

Final Thought

Our Lord had created out of love, and with creatures that were to reflect His image to the rest of creation, to one another in loving, life-giving community, and back to God in joyful service and praise, behold, it was very good. When our first parents reached out for themselves, over what God had given for them, their thoughts and actions turned away from God, each other, and all creation and brought sin, separation, and death. Yet, our Lord had intended that humanity would know Him ... know Him at the depth of His heart ... so even in the midst of sin, our Lord begins to reveal His heart of grace, promising to send in the flesh His chosen Messiah. He will not come aloof from humanity, isolated from our fallen lives in order to preserve Himself. Rather, God's chosen Messiah will have an incarnate and in person ministry in the midst of a family, a people, a community ... and with His acts of salvation He will mold His followers to have the same.



2301 S. Wolf Road, Hillside, IL 60162 nidlcms.org 708-449-3020



A Bible Study from the LCMS Northern Illinois District

Session I Designed for Community

Focus Verses:

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Genesis 1:27

Or

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”

Genesis 2:18



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Opening Prayer: Gracious Heavenly Father, we give you thanks that in love and for love You have created us. You endowed our first parents, Adam and Eve, with Your image and blessed them to be together to joyfully share in work You had given humanity to do together. Lord, as we begin this journey to explore the gift You have given us in placing us in community, we ask that You would guide us by Your Holy Spirit. May He draw us near to Jesus, who redeemed us as Your creatures, and grow us in a deeper appreciation for how You have placed us together as Your family. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

By Design We may not always appreciate it, or even notice it, but when something is well-designed, it brings blessings into our lives! I recently asked a few people to talk about something they believed was well-designed. One person noted their food processor. It was well-designed because it was adjustable, could be used for various foods, didn't take up much space, and is easily cleaned! Another person said they liked a computer app because it logically organized information and was easy to navigate and share information with others.

1. What is something you appreciate for its design?
2. What qualities make something well-designed?

Video Segment

1. What connected for you in the video?
2. What communities are you a part of? What do you like about those communities?

Designed by God – Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 2:15-25

1. How does God speak of His creating of humanity in Genesis 1:26-27?
2. What is the significance of God referring to Himself in both plural and singular pronouns? [See John 1:1-4 & Colossians 1:16-17]
3. What does it mean that male and female were created in God's image? What do you think was God's purpose in creating creatures that bore His image?
4. What clues does God give us in the Genesis 1 reading that God designed humanity to be in community?

5. How does God make His intentions more clear that humanity was intended to live in community in Genesis 2:18?
6. What would humanity accomplish as they bore the image of God together as community?
7. What indications do we have from the creation account that God intended community to be "incarnate," an in person experience? How is Adam and Eve joining together a further reflection of God's image?

Enter Sin – Genesis 3:1-21

1. What does the serpent question in order to tempt Eve?
2. Why is getting Eve away from God's Word important to Satan? [John 1:1-4] What was the result of Adam and Eve eating from the fruit according to Genesis 3:6-7?
3. Why do you think God asks Adam "Where are you?" in verse 9?
4. How does sin bring separation/isolation into Adam and Eve's lives?
5. What are the many ways that our communities today still struggle with separation and isolation? What are some of the sad results?
6. Even in the curses that come with sin, how does the Lord demonstrate and promise His grace to humanity?