

SERIES DISCUSSION GUIDE

EDENOLOGY
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ICEBREAKER

- When you're feeling overwhelmed or worn down, what's one small thing that helps you reset or regain perspective?
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MESSAGE RECAP

This weekend, we kicked off **Edenology** by going all the way back to the beginning. In Genesis, we see God who creates with beauty, purpose, order, and intention. And at the center of that good creation, God created people in His image. In all the beauty and grandeur of creation, God intentionally created us to be here.

That means your life has divine dignity, value, and purpose, not because of what you do, but because of whose image you bear.

When we face heavy moments in life, many of us can feel discouraged and ready to quit. When life feels painful, we often ask: Was it always supposed to be this hard? The answer is no. God started with good, but sin entered the world. Because of that we can begin to magnify our problems and focus on them more than on God. When life feels heavy and God feels small, it's not because He moved but that we've likely drifted. As we step closer to God, we begin to see again that God is still good, still present, and still at work in our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you most from the message?
2. Read Genesis 1:1-5. What does God bring into the darkness? What does He bring into chaos?
3. In the creation story, we see that God created rhythm, beauty, intentionality, and provision. Everything is laid out perfectly. Read Genesis 1:26-27. In all the beauty and grandeur of creation, God intentionally created who? How does God create them?

4. Being made in God's image means we have divine dignity and infinite worth to Him. God wants us to be here, and He wants you to be here.
 - What's hard to believe about that?
 - What's encouraging about that?
5. If every person carries the image of God, how might that change the way we see:
 - ourselves?
 - people we love?
 - people who are difficult for us?
6. Reread Genesis 1:26-27. Are humans a perfect representation of God? What does God actually say? (*We were created in the image and likeness of God. We are not God but are representatives of Him.*)
7. Chad used the picture that we were created to reflect God's light to the world, but often we get distracted by our "shadow." If we are not careful, we can become more focused on ourselves than on reflecting God.
 - What tends to pull your attention away from God: fear, pain, success, comparison, control, insecurity, something else?
8. When life feels heavy, our problems can start to look bigger than God. When life feels heavy, what's usually your first instinct: talk it out, stay busy, distract yourself, isolate, pray, or something else?
9. What might you be making bigger than God right now? How can this group pray for you?
10. The size of God in our lives will always be related to how close or far away we are to Him. When we take our eyes off God, we miss how He is working. What is one step you could take to draw closer to God?

APPLICATION QUESTION (*This section is designed to invite group members to reflect on and do on their own.*)

11. Where do you most need to remember that God started with good and has not abandoned His work in you?

CLOSING PRAYER

Your closing prayer can include:

God, Thank You for creating us in Your image with dignity, worth, and purpose. When life feels heavy and our problems look bigger than You, help us draw near to You. Remind us of Your goodness and help us to trust that You are still present and at work in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LEADERS

Palm Sunday Baptism will be on Sunday, March 29 after all services. Encourage people to sign up (rpc.me/baptism or westend.me/baptism) and plan to come and support them! Baptism is a great next step of obedience for someone to grow in their relationship with Jesus. You don't have to be a member of RPC|WE to be baptized.