These notes give guidance on how to lead the group through the questions and discussion. You may want to begin by asking if there was anything that particularly struck people as they watched the video. However, it would be wise to limit this part of the discussion to ten minutes at most.

Read Genesis 1.1-10, 1.24-31, 2.8-10 and 2.15.

Question 1
The description of how God made man is rather different from the description of how He made everything else. In what ways? What does that show us about ourselves?

There are a number of ways in which God’s creation of mankind is uniquely special.

1  God speaks with Himself before making mankind. He’s not recorded as doing this at any other point in creation. That suggests that we humans are very special.
2  God speaks to mankind. And after God blesses humanity, we read: “And God said to them, . . .”. God relates to them.
3  God made us in His image. We are like God in many ways. We’ll look in more detail about being in God’s image next session.
4  God gave mankind a vocation. Only humans are explicitly given a ‘job’ to do. Adam and Eve were called to be “fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (1.28, see Psalm 8.6-8). And in Genesis 2.15, we read, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it”. We’ll explore mankind’s vocation in more detail in our next session.

Read Revelation 21.1-4 and Revelation 22.1-5.

Question 2
What things do you find in the passages in Genesis that we’ve read and also in these passages in Revelation?

1  Heaven and Earth. In Genesis, God creates Heaven and Earth (Genesis 1.1). In Revelation He creates a New Heaven and a New Earth (Revelation 21.1).
2  Light. In the beginning, God created light (Genesis 1.3-5). In the New Creation, God is its light (Revelation 22.5, see also 21.22-24).
3  A river. There’s a river watering the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2.10). In Revelation there’s another river. It flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Revelation 22.1).
4  The tree of life. There’s a tree of life in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2.9). In Revelation 22.2 we see what seems like a whole grove of trees of life on either bank of the river.

The Bible as a drama
Before going on to discuss Question 3, explain to the group what a drama is. You could mention examples of current or recent TV dramas (such as Poldark or Downton Abbey). A drama is a story. It has a beginning and an end, and a plotline running through it. A good drama progresses towards a climax. It holds your attention, grips your emotions and arouses your interest; you encounter unexpected circumstances or events along the way, and you don’t quite know how things will work out until the very end. There may well be twists in the plot - events or circumstances that completely change the picture, that turn the tables in an unexpected way.

Explain to the group that the Bible story is a drama. One writer, Bernard Bell, explains: “The Bible is like a
mystery novel. In a well-written mystery, the reader doesn't learn 'whodunit' until the last page of the book, but then he realizes that everything written in the rest of the book leads up to that final page. The seemingly insignificant details turn out to be not insignificant at all. So it is with the Bible. Everything leads up to the end of the story, which we are given in Revelation 21-22."

As we saw in the video, the Bible is a drama in four acts — the good, the bad, the new and the perfect. In the beginning, God's world was good. But a catastrophe occurred. However was God going to sort out this mess? The whole of the rest of the Bible tells us how He did this. In the end we see a perfect world.

Question 3
Our series of videos will trace the whole Bible drama from beginning to end. Do you think that seeing the Bible as a drama will help you? If so, in what ways?

As the leader, you may want to share one or more of these quotations.

Roger Forster and Paul Marston said in their book 'God's Strategy in Human History': "...we find it tremendously exciting to be able to grasp a little of God's purposes in history. It enables us to see the whole movement of which we are a tiny part, and the whole history into which our lives fit. Day by day we begin to discover how our actions, our sufferings, and our attitudes have repercussions for eternity; we realise the great future destiny God has in store for His children."

Someone who attended a course like this one some years ago wrote: "I have found it extremely useful to link the whole of the bible together. We 'dip' in here and there usually and I have learnt a lot of the bible stories etc. over the 49 years of hearing them but it was really good to get the overall picture of how they connect and to see God's plan working through it all from the beginning to our future."

Bernard Bell writes: "Psychologists know that a sense of purpose is essential to emotional and psychological health. We look for...an overarching story that makes sense of all of the little stories of our lives." As we learned in the video, we can only really make sense of our individual lives in the context of God's great Story, the Story we read in the Bible.