showing Old Testament creation themes and their New Testament fulfillment in Christ