

# SESSION 1

# News Story

## LEAD-IN (10 minutes)

**5 W'S AND 1 H:** Begin this session by explaining that all news stories answer the six most basic questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Then say, "We'll use the same six questions to get to know each other a little better."

**YOU REPORT:** Have the students tell their stories by answering the 5 W's and 1 H about themselves. Those questions will tell their basic story. Have volunteers share with the group.

**ACTIVITY:** Reporters write in a style called the inverted pyramid, where they put the most important information in the top of the article. That means if you read the headline and first two paragraphs, you should know the answers to the 5 W's and 1 H. Put it to the test. Have the students answer the 5 W's and 1 H of the story of Tom Davis on the student page.

**POINT TO MAKE:** The word "gospel" means "good news." So, the gospel (at its most basic level) is news, just like you tell someone else and just like you'd read in the paper.

**DISCUSS:** Ask your group if they had to tell the basic news story of the Bible, how would they tell it? In other words, what is the story of the gospel? (Leader: Listen for the basic outline—God created us; we sinned and were separated from God; God redeemed us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; one day Jesus will come back for us).

**POINT TO MAKE:** The gospel is more than a story from two thousand years ago. The story of the gospel affects our story today. It answers the 5 W's and 1 H we all wonder about: WHAT is the purpose of life? WHO am I? WHEN will my life get simpler? WHERE can I find answers to the big questions of life? WHY are there so many problems in the world? HOW can I know God?

We are all looking for answers to those questions. Good news! The gospel answers the big questions that a newspaper can't.

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## News Story

**THE 5 W'S AND 1 H:**  
Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

**YOU REPORT:**

Who are you? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you look like? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you live? \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you glad to be alive? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you plan on making a difference? \_\_\_\_\_

**Jefferson County Man Finds Artifacts**

Last weekend, Tom Davis planned on getting a start on a new fencerow at his farm just off Highway 92. He never planned on finding a box of artifacts and becoming a local celebrity.

"It's the craziest thing. One posthole, I hit something that sounded hollow. When I got it out of the ground there was a box containing jars, trinkets, and some tools. Dr. Hall from the college came, and I've never seen a guy so excited about a box of old junk," said Davis . . .

Every news story answers the 5 W's and 1 H. So does the story of the gospel. On the most basic level, the gospel is news. It is the story of God and us. It is the most important news story you will ever hear.

"The gospel is the one story that makes sense of every story of every person who ever lived." – Paul Tripp

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## SPECIAL REPORT (40 minutes)

The gospel story is often divided into four parts. The bulk of this section will look at these four parts more closely.

**POINT 1:** The story of the gospel starts with God. He created. He spoke. He created everything you see (and even you) for His glory and His joy. Romans 1:20 says that creation reveals God's power and divine nature. Every person, every mountain, every ocean, and every beautiful sunset was created to glorify God.

**DISCUSS:** Have the students fill in the 5 W's and 1 H of creation in their guides. Here's some help to get you started: Who created? God. What did He create? Everything, including you and me. When? Genesis says in the beginning. Where? In the heavens and the earth. Why? For His glory and joy. How? By speaking, He created everything from nothing.

**POINT 2:** While God created everything perfect and for His glory, Adam and Eve sinned. We refer to that act as the Fall. His creation rebelled against Him, and His perfect world no longer existed. Now sin, death, pain, fear, shame, guilt, and all sorts of evil entered God's creation.

**DISCUSS:** Go through the 5 W's and 1 H of Adam and Eve's sin from Genesis 3. Have them write the answers in their guides. Also, have a student read the "Because of the Fall" list.

**ILLUSTRATION:** The story of *Frankenstein* was written in 1818 by Mary Shelley. The story is about a man, Victor Frankenstein, who creates a living being. (Today most people think of the monster as Frankenstein, but it's the name of the scientist.) He made his monster bigger than regular men because he could not re-create all the small parts. Frankenstein abandons his monster, and it becomes angry. The monster turns against his creator and tries to track him down and kill him and everyone close to him. The story ends in sadness as both Frankenstein and his monster die.

**DISCUSS:** Why would a creature turn against its creator? How are the monster's actions like those of humans'? What do you think God thinks as He looks towards a world that has turned on Him and largely rejects Him?

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### SPECIAL REPORT

The gospel story has four main parts:

**1. Creation (Genesis 1:27)**

Who created? \_\_\_\_\_

What did He create? \_\_\_\_\_

When did He create? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did He create? \_\_\_\_\_

How did He create? \_\_\_\_\_

"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

"The gospel begins and ends with what God is, not what we want or think we need."  
– Tom Houston

**2. Fall (Genesis 3:6-7)**

Who fell? \_\_\_\_\_

What did they do? \_\_\_\_\_

When did they do it? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

How did they fall? \_\_\_\_\_

**BECAUSE OF THE FALL, WE NOW HAVE . . .**

<input type="checkbox"/> Sin	<input type="checkbox"/> Shame
<input type="checkbox"/> Suffering	<input type="checkbox"/> Pain
<input type="checkbox"/> Death	<input type="checkbox"/> Lying
<input type="checkbox"/> Disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Sadness
<input type="checkbox"/> Wrath	<input type="checkbox"/> Hell

Ever wonder why you have so much trouble in your life?  
Ever wonder why there is so much pain and sadness around?  
It's because of the Fall.

