

Lesson 8

God Wants Us to Care for the Earth

Objective

Students will understand that God wants us to care for the world He created. Students will be able to give examples of ways they can care for what God has blessed them with.

Supplies

Teachers and/or Coordinators ensure supplies are ready prior to each class.

Print from the Site:

- Earth Puzzle – printed on white Cardstock paper – (1 per student)
- Maze Activity Sheet – (1 per student)
- Name Ways to Take Care of God's Creation Page (1 per student)

Items to Bring from Previous Lesson Plan:

- Attendance Chart
- Stickers (for attendance)

Other Items to Bring:

- Bible (Yours and enough for each student to have one)
- Pens/Pencils/Crayons/Pencil Crayons
- Scissors (1 for each student)

Optional Supplies:

- Snack – Fruit and/or Vegetable Slices
- Sandwich baggies to put puzzle pieces in after kids cut the puzzle out – one per student
- Sharpie pen to put each child's name on the sandwich baggie – to share

Teacher Tips:

- ★ See Lesson Plan 1 for tips on how to keep the classroom engaged.

1) Introduction to Lesson – Why We Care for God’s World 10 minutes

As students enter, welcome them and help find a chair to sit at. Thank them for coming. Take attendance (using attendance chart supplied). Hand out a Bible to each student.

Review with kids that; **Last week we learned that God created the world and that everything in it was good including God himself.**

Today we are going to look at the importance of taking care of God’s creation – the earth! Can anyone tell me, why taking care of the world we live in is important? (Keeps us healthy, helps the animals and birds, shows respect for God’s creation, God asks us to.)

Because we are created in His image, God gave men and women a privileged place among all creatures and commanded them to be responsible over the earth. Let’s see this by turning to Genesis 1:26-28. (Read **Genesis 1:26-28**).

God says we are responsible for taking care of the world. We are to manage the resources God has given us, using care, love and protection. This is seen in the Old Testament where God commanded that the fields and vineyards would be sown and harvested for six years, then left untouched for the seventh year in order to replenish the soil's nutrients, to rest the land, to feed the animals and the poor, and to ensure food for the future. (Read **Exodus 23:10-11; Leviticus 25:1-7**).

Does God expect us to take care of the earth? Yes.

Does He have ways in the Bible that teach how to do that? Yes.

Let’s read Leviticus 26:3-4 and Numbers 35:33-34. Turn to the beginning of your Bibles. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers.... Follow along as I read:

God say: *"If you follow my statutes and keep my commandments and observe them faithfully, I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit."* (Leviticus 26:3-4)

"You shall not pollute the land in which you live.... You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also live..." (Numbers 35:33-34)

What will God do if we follow Him and keep His commandments? (Bless us with good land and rain)

In Numbers, what does God command the Israelites? (Don't pollute or destroy the land! Keep it clean!)

In addition to our role of caretakers, we are to appreciate the earth and its beauty. God has placed on this planet everything needed to feed, clothe, and house the billions of people who live here. All the resources He has provided for our needs are renewable, and He continues to provide the sun and rain necessary to keep those resources going. And if this were not enough, He has also decorated the planet with color and beauty! We should be doing what we can to take care of God's creation. We need to care for God's earth!

2) Earth Puzzle

15 minutes

Before class, print out one puzzle for each child on white cardstock. Have kids sit around the table and hand out puzzle, scissors, and crayons or pencil crayons.

Explain to the kids:

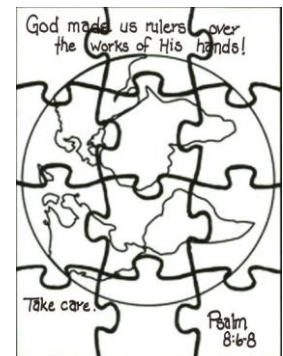
In the Bible it talks about God giving us a role in His creation. Let's all turn in our Bibles or share if you need to and go to the book of Psalms. We need Psalms Chapter 8. This was written by King David.

Let's all read this together, follow along as I read. (Read entire **Psalm 8:1-9**) Then say, **let's look at verses 6-8 again, it says that God made us rule over the works of His hands.**

Question:

What are some of the things God made during creation? (Animals, birds, fish, mountains, rivers, lakes, etc.) **So we need to rule or care for these things carefully.**

To help us remember, we have a puzzle of the earth. If we don't take care of the earth, it can become broken, dirty, and not well cared for. But if we put it together carefully, we have a nice picture of the whole earth and a nice world to live in when we take care of it. And to help us remember this verse, it is put on the puzzle to see that God wants us to care for His creation! Let's color the earth, put our names on it, then we will carefully cut out the puzzle pieces and then see who can put their puzzle back together again!

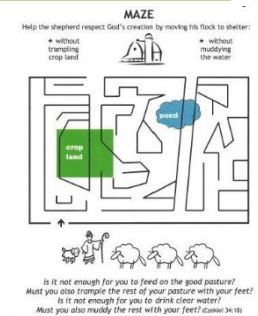


Help kids color, cut and put back their puzzles. You may want some sandwich baggies to put their puzzle pieces in. Write their name in Sharpie pen on the bag, so they can take it home and not lose the pieces. Talk about different ways we can care for God's wonderful and good creation. (Examples may be: grow organic foods, don't use chemicals, clean up the lakes and neighborhoods, pick up garbage, recycle, help animals, fish and birds by adopting ones in need, rather than buying pets from a store, ride a bike instead of using a car, help others in need, share our food and clothes, etc.) Encourage the kids to clean up before moving on to the next activity.

