

Session 1

Read: Preface, Introduction & Chapters 1-4

Opening

Do you ever try to imagine the Garden of Eden? How would you describe it using all of your senses?

View

Consider the following questions as you watch session 1.

What does creation reveal about God's nature?

How did the trees test the humans' ability to trust in God's goodness?

How do the first chapters of Genesis create a template for the Bible's story?

How is the flood a picture of de-creation and re-creation?

Reflect

Spend some time reflecting on the series of questions Sonya asks at the at the close of the video.

What are your Eden longings?

Where have you seen God's mercy in your life?

What covering or provision have you received from God?

Is God good, and do you trust him?

Study

Use the following questions for individual study or group discussion. Refer to the Bible passages listed, as well as *The Covenant Story* chapters, as you dig deeper.

Chapter 1

Two Trees: Before the Covenant

Genesis 1:26-31 & 2:5-9, 15-18

What does the creation account show us about the goodness of God?

What was God's original design for his human partners? What purpose and work did he give them?

What significance do you see in the names of the two trees? Why do you think God offered one and withheld the other?

Personal: How do you experience God's goodness through creation?

Chapter 2

Covering: A Picture of Covenant

Genesis 3:1-13, 20-24

How did the snake twist God's words?

Why do you think sin made Adam and Eve aware of their nakedness?

What was God showing Adam and Eve when he covered them with garments of skin?

How was sending Adam and Eve out of the garden a merciful act of God?

Personal: What causes you to try to hide from God?

Chapter 3

Promise: Covenant Protection

Genesis 6:5-8, 17-19 & 9:8-17

What does it mean that God's heart was grieved?

What might the ark and the flood each symbolize?

What covenant promises does God make to Noah, and what is their significance?

Personal: When has God provided a covering of protection for you?

Chapter 4

Hesed: Covenant Love

Isaiah 54:9-10 & Psalm 36

What is the connection between covenant and hesed in Isaiah 54:9-10?

Why do you think God's first covenant promise was one of protection?

How does Psalm 36 describe God's hesed? (Note: *hesed* is translated "steadfast love" in the ESV; other translations may use lovingkindness, mercy, or faithful love.)

What is the contrast between wickedness and steadfast love in Psalm 36?

Personal: What evidence of God's steadfast love do you see in your life?

Wrap Up

Consider the following question as you close your time in prayer.

Where do you see chaos and disorder in the fallen world today? What would it look like for God's people to join him in bringing restoration through hesed?