

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

## The Beginning: All Things

Genesis 1:1-25

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### SERMON SYNOPSIS

- Genesis 1:1 in its original Hebrew can be read grammatically as "In the beginning, *when* God created the heavens and the earth..."(the emphasis in italics). This implies that God resides in eternity and is outside the bounds of time. He is the only eternal being, without beginning or end.
- The picture we get in Genesis 1:2 of the earth is chaos. It was formless (without shape), void (without substance) and dark (without light). Yet we see that God was not repelled by the chaos. Instead, the Spirit of God was nearby and hovering, watching over the waters.
- Over the six days of creation, God created by speaking, bringing forth creation with His word. The Bible doesn't explain why God took six days to create, but at the end of each day, creation was good, and at the end of the sixth day, when God created man, it was very good.
- When we see how God created, we can be encouraged and hopeful, especially if there is some degree of chaos and darkness in our lives. As God is our Creator, He is not afraid of darkness and chaos. He is still hovering over areas of chaos, and speaking order and light into them.
- Just as God took six days to create the whole world, we may not see an immediate change in our lives. We need to trust God that He is making things good in His time, and that when He is done with His work in our lives, it will be good.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Genesis 1, God brought forth creation out of chaos and darkness. What are the kinds of situations we encounter that feel chaotic and dark?

[Children's Activity: Instruct the children to do a craft work of your choice, but firstly tell them that they have to do it in the dark. Turn off the lights and then give them the instructions and materials. Let them try to do the craft in the dark for a while and let them struggle a bit. Then turn on the lights and let them continue completing the craft. In the dark, it was chaotic because they could not see, and maybe be even a little fearful of the dark. But in the light they could see well, and they could create and complete their craftwork. Explain the Genesis story of how God brought order to chaos and darkness with creation. Encourage the children they if they sometimes feel their life is chaotic (i.e. in a mess), or when they are fearful, go to God in prayer and trust that He will and can bring order to the situation just as He did in the beginning.]

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2. How does God deal with areas of desolation and chaos in the lives of His people?  
[Verses to help us go deeper: Genesis 3:8-13, 21; Isaiah 54:1-8]
  
3. When God works to bring forth light and life out of darkness and chaos, how long might He take?  
How should we respond to God in such times?  
[Verses to help us go deeper: Hebrews 11:39-40; Isaiah 9:2-7; 2 Peter 3:3-9]

### PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank God that He is our Creator, that He does not turn or run away from the chaos that we make in our lives and our surroundings but comes close to watch over and speak light and life into it.
- Pray for faith to be faithful to His call in our lives, to hear His call and respond to the work that He is doing in and through us.
- Pray for those in our community and world whose lives are still ruled by darkness and chaos, whether they realise it or not. Pray that God will send light into their lives and that we will be His hands and feet as we respond to His call in our lives.

### MEMORY VERSE

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You (Isaiah 26:3 ESV).

### PRACTICAL HANDLE

If you have an area of darkness or chaos in your own life which needs the creative power of God to come and make a change, share it with your CG or a smaller group of believers who you trust and pray for each other's burdens.