

## What's the Message – Lesson One

### STANDARD OPENING

#### Opening Music up, then fade behind . . .

ANNCR: Lamb of God Education Ministries presents . . .

#### Music briefly, then fade behind . . .

What's the Message?

#### Music up, then fade behind . . .

### New Text

ANNCR: 1. Today's study is our first lesson in this new series, and is entitled . . . God is.

#### Music concludes

NARATR: 2. Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Savior. May the Lord bless you through this study, and give you comfort, peace, and the strength to deal with the troubles we all face in our everyday life. Amen.

3. Welcome to a new series of studies that will present the major themes of the Bible, and will focus on emphasizing the message that the words on the page are attempting to communicate to you. In other words, after you read a section of the Bible, ask yourself the question: "what's the message?" What should I learn from this, and how should it affect my life?

That's what we will try to accomplish in this series.

4. Since this is a study of the Bible, it seems that the logical place to start is at the beginning. And so, if you would, please, open your Bible to Genesis, and read along with me in chapter one, verse one:

5. *In the beginning, God . . .* Now, stop right there. Those four words are profound, and contain several lessons for us even before we go any further into the text.

6. The person to first record these words was a Hebrew, and Hebrew thought patterns and speech are very different from our Western, Greek-oriented practices. We are accustomed to speaking in abstract terms, and talking about concepts as the ancient Greek philosophers like Plato did. But the Hebrew spoke in absolute terms. He doesn't begin with vague discussions of forces or powers, he begins with a statement of absolute fact: God is!

7. No uncertainty. No maybes. No doubts. God is real. An absolute fact. And He created this world in which we live. We can be confident in that.

8. Next, take a look at the first three words, "In the beginning". What beginning is being referred to here? Since we hold that God is eternal, without beginning or end, this must refer to the work of creation. And it establishes a time for this to happen. There was a starting point.

9. Now, time is a dimension of our lives on this earth, just as much as we see and live in three structural dimensions. We are constrained by those dimensions, and cannot comprehend any other way for things to be. But God is not so constrained. He exists outside our concept of time.

10. What else do these opening verses of Genesis tell us about the Creator-God, whom the Hebrews knew by the name of Yahweh?

11. Well, first in verse 2 we read . . . *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.* Then in verse 26 of chapter one, we read: *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . .* We Christians see these two statements as a clear reference to The Trinity, as is then reinforced by St. John in the opening verses of his Gospel:

12. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

13. Now those are a few points that we can establish just in these opening words of Genesis. But what is the message? Teacher, what is it saying to us today?

TEACHR: 14. First, God is not some hypothetical “perhaps.” He is real. He is!!! He has always existed, and will always continue to be there. He is eternal.

15. Second, in these opening verses of Genesis we start to learn about our God and Creator, that He exists as the Trinity. We shall learn more about Yahweh in the coming lessons, but the fundamental thing these verses should establish in us is a comforting assurance and confidence that He is always there for us, no matter what challenges life might bring our way. He is so powerful that He can create a universe out of nothing but His Word, and He is powerful enough to bring us to Himself in His eternal kingdom. May God comfort you with these thoughts, and when you pray, pray with boldness . . . for God is able to do far more than we ask.

**Music up, then fade behind . . .**

NARATR: 16. Our next lesson will delve further into what this Creator has done, and what He intends for us to learn.

## STANDARD CLOSE

ANNCR: 17. This series has been developed and written by our director of teacher training, Mr. D. A. Senter, and is copyrighted by Lamb of God Lutheran Church in Flower Mound, Texas. Your narrator is Dale Gaus.

### Music up, then fade behind . . .

17. For additional study aids and information, go to log.org and click on \_\_\_\_\_ , call \_\_\_\_\_ , or send us a question about this study at \_\_\_\_\_ .

### Music up and concludes

## Study Aids

### Discussion Questions and Suggested Readings for “What’s the Message?” Lessons

#### Lesson One

##### Questions:

A Harris Poll in November 2006 reported that, although the United States is generally thought of as a Christian nation, 42% of all U.S. adults said they are not absolutely certain there is a God. Even among those who described themselves as either Christian or Jewish, only 76% of Protestants, 64% of Catholics, and 30% of Jews said they are “absolutely certain” there is a God. This is a decline of 8 percentage points since a similar poll taken just three years ago.

Discuss why you believe that God is real, eternal, and cares for you. How can you be certain?

Have you ever had someone say to you that the only scientifically-based and accurate basis for teaching the origin of the universe in schools is the theory of evolution? How did you respond to that person? Did you point out that the theory of evolution begins with the assumption of some initial source of matter, and ask him/her “where did that matter come from?” Or, that this assumption can not be defended as a point of scientific fact, and requires faith to believe it, which removes the theory from the field of science and replaces it into the field of philosophy?

If you have not had such a conversation with an evolutionist, what do you think their response might be?

Suggested Reading for further study:

**Creation vs. Evolution**, by Michael L. McCoy, from CPH and Amazon.com. This is an entry level book that incorporates science, literature, and philosophy along with the words of Scripture. Suitable for both private and small group study.