

**Group Study on Miracle of Life**

*What you will need:*

* A print out of this document
* A Bible

*Read aloud the following excerpt and use your Bible to look up the passages cited in the text*

All creation is wondrous. From the vast grandeur of galaxies and solar systems, to the beauty of the Coral Reef or Uluru, creation speaks of the One who creates. The Psalmists often sing praises to God for His incredible workmanship in creation: *“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”* (Psalm 19:1)

And then there is the miracle of life, including the human race. We often wonder when we consider God’s heavens how humans fit into the scheme of things (Psalm 8:3-4). Our lives can seem to pale in insignificance compared to the expansive universe, or seem trivial when we are chomping on a packet of Twisties watching TV.

But God says we humans are made a little lower than the angels, are crowned with glory and majesty, and are made to rule over all creation (Psalm 8:5).

How can this be?

God said*: “Let us make humankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth”* (Genesis 1:26). The miracle of human life holds great mystery and wonder. So much so, many generations of scientists and philosophers have been led to ponder and study even the tiniest workings of human life.

In Psalm 139 David marvels at his own bodily creation. Knitted together in his mother’s womb, he appreciates that his life was fearfully and wonderfully made. Even though hidden from sight, God saw his unformed body and planned out all his days. It is like this for all of us. And since God is love (1 John 4:8) and His creation is a display of that love, He made us so we can enjoy these blessings and love Him.

All this seems all the more incredible when we think upon the potential held in a miniscule embryo, just moments after fertilization takes place. At that moment, as sperm penetrates egg and begins rapid division of cells, a new life commences. In the smallness of that embryo lies all the information required for a complete human being capable of loving God, all creation and others. We all began our lives as embryos.

*Discussion questions*

* Which part of creation fascinates you? Sunsets? Volcanoes? The circulatory system? How do you see God at work in these things? How does knowing God created them help you to appreciate them?
* God said that creation was good – that is to say it was doing what it was meant to be doing. He has purpose for you too. What do you think this purpose is at present?
* How are we meant to love? Look up 1 John 4:7-21 to see what God means when He says He is love and how we reflect that with our lives.
* Is it strange to think of an egg and a sperm as having all of the necessary information for an entire life? In these miniscule things, God has made great purpose (Psalm 139) and He knows what He is doing. Does knowing that God has planned for you and cares about you (Matt 10:29-31) change how you think about yourself? Why or why not? Can it affect your life?

*Close with prayer*

*Optional further research/viewing/reading:*

* Youtube video: ‘FERTILISATION: How human life begins’: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNY6Gagxvl4>
* Youtube video: Life in the womb (conception to 9 months in 4 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7kaw40pPYw>
* Youtube video: Real Photography of the journey from a sperm to human baby (compilation of photos by Swedish photographer Lennart Nilsson): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OD1gW88Lm-Y>
* Youtube video: 9 months in the womb: Fetal development through ultrasound: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WH9ZJu4wRUE>
* Book: ‘*Bioethics: A Primer*’ by Lutheran bioethicist Gilbert Meilaender (2005). See pages 118-119.