

The Story of God and His World

Understanding the Bible's Great Story



Facilitator's Guide



Abraham in the Story of God and His World (Facilitator's Guide)

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Welcome

Welcome to *The Story of God and His World* course. We are so glad that you want to help others to learn this story by being a facilitator.

The idea behind this course is that the book acts as a teacher. Ideally, everyone – the learners, and you as facilitator – needs to work through each lesson before you meet as a group. The group meeting will be led by you as facilitator, and you will guide the other learners through discussion. We hope you will find that through the discussion everyone learns from everyone else.

We have written this guide to help you to know what your role involves. Even if you have led this sort of course before, please do read through this guide as there may be some things that are different.

We wrote this course with a purpose. It is for anyone who wants to understand the overall Bible story. That may include new Christians, or it may include people who have been Christians for many years but who have not had the opportunity to understand the Bible as one story. It may be particularly helpful for lay leaders in the church who can then use what they learn in talking with and teaching others.

We have designed the questions to help people to learn and grow - not only in head knowledge, but also to grow in their walk with God and in their service of God. By the end of the course, learners should be able to:

- Tell *The Story of God and His World* using the six building blocks of Creation, Rebellion, God's Promise, Christ, God's Mission and New Creation
- Understand how the six building blocks form the whole Story of God and His World
- Explain how God is at work in each of the six building blocks to fulfil God's Mission
- Explain where we are in the story and our role in God's Mission
- Love God more and respond to him in practical ways following reflection on each lesson.

We would love to hear how you and your group get on! We would also love to hear any suggestions or comments you have about the course. Please contact us through the TEE net email info@teenet.org

Thank you for being a facilitator, enabling others to learn from this course, from each other, and from God's Story.

Volker Glissmann and Ruth Guinness

General Guidelines

How to use this course

This course is written to be used with a particular method of learning. It is very important that you, as facilitator, understand what this is.

Before the course starts, all learners will need a copy of the course so that they can prepare for the first meeting.

The book is a teacher. When you give out the books, it is good to let everyone know this method:

- 1) Learners need to read one lesson of the book at a time, using a Bible to look up verses, and answering each question by themselves. This ensures that they are thinking about it for themselves.
- 2) Learners meet up with a facilitator for a group meeting. In this meeting everyone brings to the table what they have learned from the lesson in the book. The facilitator guides the meeting and makes sure that the learners have grasped the main points and met the objectives for that lesson.
- 3) Learners are encouraged to reflect and continue to learn after the meeting through using the reflection questions at the end of the lesson. Then they work on the next lesson in the book (starting again at the first point above).

What we hope that participants will learn from this course

This is a course that helps people to learn *The Story of God and His World* through six building blocks. Knowing this story can help us to read, interpret and understand the Bible better and recognise how God is continuously work until the final restoration. Personally, we learn about where we fit in the story and what our role is. The most important lessons are the heart lessons and action lessons that can be learned as we come to God's Word and let him teach us. So, this is not a course just to learn content so that an exam can be written and passed. There is no exam! Disciples of Jesus continue to grow, whether they have just started to follow him, or have been following him for many years.

Purpose of group meetings

A good way of thinking about the purpose of the group meeting is with the following illustration.

Imagine that one of the course writers comes to one of your group meetings. They have a surprise for you, and bring out of their bag a hot, freshly grilled, whole chicken. It smells good! They put it on the table and then pause and ask a question. "Do you want to eat the chicken? Or do you want me to eat it on your behalf?"

How would you answer? The course writer could eat the chicken for you. They could tell you how delicious it is. They could tell you how much they enjoy taking it apart and tasting each part. They could tell you how strong they will grow because of the nutrients in the chicken.

No one asks someone else to eat a chicken on their behalf! That would be very strange. But what do we do with the Bible? Do we let someone else read it, enjoy each part, grow from spending time studying it, and tell us how good they think it is? Spiritual growth will come as each person studies the Bible. In a group meeting, like eating a chicken together, you will be studying God's word together, sharing what you are learning from it. The more work each person puts in to learning before a group meeting, the more they will get out of it. As learners study the lesson before a group meeting they should include time to pause, reflect and pray. Then everyone will have plenty of good "food" to share in the meeting.