3) Activity Sheet – Maze

5-10 minutes

Hand out sheet to each child. If children are younger, you may want to only give the maze sheet and have them color the picture when they are done going through the maze. The older children can do the Crack the Code and/or Quiz activity. Hand out crayons or pencil crayons as well and ask each child to put their name on the front of the first page of each sheet.



Read each page aloud as you go through and help the children do the activity. Have Bibles ready to help them look up the verses being discussed.

As you wrap up, say **“the Bible is concerned about the environment. In fact, of all people, Christians should be the most concerned for the environment.**

Why is this? The reason is because Christians know God created the world, and we are the earth's caretakers. The very first verse of the Bible says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). When we see the world as a gift from God, we will do our best to take care of it and use it wisely, instead of poisoning or destroying it.

We don't worship the earth; instead, we realize that God gave it to us, and we are accountable to Him for how we use it. After creating Adam, the first man, the Bible says, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15). God told him and us to watch over the earth and use it wisely. Like a good ruler, we should seek the best of everything God entrusts to us -- including His Creation. And that includes taking care of each other as well since we too, are God's creation. Yes, we should take care of the environment. But most of all, we should take care of our souls.

Is Christ the center of your life, and are you seeking to live for Him every day? If not, start now!

4) Ways We Care Activity Sheet

10 minutes

Remember, God has blessed us with His wonderful creation; it is our job to take care of it and respect the world that God has made. I am going to hand out a piece of paper to everyone, please put your name somewhere on the top of the page. I will also hand out crayons (or get assistant to do this). The page says, ‘Can you name all the ways these people are taking care of God’s creation?’ Let’s go through these pictures together and raise your hand if you can tell me what each one is talking about:

Can you name all the ways these people are taking care of God's creation?



- 1. Man cleaning up trash** – we need to remember to help show respect for God’s creation by putting our trash in the garbage, not on the ground where it can hurt animals or wreck the plants or grass around it, or end up in the ocean or rivers.
- 2. Man planting seeds** – by planting our own food, we help enrich the soil with nutrients, we help by providing food for our families and for birds and animals that also nibble on the good food we plant. We can respect God’s creation by eating foods that are made by God – not junk food that isn’t made by God.
- 3. Child riding bike** – we can walk or ride a bike. Not only is it good for the world, it is healthy and gives us exercise as well!
- 4. Three cans that are being used for recycling items instead of throwing them away.** Did you know in Canada and other countries, there are places that will take your old computers, house items, cars, etc. and reuse the parts or turn them into something else? We can all recycle and keep the world clean and pure.
- 5. Planting a tree** – trees create oxygen for the air, provides shade and shelter for animals, looks beautiful and by caring for it, shows respect for the wonderful things God has blessed us with. Try planting a fruit tree and enjoy the fruit that it brings and share that with others who don’t have access to fresh fruit.
- 6. Turning off lights and power when we aren’t using them.** Saves power, energy, and helps prevent a light from burning out quickly – which keeps them out of landfills!
- 7. Girl walking dog** – respecting God’s creation by helping animals on the earth and getting out enjoying nature. If we don’t have a pet we can volunteer to spend time at animal shelters that care for animals without a home. When we do get a pet we can tell our parents to get a dog or cat from an animal shelter rather than a breeder to ensure all the animals find a loving home rather than having more animals born when there are already so many in need.

Now let's all color the pictures! And as you color think about the ways you can respect God's creation and make the world a better place this week.

5) Optional – Snack: Fruit or Vegetable Pieces

5 minutes

“You’ve all done a great job this morning learning about God’s Creation. To help us remember, we are going to have a snack.” Hand out a few slices. Remind them that these snacks are part of God’s wonderful creation for us to enjoy and they are good! Review verses that the students looked through and ask them to tell you their favorite verse from the ones we looked at today. After snack have kids clean up.

6) Optional – Old Testament Song, Etc.

5 minutes

Practice learning Books of the Old Testament. You can sing them to the ABC Song.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges....

Days of Creation

(Tune: This Old Man)

lyrics written by Sharon Broome

On day one God made light
Made the difference in day and night
God just spoke the words and it came true
Wonder what else God will do?

On day two Split in two
Skies above the water blue
God just spoke the words and it came to be
What will happen on day three?

On day three God made land
Then he put plants in the sand
God made herbs and grass and
fruit on the tree
This was all done on day three

On day four God made lights
Some for days and some for nights
Stars are dim, but the sun and the moon are bright
Aren't you glad that God made lights

On day five God made alive
Fish for the waters and birds for the skies
All the things that swim and birds to fly
These were made on day five

On day six God did fix
Animals, mankind and even ticks
God made lizards, cats, and other things that lick
Animals were created on day six

On day seven God in heaven
Rested from all the work he'd done
He'd made the earth, the stars, the moon, and sun
It was good what God had done

7) Closing Prayer

**Ask if there are any prayer requests that kids want to share. Make a list.

Thank God that He created the world and that as we learned today, pray that we can take care of the wonderful world that God has given to us.

8) Things to Remember

Thank the children for coming.

Encourage them to share what they learned with their family.

Make sure students leave with a responsible person and take their sheets.

Thank you for serving Christ in this way!