

Lesson 9: God Wants Us to Take Care of His Animals

Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Understand that God expects us to care for His animals
- 2) Understand that God has commanded us to respect the life He has created

Accommodations: See Lesson 1 for ideas

Supplies:

- Pens/Pencils
- Bible (please bring your own)
- Crayons/Pencil Crayons
- Attendance Sheet
- Stickers – one per student for attendance
- God's Animals Activity Sheets (one for each student)

Optional Activities

- Snack: gummy worms and celery
- Napkins
- Cups with water or milk

Lesson:

1) Introduction to lesson:

5-10 minutes

As students enter, welcome them and help find a chair to sit at. Thank them for coming. Take attendance and have them sit around the table.

Say: **Today we are going to talk about animals and their importance as God's creation. We are going to look through the Bible to understand that God expects us to take care of animals as part of His wonderful creation.**

We will look at why God created animals, what is our job in caring for them, and how by us caring for animals and respecting them as special gifts from God it makes God very happy!

Why Did God create animals?

Read the following passage from Genesis focusing on the bolded words. Have the kids follow along in their Bibles as well if able.

Genesis 1:20-26

²⁰ And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that **it was good.** ²² God **blessed them** and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and **fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.**" ²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw **that it was good.**

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so **that they may rule over** the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Why did God create animals?

Because God knew it was good and so that we could rule over them and have a useful job to do that pleased God by taking care of His creation that He blessed us with.

The Bible passages say:

It was good and they were blessed by God – so animals are a blessing, and they were to increase on the earth and fill it – so no animal shouldn't increase and be on the earth – all are useful and good to God, and finally God gave them to us so we could rule over them and take care of them, to give us a job that pleased the Lord. But this is not the only job we do that pleases God. As we have been learning we need to take care of all of God's creation – people, the world, and animals. Now we are going to look at what the Bible says we are to do concerning animals in God's creation!

2) Bible verses that show our responsibility

5-10 minutes

To show examples from the Bible that explain our responsibility of caring for animals, read the following verses aloud and ask the students questions as they go. If needed, repeat the Bible verse.

Proverbs 12:10

The righteous care for the needs of their animals.....

What does this verse say a righteous or Godly person does with animals?

Psalms 50:11

I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine.

According to this verse, who owns the insects, birds and animals? God

Who knows them best? God

Who is concerned if they are not being taken care of? God

Would you like it if someone hurt something that belonged to you? (No) That's why we have to take care not to hurt or harm animals – even insects! Because they belong to God!

Exodus 23:12; cf. Deuteronomy 5:14

"Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief."

Luke 12:6 "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight."

According to these verses – is God concerned about the wellbeing of animals? There rest, there food, there care? (Yes God cares very much and so should we!)

So in conclusion: Ask the students the following and discuss

***Do you think God wants us to hurt animals?**

***Do you think God is sad when people hurt animals?**

***People need to eat and God says we can eat animals for food – that is ok. They are a gift and they taste very good and are healthy for us. The people that prepare the animals though are to take good care of them while they grow and prepare them in a way that doesn't hurt the animal so that God is happy.**

Have you ever stomped on a bug because you didn't like it? Have you ever seen someone throw rocks at an animal to make it go away because they didn't want it around? That is not nice, it makes God sad. It is ok to protect yourself if an animal were trying to hurt you, but to just hurt

or kill an animal for no reason – is wrong! Let’s all try to make sure we help God by caring for all the animals including insects that God has blessed us with – every animal is special to God and every animal plays an important role in the world. Some provide food for other animals, some keep us safe, some give us food, and some are there to show us God’s beauty! Let’s make sure we take care of what God created – just for us! And, if we have hurt an animal, let’s ask God to forgive us and apologize for being mean and don’t do it anymore.

3) Activity Sheets: God wants us to care for animals!

20-30 minutes

Now we are going to do an activity. We are going to look at what God’s animals need to be safe and well fed. Hand out animal activity sheet to each child, along with a pencil. Have them write their name somewhere on the page. Read the instructions on the top of the page aloud and together go through the sheet to match the animal to its food and shelter so the children get the idea that animals have needs too!

Tell the children to: “look at the animals on the last page (farm animals). As you color them, what do you think they need to be happy and cared for? While all the students are coloring ask the following questions and get someone to either raise their hand or just say the answers. Afterwards, have the children clean up and put their crayons away.

In what ways do the animals in this picture require us to help care for them?

The Bible says we should take care of the animals God made. Farmers, Veterinarians, and Game and Park Wardens care for animals. A lot of people have pets as well. If you have a pet, you should take good care of it. Even if you don’t have a pet, you can be kind to birds, bunnies, and other people’s pets too!

What are some ways you can be kind to animals?

4) Sing and learn Books of the Old Testament

5-10 minutes

Who did make the fishies swim? Great for younger kids

Who did make the fishies swim, fishies swim, fishies swim?

Who did make the fishies swim, God in heaven above!

(Actions put hands together and wiggle for fish, and then point to heaven)

Who did make the birdies fly, birdies fly, birdies fly?

Who did make the birdies fly, God in heaven above!

(Actions put thumbs together and wiggle fingers out like wing, then point up)

Who did make the flowers grow, flowers grow, flowers grow?

Who did make the flowers grow, God in heaven above!

(Actions put fist through other hand and when push up and out, open fingers like a flower and then point up)

Who did make both you and I, you and I, you and I?

Who did make both you and I, God in heaven above!

(Actions point to the students and then to self and then point up)

This is my Father’s World (Should be in church song book or see below)

This is my Father's World, and to my listening ears,

All nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres.

This is my Father's World, I rest me in the thought,

Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas, His hands the wonders wrought.

5) Optional – Snack - gummy worms and celery sticks

5 minutes

“You’ve all done a great job this morning learning that God wants us to care for His animals. To help us remember, we are going to have a snack. Show the kids the gummy worms and celery and ask, “What animal do you know eats worms and grassy things?” (Birds). “Great! We need to remember that different animals need different things and that is why it important to make sure we take care of the earth and the animals on it to ensure they have what they need to survive. We can also pray to God that He will help us care for His creation. Let’s all eat like birds today!” Hand out the snack to each child with a glass of water. After snack have kids clean up. Then move on to the remaining activities.

6) Close in prayer

Thank you God for all the different animals you made. Thank you for the people who take care of them and help us remember that it is our job to care for all of your creation – including animals as well. Help us know and remember to care and respect all your animals including birds, fish, pets, livestock, wild animals and bugs too! In Jesus name, Amen.

Thank you for serving Christ in this way!