Length of the course

This is a basic foundational course to help learners grasp the whole of “God’s story”. It has been written in 6 lessons. We suggest that the course takes six weeks, with one group meeting a week. However, you are free to take as long as your group needs.

Note that if you do it in six weeks, the first lesson will include the introduction and the last lesson will include the conclusion. Feel free to arrange another lesson with the learners if this is required by the group.

Allow at least 1 ½ hours for each group meeting.

Role of a facilitator

Your role is to:

- 1) facilitate discussion. Try to draw out every learner, making sure that the group hears from everyone at some point in the lesson.
- 2) share the work. Allocate different people to read different sections of the lesson.
- 3) know what is coming up in the lesson, and decide what needs to be covered in the group meeting. For example, it is not necessary to read every Bible reference in the group meeting, but it may be helpful to read some to make sure that all the learners understand what the Bible says.
- 4) guide the discussion so that by the end of the group meeting the main objectives have been covered. Some learners may ask questions that go away from the main topic. You may decide to discuss these at the end of the lesson, or perhaps suggest that learners think through these questions and come back with answers next time.
- 5) encourage learners to relate the lesson to their own lives and walk with God. It is hoped that all will grow in their own love of God and in their following of Christ each day as well as in their understanding of the Bible.

The role of a facilitator is not to teach the course, or to read everything out loud and give all the answers.

Suggested lesson plan

- 1) Welcome all learners. In the first meeting, introductions of each member are needed.
- 2) Prepare hearts and minds for the lesson by praying and perhaps singing a relevant worship song. (As the course goes on, you may want to ask one learner each week to choose a well-known worship song, relevant to the lesson, for everyone to sing). Study of God’s word and worship belong together.
- 3) Work through the lesson in the workbook, allowing discussion at each point.
 - a) Point out the title of the lesson is the title of one part of the overall story.
 - b) Read the summary sentence underneath the title. This summarises that part of the story. You may want to come back to this through the lesson, and particularly at the end.
 - c) Suggest a learner reads the short story/parable in a box. Then ask for learners’ responses.
 - d) From lesson 2 onwards, ask learners to re-tell the story so far.
 - e) The learners should have read the re-telling of the Bible story for this lesson. Decide whether to read this again as a group or just remind each other of the main points.
 - f) Discuss learners’ answers to the reflection questions.
 - g) “Exploring the Story” is very important to check understanding. We suggest that you go through each question, asking different learners for their answers and facilitating discussion. You might need to ask follow-up questions to make sure that the learners are grasping the main points (see the lesson design section from page 8 of this guide for help in this area). Decide whether you need to look up any Bible references with the group.

- h) “Did you know?” boxes in the lesson give some information that help learners to reflect further on related themes. There may or may not be time for you to cover these in the meetings.
 - i) Personal reflection questions are a very important part of each lesson. Suggest that learners continue to reflect in the week ahead. Encourage them to relate the lessons to their lives and invite people to share if they would like to.
 - j) Each lesson ends with a summary, repeating the summary sentence from the beginning of the lesson, and adding a sentence which shows that the story (in parts 1 – 5) is unfinished. This is the cliff-hanger which builds anticipation for the next lesson!
 - k) Note that throughout the book there are text boxes explaining key words. These are also listed in the glossary at the end of the book.
- 4) End the meeting with a time of prayer. You may want to encourage each learner to take part in this.

Course logistics

In the first meeting, discuss and agree the following points for smooth running of the course:

- 1) Agree starting and finishing times.
- 2) Agree name courtesy (what will everyone call each other?).
- 3) Agree course courtesy:
 - a) Everyone has the right to speak and to be listened to.
 - b) Everyone should give each other room to participate.
 - c) There are no stupid questions (do not laugh at another learner’s question).
 - d) Be kind, considerate and respectful.
- 4) The course follows a path, or a journey. There may be interesting diversions, but the facilitator may need to bring the group back to the main path.
- 5) Everyone needs to have answered the questions by themselves first and written their answers down. This helps people to learn and to remember.
- 6) To “graduate” from the course, at least 75% attendance is required. There is no written assessment, but all learners should have worked through the lessons in the workbook and answered them themselves, and also have actively participated in the discussion in group meetings. Participation shows that learners have read and thought through the lessons for themselves, which is the intention of the course.

