



SOMETHING VERY GOOD

Preparation: You will need a boxed cake mix and the necessary supplies to make a cake, spread icing onto it, and decorate it with a variety of edible and non-edible toppings.

PRAYER

Open Up to God Together

Take turns praying out loud:

Parent: *God, we're starting something together today that we want to make the most of. We want to begin by first expressing appreciation for you for who you are and thanking you for all that you've given us.*

Preteen: *God, a problem is that we feel limited at times in what we know of you. You reveal yourself in the Bible to be good, loving, graceful, and wise. You also are creative, care about all people, know what real justice is, and understand things that we could never begin to understand.*

Parent: *We want to faithfully work to understand, however. So thank you, God, that you are bigger than what we can possibly comprehend and yet personal and intimate enough that you gave us the Bible and your Holy Spirit for us to know you deeply. Instead of resisting you, we desire to open our hearts to your love, our minds to your truth, our souls to your presence, and our strength for your service and mission.*

Preteen: *We also ask, God, that you will begin to speak through each of us into one another's lives. Please use this ongoing experience to strengthen our family and help us all know, love, and serve you more faithfully than we ever have. We ask this in your Son, Jesus', name. Amen!*

SCRIPTURE

Dive into God's Story Together

Read Genesis 1:1–2:3 in its entirety. Consider taking turns reading the various sections of this text.

Look through the passage again, this time pausing after each of these verses to ask one or more of these questions:

- 1:1-2: What do you imagine God was feeling at the end of verse 2?
- 1:3-4: The sun or moon hasn't yet been created—so do you think these verses mean God created actual light and dark or simply the notion of light and dark as a particular metaphor?
- 1:6-10: How different do you think the land, sky, and waters looked without any living creatures, grass, plants, or trees on or in them?
- 1:11-13: This is the first instance of something being created that can reproduce. Why do you think that God invented this idea of something being able to naturally make something else?
- 1:14-19: Think about how many stars were created in the time that these verses summarize. Yet God seems primarily focused on earth. How does that make you feel, that out of the beauty and creativity in the whole universe, God is genuinely focused on us as a people?
- 1:20-25: Every day creation gets more and more complex. Now there are living creatures that are given more choices than the grass and trees created earlier. God seems to be building things up right before making humans. Why do you think God didn't just make humans first?
- 1:26-2:3: What might it have been like for Adam and Eve to take in all the creativity God had put forth and realize it was for them?

Scan the verses one last time, taking note of any time you see the word “good.” Discuss why God took the time to appreciate what was made.

EXPERIENCE

Do Something Practical Together

Take a look at the picture of the cake on your cake mix box. Talk about if it looks “good” or not, and why. Make sure to take note of the fact that you're looking only at a picture.

Pour the contents of the cake mix out into a bowl and look at it. Talk about if it's easy or difficult to imagine it becoming a cake. Does it look "good" yet? Taste the powdery mix.

Stir in the ingredients that the mix requires to become batter. Again, discuss if it seems like a cake yet. Note that all of the necessary ingredients are there, so is it officially a "cake"? One last time, taste it and determine if it's "good."

Bake the cake, and clean up your supplies and workspace as you wait. Get your icing and other toppings ready to prepare for the cake to come out. Try one of the toppings. Is it "good"?

Take the cake out of the oven and decide if you want to try it as it is or wait until you decorate it. Have fun determining how you'll decorate the cake. For instance, decide if you'll come up with one scheme to decorate the whole cake or split it and each of you decorate different sides.

Take a digital picture of what you made together, and text it to neighbors or share it online with a message such as "We made this together and are willing to share. There are only so many pieces to go around, so if you want one let us know. First come, first served." Finally, taste and enjoy what you made together.

DEBRIEF

Process What You Experienced Together

Consider the scripture:

- What did you realize about God from what we read?
- What did you realize about humanity from what we read?
- What did you realize about life from what we read?

Consider the activity:

- We went through every stage of creating a cake: picturing it, preparing it, mixing it, baking it, and decorating it. Which stage was your favorite? Why?
- How did the cake taste—"good" or "very good"?
- What did it feel like to take a picture of what we made and share it with others?
- Would you rather keep all of this cake or share it? Why?

Consider it all together:

- How might this experience help you better understand God as Creator?
- Think about all the feelings you had in this experience. How might they be similar or different than what God felt after creating the world, everything in it, and humanity?
- God was with you as you went through every step of creating the cake. Did you realize it?
- Out of all the things you did with the cake, think about when you felt "This is good" versus "This is very good." What made the difference?
- How is sharing something with others that you find good a very good idea?

SUMMARY

It seems that most people think of God as a big, deep voice who spoke creation into existence rather than one who enjoys creation while making each part unfold. When we create something and enjoy the creative process, we reflect the image of God more than we may even realize. This is furthered even more so when we share what we've created with others, making that which was good "very good."

JOURNAL

Write Out Your Takeaway Together

Today we . . .

One favorite memory of this time is . . .

Some of the blessings God provided for us to be able to do today are . . .

A few things we realized about God together are . . .

One question this raises about God, life, or faith that we'll look into this week is . . .