

# NEW CREATION:

THE WORLD, THE GOSPEL, AND THE MISSION OF GOD



**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation  
has come: The old has gone, the new is here!  
- 2 Corinthians 5:17**



**God creates out of nothing. Wonderful you say. Yes,  
to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful:  
he makes saints out of sinners.  
- Søren Kierkegaard**

# HOW DOES THIS WORK?

*New Creation* is an 8-week devotional and study.

Each week, a brief devotional will be sent out in a newsletter containing reflections and prayers for the following week's reading. These messages will also reference questions that will be discussed in small group discussion.

SIGN-UP FOR THE NEW CREATION NEWSLETTER BY SCANNING THIS QR CODE. 



## NEW CREATION *8-Week Reading Plan*

### I: THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

WEEK 1 | *GENESIS 1*

WEEK 2 | *GENESIS 2*

WEEK 3 | *PSALM 130*

WEEK 4 | *ISAIAH 9:2-7*

### II. THE WORLD AS IT IS BECOMING

WEEK 5 | *JOHN 1:1-18*

WEEK 6 | *COLOSSIANS 3:1-17*

WEEK 7 | *2 CORINTHIANS 5:11-21*

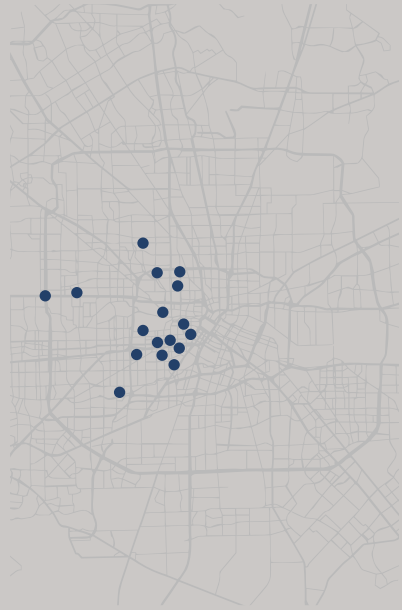
WEEK 8 | *REVELATION 22:1-11*

**“GOD CREATED.”**  
**SCRIPTURE’S FIRST AND LAST NOTE.**

**W**E all likely know these famous words that begin the Bible: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). But keep reading, and you’ll see something about what that means: “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” (Gen. 1:2). The first act of God the Creator is to lend form to formlessness, and of course to bring light into the darkness.

In the gospels, John mirrors this language by picturing Christ as this same Word, which appears to be the “light of all mankind” (Jn. 1:4). And at the end of the Bible, in Revelation, we are told of the ultimate destiny of man: “There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 22:5). Christ carries out the conquest of light that began *in the beginning*: a progressive creative act that started with the first breaking of light in Genesis, was extended through the light that is Jesus Christ, and will one day complete its triumph in the “end of night” promised in the pages of Revelation.

This devotional is designed to help find and pull the thread of this divine creative agency through the entire story of scripture, beginning in Genesis, tracking through the imagery of the Psalms, culminating in the re-creative power of the gospel, and concluding with the vision of “the new heavens and the new earth” (Rev. 21:1). We hope you will discover a cohesive narrative of God’s intended redemption of not simply the spiritual realm, but also of the entire physical, bodily order. One of the distinctives of the gospel is that *matter matters*. God does not intend to leave this world behind to begin anew, but to indeed “make *everything* new” (Rev. 21:5).



## THE COMING CLIMATE. THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH.

THE subject of climate change looms large in present-day conversations about politics, environment, and generational conflict. Recent surveys have repeatedly found that Millennial and Gen Z respondents list climate change and climate-related water issues as the most troubling subjects of their time. While these views are not always shared by all demographics, studies conducted by Gallup and Pew have begun to note that these views *are* shared across the full range of political opinion within younger generations, both “right” and “left.”

Why would this be? We live in what some regard as the most divided moment in contemporary U.S. social and political history, and yet, we are watching a convergence of concerns around the subject of the earth’s future. Would it surprise you to learn that the authors of the Bible, while having a different language of expression, worried and wondered about *these same things*?

“Hope, for the Christian, is not wishful thinking or mere blind optimism. It is a mode of knowing, a mode within which new things are possible, options are not shut down, new creation can happen.” – N. T. Wright

What is going to happen to this time and place? What is God’s plan with not only the people, but the entire universe that he created, in part, to contain these lives and histories? In John’s vision from Revelation, he records and reveals God’s final ambition for this stage of history: that he intends to save and salvage this world from all of the products and consequences of the Fall. Dialing into the Bible’s vision for the historical and natural redemption of this place—what theologians call “eschatology,” or study of last things—will hopefully help cultivate a common language that helps animate these important conversations about this earth, God’s Kingdom, and our place in it.



## THE ALREADY-BUT-NOT-YET. OUR PART TO PLAY.

THE great New Testament scholar N. T. Wright insists that we have an instrumental role to play in constructing this new creation—because we ourselves *are* new creations in Christ. Says Wright,

You are not oiling the wheels of a machine that’s about to roll over a cliff. You are not restoring a great painting that’s shortly going to be thrown on the fire. You are not planting roses in a garden that’s about to be dug up for a building site. You are—strange though it may seem, almost as hard to believe as the resurrection itself—accomplishing something that will become in due course part of God’s new world. Every act of love, gratitude, and kindness; every work of art or music inspired by the love of God and delight in the beauty of his creation ... all of this will find its way, through the resurrecting power of God, into the new creation that God will one day make.<sup>[1]</sup>

This is, as the Apostle Paul would say, “a great mystery” (Eph. 5:32). How can it be that God is sovereign and in control and yet still employs us

“The new birth is the power that God is going to use to regenerate the world, brought into your present.”

– Tim Keller

as agents of his transformative, redemptive work? The cynic might say, “He doesn’t need us.” The naïve might say, “God needs us.” The truth lies somewhere in between. This study is

an attempt to sort out, or at least ponder, that great mystery: namely, what part do we have to play in bringing God’s Kingdom of love and grace to bear upon a world that often seems so short of both love and grace.

Join us in this eight-week sojourn across the scriptures, resting in the wonder of creation and the yet greater wonder of the new creation God promises to secure—and is, in fact, already at work securing *here and now*.



<sup>[1]</sup> N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 208.

## Small Groups at City Church Winter 2025

**Please Consider Engaging, or Reengaging, with Small Groups at City Church this Year!**

We have locations all over Houston that meet at different times each week.

Our City Groups are small- to medium-sized groups that meet regularly to share in the life of the gospel, and our Focus Groups are more intimate Bible studies or special topic groups designed for those looking to go deeper in relationship and application of God's Word in their lives.

SCAN HERE TO FILL OUT A  
SMALL GROUP INTEREST FORM



SCAN HERE TO LEARN  
MORE ABOUT OUR SMALL GROUPS



### HOW ELSE CAN I ENGAGE WITH CITY CHURCH THIS YEAR?

Please check out one of calendar of events we have lined up for this winter!

Sat, Jan 11 | Church-wide Social

Sun, Jan 12 | City Youth Kick-Off: Lunch + Ice Skating

Sun, Jan 12 | City Kids Family Lunch

Sun, Feb 2 | Church Lunch

Sat, Feb 8 | City Youth Fuente Food Pantry Service Day

Sun, Feb 9 | City Kids Love & Lunch

Sun, Mar 2 | Subjects that Matter Lunch

Wed, Mar 5 | Ash Wednesday

Thur, Mar 27 | City Church Arts Alliance Classical Concert



[citychurch.org](http://citychurch.org)