Answers

This facilitator’s guide gives you some model answers. It is best to work through the course by yourself first, so that you know where the answers come from, before checking with the model answers. Note:

- 1) Many of the answers are taken from the Bible. We have used the NIV.
- 2) Some answers ask for what the learners think – so we have only given possible answers. The learners may come up with others.
- 3) In general, keep the answers short and to the point so as to stay on the main ideas of the big story.
- 4) In the model answers we have sometimes we have provided several answers to a question though learners may just have one or two, which is fine. We have sometimes added notes which you may want to use to prompt fuller understanding.

Lesson Design

As you facilitate each lesson, it will help you to know how we designed it, and the key themes that we believed would be important to cover.

Below we explain why we have chosen the wording we have used for each building block of the story, and what we think is particularly important for learners to grasp in each lesson.

The Bible is like a tapestry with themes weaving in and out, going from the beginning to the end. You will find that this course follows several threads. Using similar words or phrases throughout the course can help learners to understand this tapestry.

Lesson 1: Creation

God created the heavens and the earth and made people in his image to be like kings under him, that all would live in peace under his blessing and worship.

Key ideas here:

- God is the creator of all things.
- Note that “the heavens and the earth” are the things that are created. We also use the phrase “**heaven and earth**” to stand for the dwelling place of God (heaven) and the dwelling place of people (earth), which meet when God and his people are in fellowship.
- People are made in **God’s image** – to be like him, reflect his character.
- One of the aspects in which we are like God is as rulers (or kings), but we need to understand that God’s intention was always for us to rule under him as the great **King**. We have a delegated authority.
- Note that we have used the word “**king**” to describe our rule. This applies to men and women. We have used it as it fits in with the idea of kingship which runs through the whole story.
- **Relationships** are key to our understanding of the whole story, and start here in creation. Everything is living in peace together.
- Adam and Eve **flourished** in Eden.
- God’s **blessing** is, ultimately, to do with living in fellowship with him, knowing his love and his provision in the world he created.
- **Worship** is another theme throughout the story. Creation was designed and made to glorify God. We are to respond to God by worshipping him.
- As the story goes on, remember this lesson is the foundation, and you will want to refer to it as you go through the course. Note that restoration is not part of the creation story, but the restoration of the ideal relationships we see at creation is God’s plan.

Other notes:

- The story/parable at the beginning of lesson 1 is about Mai Banda. “Mai” is the respectful term for a woman in Chichewa, equivalent to “Mrs”. She sits on her “khonde”, the Chichewa term for a covered area like a porch in front of the house where people often sit with visitors.

Lesson 2: Rebellion

People rebelled against God, making themselves kings in his place, and broke all the relationships of blessing God had made.

Key ideas here:

- Lesson 2 is built on the story from lesson 1 and adds the following:
- Adam and Eve rebelled against God and wanted to be **kings** independent from God. Remember that as the great King, God delegated responsibility to humans to reign under him. God had kept one responsibility from Adam and Eve, to decide what is good and evil, but Adam and Eve wanted to decide for themselves.
- We have usually used the word **rebellion** rather than sin to emphasise the relational aspect (against God) and to show that this is the state people's **hearts** are in from Adam and Eve onwards – the whole being turned from God (this is more than just individual sins).
- Note that **heaven and earth** are separated due to rebellion, as Adam and Eve are banished from the garden and God's presence.
- Due to Adam and Eve's rebellion, **God's image** in them broke.
- From now on sin breaks all **relationships** (with God, self, other people and creation).
- The penalty of rebelling against God the King is death. God judges **justly** but also shows his **mercy** and **grace**.
- Even though Adam and Eve rebelled, God still loved them and **promised** that one day, a descendant of Eve would be victorious over the serpent and reverse the results of their sin. This promise will be central to lessons 3 and 4.
- Humans didn't **flourish** outside the garden. Sin continued to multiply, breaking relationships, leading to death, with humans trying to make a name for themselves rather than worshipping God.