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**POINT 3:** *Redemption* and *redeem* are terms we rarely use today. Sometimes you'll hear someone say they will "redeem" a coupon or gift certificate. The word means to buy back or to exchange. In the Bible, it means that Christ came to earth to bring God's creation back to Him for His glory. The price was the highest price imaginable: the death of the Son of God. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus bought back creation.

**READ:** Read through the verses and quotes and discuss each.

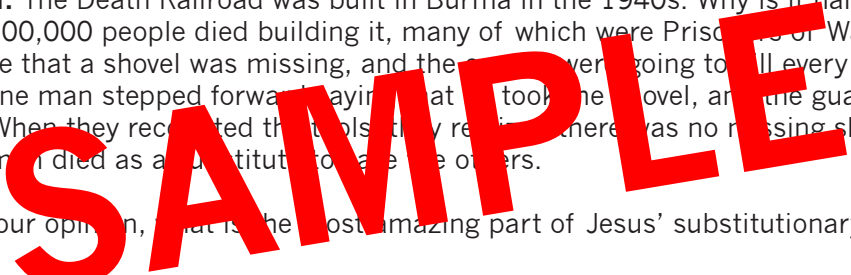
**ILLUSTRATION:** The Death Railroad was built in Burma in the 1940s. Why is it named that? Because over 100,000 people died building it, many of which were Prisoners of War. A story is told of a time that a shovel was missing, and the men were going to kill every person in the group. One man stepped forward saying that he took the shovel, and the guards beat him to death. When they rechecked the tools they realized there was no missing shovel. This innocent man died as a substitute to save the others.

**DISCUSS:** In your opinion, what is the most amazing part of Jesus' substitutionary death?

**POINT TO MAKE:** God redeemed us through the most incredible event imaginable. Jesus, God's Son, came to earth to die in our place. He was our substitute, which is what is meant by substitutionary atonement. God poured out His righteous anger for sin onto Jesus instead of us. The Father turned His back on Jesus, when it should have been you and me. And Jesus died a horrible death instead of us. He was our substitute. But the story ends with Jesus coming back to life, proving the redemption was complete.

**POINT 4:** The happiness and peace in the Garden of Eden is gone because of the Fall, but it began to be recovered with the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, and will be fully restored when Jesus returns. Restoration is about the future and getting God's creation back to the place where it is glorifying Him once again.

**DISCUSS:** Read Greear's quote. How is restoration a bigger goal than just rescuing people?



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### 3. Redemption (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

Redeem: to buy back, to get something back, to exchange

Who redeemed us? \_\_\_\_\_

What did He do? \_\_\_\_\_

When did He do it? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did He redeem us? \_\_\_\_\_

How did He redeem us? \_\_\_\_\_

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit."  
- 1 Peter 3:18

"The gospel is not 'God loves us,' but 'God loves us at the cost of his Son.'"  
- Derek Thomas

"The heart of the gospel is redemption, and the essence of redemption is the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ." - Charles Spurgeon

### 4. Restoration (Revelation 21:1-4)

Who will restore everything? \_\_\_\_\_

What will He do? \_\_\_\_\_

When will this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Where will this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Why will He restore everything? \_\_\_\_\_

How will He restore everything? \_\_\_\_\_

"The whole point of God's work is not simply to rescue people out of the earth, but to actually restore the earth to its glorified state." - J. D. Greear

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## THAT'S A WRAP (10 minutes)

**QUICK RECAP:** Point out the chart on the student page. Review what is meant by the terms *creation*, *fall*, *redemption* and *restoration*. Make sure the students understand the story of a perfect creation which glorified God and the close relationship humans had with God, and that how humans chose to rebel against God's glory, and how through the substitution of His own Son Jesus, God has redeemed and is restoring creation. The gospel is that story of what all God has done.

**SIMPLE IDEAS TO APPLY:** Briefly go over these ideas and discuss each. These will be more carefully explained and applied throughout the rest of the study.

- We were created to bring glory to God.
- Our biggest problem is the sin that separates us from the God who created and loves us.
- Jesus' life, death, and resurrection solve our greatest problem.
- We can have hope because Jesus has redeemed us and is restoring the world.

**QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT:** Give the students a few minutes to silently answer the questions in their guides. Then ask for individuals to share. Go through the questions one at a time asking for students to share answers as they are comfortable. You share too!

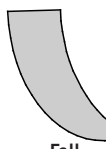
**CLOSING:** Sum up that the gospel is a story of perfect creation, humans rebelling against God, and all that God did to buy back and bring back His creation. Say a closing prayer, praising God for the glory He has shown through His creation and thanking Him for His mercy and grace in saving sinners and restoring his creation.

SAMPLE

### THAT'S A WRAP

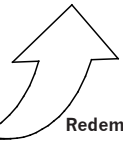
**QUICK RECAP:**

Creation



Fall

Restoration



Redemption

**SIMPLE IDEAS TO APPLY:**

- We were created to bring glory to God.
- Our biggest problem is the sin that separates us from the God who created us.
- Jesus' life, death, and resurrection solved our greatest problem.
- We can have hope because Jesus has redeemed us and is restoring the world.

**QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT:**

1. Name one reason you believe God created the world. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name two ways you can see the effects of the Fall in your life. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name three words to describe the fact that Jesus loved the world so much, He came to earth, died, and rose again to save it. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Name four things that excite you about heaven and God's restored creation. \_\_\_\_\_

"In [a biblical] perspective, the gospel appears as creation, fall, redemption, restoration. It brings out the purpose of salvation, namely, a renewed creation."  
- Gospel Coalition's Theological Vision for Ministry

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