

Before the discussion each week, encourage those in your group (and yourself) to share any WINS from last week on how they applied the passages to their life and any changes they experienced. Specifically, ask how they're doing with the spiritual disciplines discussed in previous weeks.

How to use this guide

Start with the key questions, include any optional scriptures and questions as needed, and conclude by determining your next steps. Be careful not to add too many passages, as it can create confusion. Make it a habit to continually direct the group back to the scripture you are studying.

Use this section (Main Idea) to set up the discussion. Remind everyone of the overall themes of the passage(s). Introduce this week's discussion using content from the "main idea" section below.

Main Idea, THE GENESIS WAY: (Genesis 1:1-10)

Last week required honesty. This week requires decisions. After dumping everything onto the table, many of you probably felt a strange mix of relief and resistance...and that's normal. It's like dumping every piece of laundry you own into one massive pile on the floor. At first, it feels good just to get it all out of the hamper. But then reality sets in. A pile, no matter how honest it is, doesn't actually get anything clean.

The next step isn't washing yet...it's sorting. Some people separate by color: whites, darks, brights. Others sort by fabric and weight: delicates, heavies, towels, workout clothes. Either way, nothing moves forward until decisions are made about what belongs together and what does not. If you stop at the pile, you haven't made progress...you've just exposed the mess. Clarity without structure leads to paralysis.

Genesis shows us this same principle. God does not fill chaos...He shapes it first. Before life flourished, God separated light from darkness, land from sea, and waters from sky. He gathered what belonged together and gave form to what was formless. In the same way, shaping your life means organizing what God has revealed so responsibilities stop competing and start cooperating. Dumping showed you what you're carrying. Shaping decides where it belongs.

I encourage you to resist the urge to "run the wash cycle" now. This is not about schedules, calendars, or execution...that comes later. The goal isn't a perfect plan; it's a defined shape. When life has shape, obedience becomes possible. When everything belongs somewhere, clarity replaces chaos and progress can finally begin.

Leader Reminder: Expect resistance. Shaping requires acknowledging that not everything belongs everywhere. Stay focused on form, not fill. This week is about defining the categories. That's why we call it "Shape It."

Next time, we'll move from shape to rhythm...learning how God's pattern of separation, gathering, work, and rest creates sustainability. Shaping it defines what belongs. Rhythm determines when it belongs.

When conducting a group discussion, it's important to give everyone a chance to respond to each question. Start by asking specific individuals "WHAT" and "WHY" questions, then move on to general questions for the entire group. Be sure to acknowledge and thank those who participate and include your own input to further the discussion. It's perfectly acceptable to have moments of silence to collect thoughts. By following these steps, you can maintain a focused and productive discussion.

Questions

Weekly check-in question: Use this question to start a conversation and help everyone feel at ease. Be sure to listen and acknowledge each person's response. There are no right or wrong answers.

Check-in Question: WHAT SURPRISED YOU MOST WHEN YOU DUMPED EVERYTHING OUT ON PAPER LAST WEEK?

This question encourages participants to reflect on moments when they felt a deep sense of guidance or protection, similar to how Jesus portrays Himself as the Good Shepherd in the passage we will be studying. By sharing personal experiences of feeling guided, we can connect with the themes of John 10 and explore the significance of trusting in God's care and guidance in our lives. It also sets a tone of openness and vulnerability, creating an atmosphere where participants feel comfortable sharing their stories and insights.

Have everyone open their Bible and move right into the scriptures after covering the Main Idea above. Encourage everyone to bring their Bible and to read along. Suggestion: depending on the amount to read, you might want to break it down into sections and have more than one person read. Either ask for volunteers or choose those who feel comfortable reading in front of others. Remember these two techniques: Don't give the participants the answers. Leave them time to discover.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION: THE GENESIS WAY (Genesis 1:1-10)

Opening Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1-10

1. Check-in Question: WHAT SURPRISED YOU MOST WHEN YOU DUMPED EVERYTHING OUT ON PAPER LAST WEEK?
2. READ Genesis 1:1-10
3. Fat rabbit statement (conversation starter): CLARITY WITHOUT STRUCTURE DOESN'T PRODUCE PEACE...IT PRODUCES PARALYSIS. Agree? Disagree? (Let it linger. Expect some tension.)
4. WHY DO YOU THINK GOD SHAPED CREATION BEFORE HE FILLED IT? WHAT DOES THAT TEACH US ABOUT OUR OWN LIVES?

5. WHAT HAPPENS EMOTIONALLY OR SPIRITUALLY WHEN EVERYTHING IN LIFE FEELS EQUALLY IMPORTANT?
6. AS YOU LOOK AT THE SEVEN SPOKES OF THE ZIGLAR WHEEL OF LIFE—*SPIRITUAL, FAMILY, CAREER, PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL, AND FINANCIAL*—WHICH AREA SEEMS TO RECEIVE MOST OF YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION RIGHT NOW? WHICH AREA APPEARS TO RECEIVE THE LEAST? WHAT DOES THAT REVEAL TO YOU?
7. AS YOU BEGIN TO SORT YOUR LIFE INTO THESE CATEGORIES, WHAT DO YOU NOTICE HAPPENING INTERNALLY? DOES THIS BRING CLARITY OR CALM—OR DOES IT SURFACE TENSION, STRESS, OR RESISTANCE? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS? (Feeling tension here doesn't mean you're behind...it usually means you're being honest.)
8. Anchor to the discussion. How does this fit into my toolbox? God doesn't ask you to do everything...He asks you to do what belongs to you. DO THE ZIGLAR WHEEL OF LIFE to gain perspective about where you want to focus your time and energy.

“Check-out” question: Discuss some examples and ways you can apply this week's message and scripture to your life and name some definite next steps you can take in your mission. We'll provide some examples each week on your copy as listed below. The challenge applies to the scripture reading and prayer time mentioned below.

Next Steps/Challenge:

DO THE ZIGLAR WHEEL OF LIFE (To get the Ziglar Wheel of Life PDF go to the free resource section at <https://coachdanholland.com/thegenesisway>).

These scriptures should be read throughout the week. They can easily complement any other reading that each group member may be doing. There will only be a few scriptures assigned for each day. Each passage will relate to the Main Idea and will assist everyone in taking the next steps discussed or identified in your group. Instruct your group to meditate on these verses (not just read them) and to pray before, during, and after reading for the Holy Spirit to guide, encourage, and help each person apply them to their life.

Daily Bible Readings and Prayer Time

Read the following scriptures this week:

- Day 1 – Genesis 1:3-10 – God separates and forms
- Day 2 – Ephesians 5:15-17 – Living wisely with intention
- Day 3 – Proverbs 4:25-27; 12:11 – Staying on a straight path
- Day 4 – Luke 4:42-44 – Jesus choosing assignment over demand
- Day 5 – 1 Corinthians 14:40 – God values order
- Day 6 – Colossians 1:15-18 – Christ as the organizing center
- Day 7 – Psalm 37:23-24 – God ordering the steps