Lesson 3: God's Promises

God promised restored relationships for all through Israel, but they were unfaithful.

Key ideas here:

- Lesson 3 is built on the story from lesson 1 and 2 and adds the following:
- Despite people's rebellion and broken relationships, God remained committed to his **promise** of restored **relationships** and **blessing**. He gave this promise to Abraham and his family. The promise included the blessing of **all nations**.
- Abraham's descendants were enslaved in Egypt. God sent Moses to lead them, defeated the Egyptians and their gods, and saved the Israelites through the **blood** of the **Passover lamb**.
- **Heaven and earth** are connected again, first through the mobile **Tabernacle** and then the **Temple** in Jerusalem where people were to **worship** God.
- God provided a way for humans to connect with him through **sacrifices**.
- God made a **covenant** with Israel that he would be their God and they would be his people. God called them to live as his people and be a light to the nations.
- He gave the **Law** of Moses to show them how to live in the covenant relationship. However, they all failed to keep it.
- God gave them **kings** to rule under him as the great **King**, but they continued to rebel. Remember rebellion breaks all **relationships** (with God, self, other people and creation).

- Prophets warned of judgement because of the people’s rebellion. They also promised a **King** (the **Messiah**) who would rule faithfully and restore all relationships under God’s blessing.

Lesson 4: Christ

*God sent his Son Jesus as the faithful and true Israel
to restore all relationships on heaven and on earth.*

Key ideas here:

- Lesson 4 is built on the story from lessons 1, 2, and 3 and adds the following:
- Although Israel failed to remain faithful, God kept his **promise** to restore all **relationships** by sending his Son, Jesus—the **Messiah** and the true and **faithful** Israel. Jesus as God’s Son was the true **image** of God.
- In his earthly ministry, Jesus revealed **God’s Kingdom** by teaching God’s word, healing the sick, restoring **relationships**, and showed how humans **flourish**.
- At the cross and the empty tomb, Jesus, the **Lamb** of God, broke the power of sin, of death, of separation from God and, through the **sacrifice** of his body and **blood**, made a **new covenant**.
- Jesus promised the **Holy Spirit**. Note this promise here, but recognise that the promise and work of the Holy Spirit is a central theme of Lesson 5.
- **Heaven and earth** are connected again in the person of Jesus Christ.

Other notes:

- The story/parable at the beginning of lesson 4 is about Bambo Phiri. “Bambo” is the respectful term for a man in Chichewa, equivalent to “Mr”. Maize is the staple food in Malawi.

Lesson 5: God's mission

*God sent his Church on his mission in his power
to share the good news of restoration to the whole world and to worship him.*

Key ideas here:

- Lesson 5 is built on the story from lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4 and adds the following:
- Jesus returned to the right hand of God, the Father, but **promised** that the **Holy Spirit** would empower his disciples to share the good news to all nations that Jesus is Lord and Saviour who restores all **relationships**.
- Those who **repent** and confess Jesus as their Lord enter into **God’s Kingdom** and are under God’s rule. Note that this is a reversal of the rebellion when people decided to rule themselves and not submit to God as King.
- As we follow Christ and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit in our **hearts**, we grow into the **image** of Christ so having the image of God in us restored.
- God’s **mission** continues through us today as we follow Jesus, bringing others to join us in **worshipping** him and wait for his return to restore all things fully.
- **Heaven and earth** are again connected when the Holy Spirit dwells within believers and the church.

Lesson 6: New Creation

*God's Son Jesus will return as King to judge and set all things right, by finally punishing all evil.
God will live on the restored earth with all his redeemed people,
with all living in peace under his blessing and worshipping him.*

Key ideas here:

- Lesson 6 completes our story. Note that the new creation story links to the creation story. It is the restoration that was necessary following the rebellion.
- Creation longs for this day when it will be renewed and freed from decay.
- Jesus is **King** – and all creation is under him. This restores the relationship intended at the beginning.
- Jesus is the judge who judges **justly**, setting everything right, and gives **grace** and **mercy** to all who follow him.
- All **rebels** who don't follow him, the serpent (deceiver, Satan or the devil), death and evil are destroyed. There will be no more death, mourning, crying or pain.
- Jesus will reward his people, according to how they lived in response to his love.
- **Heaven and earth** are connected again because God will dwell with his redeemed people on a restored earth.
- All **relationships** will be finally fully healed (with God, self, others and creation).
- All God's people will **serve** and **worship** him.
- People will reflect **God's image** again.
- Emphasise that the story ends with a new beginning – eternal life with God, forever under his reign and blessing.

Answer Guide

In the following pages you will find our suggested answers with a few notes to guide you. (See also the 'Answer' section to 'General Guidelines' on page 7.)

Introduction

- 1) They didn't believe what the Scriptures said about Christ's suffering.
- 2) Everything written in the Scriptures (Law, Prophets, Psalms).

Note: these are the 3 sections of the Hebrew Bible (our Old Testament). The Law of Moses is Genesis to Deuteronomy; the prophets are the prophetic books, and Psalms is the first book in the section called the Writings.

- 3) Preaching of repentance and forgiveness to all nations, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Note: "what my Father promised" is the Holy Spirit.

Lesson 1 - Creation

Introductory story: everyone will have a different answer. For example, the mountains, because of walking with God in his creation, and enjoying time with friends there.

Reflect on the story

- 1) God and all of creation; God and people; Adam and Eve, people and creation.
- 2) Very good, life-giving, joyful, peaceful, flourishing, harmonious etc.

Exploring the story

- 3) He is good, righteous, gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, loving, mighty, trustworthy, faithful.
- 4) He rules with goodness, care and righteousness
- 5) Glorious, full of splendour, everlasting, good
- 6) Praise, worship, celebrate, and declare God's glory
- 7) To rule, to be fruitful and increase, to work (the land), to take care of (the land)
- 8) With goodness, care and righteousness.

Note: compare the answer to number 6 with the answer to number 2. They should be similar!

- 9) With joyful praise, glorifying his as King, worshipping and serving him
- 10) A world where God provides, sustains abundance, and where all creation flourishes in its place. When the majesty and goodness of God as King is seen.

Note: everyone will have a different answer but look for a description of an ideal world.

- 11) God created all things, visible and invisible. All of God's creation is intended to flourish and worship God. All creation is in harmony with good relationships with God and each other. People are instructed to rule like kings under God, and to care for God's creation.

Lesson 2 - Rebellion

Introductory story: encourage participants to find as many different relationships as possible, for example between the boys, between the boys and adults, between the boys and creation, between the boys and the house owner.

The story so far

Encourage the re-telling of the story of Creation as learned in this course. There is no need for the detail of what was created when. Encourage learners to include the main points (see question 9 of Lesson 1)

Reflect on the story

- 1) Between people and God; people and people; inside people (loss of peace, doubting, fearing, shame); people and the land; God and the land.
- 2) It's the opposite – all the good relationships have been broken. Harmony replaced by bloodshed, rebellion, sin.

Exploring the story

- 3) The serpent contradicts God; God said “you will die”, the serpent said “you will not surely die”.
- 4) He gives people freedom within boundaries – so that they are protected, so that they enjoy life, flourish, and do not die.
- 5) She believed the serpent, was persuaded because it sounded good, wanted wisdom and to be like God, ignored God’s word and doubted God’s good intention.
- 6) To do what is right and control sin/temptation by saying “no”.
- 7) The human heart
- 8) To make a name for themselves, to be great, to be like God.
- 9) Hardship, broken relationships, and death.
- 10) Clothed them
Note: this was by making the first animal sacrifice
- 11) Protected him (gave him a mark that protected him)
- 12) Made a covenant (to save his family and the animals in the Ark)
- 13) A descendant, (son of Eve) – Jesus, who will crush the serpent
- 14) No faithfulness or love or acknowledgement of God. Instead, cursing, lying, murder, stealing, adultery, breaking all bounds.
- 15) Adam and Eve rebelled against God by wanting to rule themselves and be like God. Sin breaks down all relationships, and effectives how we rule. God shows mercy and grace and does not give up on people. He promises the serpent will be defeated.

Lesson 3 - God's Promise

Introductory story: a marriage covenant should be a lasting, strong, faithful relationship with mutual commitment.

The story so far

Encourage learners to put together the story of creation and rebellion as learned in this course, bringing out the main points only. Remind them this is a summary and does not need lots of detail.

Reflect on the story

- 1) Choosing Abraham to bring blessing to nations; making a covenant with Israel, giving them the law and sacrifices to remove sin. Promising a new covenant with new hearts, and a new Servant-King who will bring restoration.
- 2) Some had faith and were obedient to God, but most turned away from God and were unfaithful.

Exploring the story

- 3) They will be blessed as God intended at creation – living under his rule, and ruling under him, with good relationships with him, people and creation, and with flourishing life. His blessing is intended globally, for all nations.
- 4) For all to live together in peace under his blessing, glorifying him
- 5) For him (and his descendants) to be the means through which others are brought into restored relationships and the blessing God intends.
- 6) Relationship of belonging, knowing, a heart relationship, close, intimate. With God's law in the heart, being truly God's people, being forgiven.
- 7) Flourishing! Everything in its place living in peace with everything else. Satisfaction. Blessed. People are heard. And the serpent's power is broken.
- 8) He is glorious and holy (can't be approached). He is travelling with his people.
- 9) They had to offer sacrifices (to make atonement)
- 10) A response of love and obedience
Note: do make sure that love features in this answer! Obedience comes from love.
- 11) Mediate between God and the nations – teach about God, point to him. Be restorers of relationships.
- 12) To restore Israel and all people back to God.
- 13) They were only external rituals. God saw their hearts and saw that they neither loved nor obeyed him in the way they live. They focused on religious rituals and not on relationship.
- 14) No. Loving God includes loving people as it means following his ways and wanting to please him. But none of us do this fully! We are learning to love God and others.
- 15) God does not change his intention for people to live under his blessing on a good earth (creation). He promises to restore all the relationships broken because of rebellion. He made covenants to be in relationship with his people. He gave them his law (to know how to live), the Tabernacle/Temple (for God to live among them), and sacrifices (to restore relationships). He called Israel to be priests for all nations. Israel failed to walk in God's ways.

Lesson 4 - Christ

Introductory story: allow participants to share a range of likely feelings, for example, overwhelmed, numb, relieved, thankful, crying with joy. No, he did not deserve it!

The story so far

Encourage learners to put together the story of creation, rebellion and promise as learned in this course, bringing out the main points only. Remind them this is a summary and does not need lots of detail.

Reflect on the story

- 1) He taught about the true nature of the Kingdom of God, healed the sick, loved and cared for people, brought peace between people and creation, lived as God planned for people to live.

Note people might add his death – initiating a new covenant through his blood.

Exploring the story

- 2) He is glorious! God's son, chosen by God. Has authority.
- 3) His death on the cross
- 4) Our hope in God's promises for our own resurrection, our faith, life!
- 5) Death to the first born, defeat to the gods.
- 6) The blood of a perfect sacrificial lamb.
- 7) Through the blood of Jesus (his sacrifice on the cross)
- 8) Jesus' sacrifice – his body and blood given for us
- 9) All things!
- 10) Actions that show a change of heart – following God's ways, doing acts of love
- 11) Caring, compassion, support, love to all, blessing others
- 12) To show our love for God by loving others. To show God's character to others.
- 13) Jesus is the promised Christ who restores all relationships broken by our rebellion, bringing us back to God's intention from the beginning. He is the Son of God. He died as a sacrifice, making a new covenant, and rose again, victorious over sin, death, the devil. He shows us how to live by God's values.

Lesson 5 - God's Mission

Introductory story: allow participants to share, for example, births, weddings, life achievements such as graduations, etc.

The story so far

Encourage learners to put together the story of creation, rebellion, promise and Christ as learned in this course. Can they tell it as a summary concentrating on the main points only?

Reflect on the story

- 1) Preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit; going to others (Gentiles, nations); persecution.
- 2) Some repent and accept salvation, rejoice and witness to Jesus. Others refuse the message and persecute God's followers.

Exploring the story

- 3) The Holy Spirit is in us: God with us.
Note similarity with OT Temple – God's presence was there.
- 4) The Holy Spirit.
- 5) Obeying the whole law (law of Moses) (including circumcision)
- 6) God gave the Gentiles the Holy Spirit
- 7) Through the grace of Jesus. (His blood of the New Covenant)
- 8) We are not under a heavy burden to obey the law. Salvation doesn't depend on our effort. As we have faith in him, salvation is guaranteed because of Jesus' sacrifice, and we are accepted by God.
- 9) Actions of compassion towards others.
Note, faith results in actions
- 10) "Your kingdom come"
- 11) God is giving time for people to repent and know him. He wants everyone to repent.
- 12) Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control
- 13) To serve God and represent him to the nations – teach them about God, pray for and point them to God.
- 14) To declare God's praises.
- 15) God and people.
- 16) God's mission continues through believers empowered by the Holy Spirit – the mission to restore all relationships (the mission that runs through the whole story). God wants all nations to know him. Those who believe are saved by faith through grace, and are given the Holy Spirit – becoming temples.

Lesson 6 - New Creation

Introductory story: she was excited because her father was returning! She wanted to please him (maybe for him to be proud of her).

The story so far

Encourage learners to put together the story of creation, rebellion, promise, Christ and mission as learned in this course. Can they tell it as a summary concentrating on the main points only?

Reflect on the story

- 1) Relationship between believers and Jesus forever. God people, creation, living together in harmony.

Note some may add that evil and sin is destroyed, not breaking relationships anymore.

Exploring the story

- 2) It will be set free from decay, share the freedom of God's children.

- 3) Will be free, our adoption will be complete, our bodies redeemed.

Note: bodies redeemed – resurrection bodies free from decay, sin and death.

- 4) Everything will be restored.

- 5) Angels, living creatures, elders, every creature on earth, under the earth, on the sea, everything in earth and sea!

- 6) God the Father and the Lamb (Jesus).

- 7) They were rewarded according to what they had done and their faithfulness.

- 8) What he had was taken away from him. No reward. The master was not pleased.

- 9) One who does quality work will be rewarded; the other will not, but will still be saved.

- 10) People from every tribe/language/people/nation bought for God.

- 11) To be priests to serve God; and kings to reign on earth (under God).

- 12) To destroy all the devil's work.

- 13) It shows God's purpose to restore the world to be as God intended at the beginning – and more, with glory given to the Redeemer!

- 14) Death, not life. Exclusion, punishment of death.

- 15) Heaven, earth sea, fields and their contents, trees all rejoice because God will restore justice by justly judging.

- 16) Jesus will return as victor to bring the full Kingdom of God on earth; all that opposes his reign will be destroyed (serpent/deceiver/Satan/devil and followers). The righteous will be separated from the wicked. All the consequences of sin (death, broken relationships, sickness) will be removed from the new creation. Christians will be accountable for how they served Jesus on earth, and rewarded accordingly. All will serve God and reign under him for ever.

Conclusion

List here important themes that run through the whole story. These are things that are mentioned in several of the sections of the story.

Example answers:

- Kings and kingdom (people as kings under God the true King)
- Covenant between God and people
- Rebellion, failure, unfaithfulness (broken relationships)
- Restoration (of all broken relationships)
- Relationships of blessing between God, people, self, creation
- “Heaven and earth” – God dwelling with his people
- God’s good intention / promise / purpose / mission
- God’s love, grace, mercy and justice
- Worship and service