



Stewards of God's Creation

7

Key Themes

- God is faithful to His promises.
- God upholds His creation.

Key Passage

- Genesis 1:26

Lesson Focus

- We should take care of God's earth.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will color the God Made . . . Trees coloring sheet.



Circle Time

Prayer—Using the Prayer page of the Flip Chart, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

God's Word—Students will hear that God made man to rule over His creation. We have a responsibility to take care of God's creation and use it wisely.

Song—Students will sing about creation in the songs "God Created!" and "God Made Dinosaurs!" Then they will review the memory verse by singing the "Exodus 20:11 Memory Verse" song.



Activity 1: Ups and Downs

Students will play a game of ups and downs. Up means it's a good idea; down means it's a bad idea in caring for God's creation.



Activity 2: Peanut Butter Bird Feeder

Students will make a bird feeder to take home using bread, peanut butter, and birdseed.



Memory Verse Review/Snack

Children will review the memory verse while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite and/or repeat the memory verse.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



FOR THE TEACHER

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



COME ON IN

- Print one God Made . . . Trees coloring sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- God Made . . . Trees coloring sheet for each student
- Crayons



CIRCLE TIME

- Practice the songs on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

- Lesson Flip Chart
- Healthy-looking potted plant
- Stuffed plush dog or cat



UPS AND DOWNS

- Print one Ups and Downs Ideas sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use during the activity.

- Ups and Downs Ideas sheet



PEANUT BUTTER BIRD FEEDER

- Allow bread slices to get stale; attach yarn or string to each piece of bread.
- Mark plastic sandwich bags with students' names.
- Make a sample bird feeder.
- Check for any peanut allergies. May use vegetable shortening instead.

- Peanut butter divided into several bowls for students to share—within easy reach
- Stale French bread slices—one per student
- Bird seed
- Plastic knives and plates
- Paper towels
- Plastic sandwich bags with students' names
- Yarn and needle
- Hand wipes



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW/SNACK

- Prepare and bring snacks.

- Lesson Flip Chart for memory verse review
- Snacks



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare for this week's lesson, read Genesis 1:26–31; Genesis 8:20–9:1; 2 Peter 3:5–7.

Our God is the Creator and Sustainer of all the universe—everything we have comes from Him and it all belongs to Him. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). “The sea is His, for He made it; and His hands formed the dry land” (Psalm 95:5). “The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness” (Psalm 24:1). “For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills” (Psalm 50:10). “Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides” (Psalm 119:90). God's creation clearly brings Him glory and He rejoices in His works (Psalm 104:31). We can rejoice, too, in God's graciousness to us each day as we appreciate the beauty and wonder around us. However, we must be diligent to respect it—because it does not belong to us.

When God created the world, it was perfect—it was all very good (Genesis 1:31). Man and all of creation lived together without any stress in a harmonious environment. But God did provide a hierarchy of authority. He intended that Adam and Eve be the ones to tend the garden and keep it (Genesis 2:15). He instructed them to multiply and fill the earth, and to have dominion over it and all of its creatures (Genesis 1:28). This “Dominion Mandate” ordained by God gives all of us, as the heirs of Adam, a special responsibility—to care for God's earth with diligence, concern, and from a biblical perspective.

What this means, however, is not always easily determined. Because of the high profile of this issue, you will come across many strong opinions. God did create resources for man's use in sustaining life. But we find today those who want to abuse the resources out of greed and selfishness, causing needless loss and destruction in other areas. We see also the overly enthusiastic conservationists who appear to worship the creation more than the Creator—clearly a position not ordained by God (Romans 1:25). What we need to remember is to consult the full counsel of God's Word in these matters. Because this is a sin-cursed world that is far, far from perfect, this may mean weighing each specific decision we make in this area based on the circumstances and expected results of that decision, while asking the question, “How does this line up with biblical principles?”

As you confront this issue, remember that Solomon

in all his wisdom reminds us that there is a time to plant and a time to pluck what is planted, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to break down and a time to build up, a time to keep and a time to throw away (Ecclesiastes 3:1–8).

Ultimately, this is an area that must be covered in prayer and balanced carefully between abuse to God's creation and environmental idolatry. It is God's creation. He made it and He will destroy it by the Word of His mouth at His appointed time (2 Peter 3:7). Meanwhile, He has promised to preserve it: “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The big issue surrounding the earth's environment today is global warming, or climate change. We are barraged with claims and facts being presented—leaving us more confused than ever. There appear to be five recurring claims. We'll take a quick look at those here.

Claim #1: Global warming is really happening. Yes, this is true. According to the National Climatic Data Center, the average global surface temperature has risen approximately 1.2°F (0.7°C) since 1880. We do not know exactly what has caused this warming.

Claim #2: Humans are causing global warming. Again, it seems to be true that addition of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere by man's activities has increased the global temperature. However, the CO₂ (carbon dioxide) in the atmosphere is not the sole cause of this warming. And it has been determined that the warmer climate itself can actually produce more CO₂—giving a distorted measure of the cause and effect of CO₂ in the atmosphere.

Claim #3: Global warming will cause the extinction of animals. First of all, many animals had gone extinct long before the issue of global warming was considered, and species continue to go extinct all the time. The woolly mammoth and the Miohippus (a small, three-toed woodland horse) are examples of animals found in the fossil record that are today extinct. Although there are predictions that many animals will become extinct by 2050 due to climate change, currently there are no documented extinctions resulting from global warming.

Claim #4: The oceans will rise dramatically in the next century. There is no hard scientific evidence currently available to back up this prediction.

Claim #5: Global warming will cause more weather catastrophes. Again, there is not sufficient evidence to make this claim. In fact, there are conflicting reports. Some blame global warming for the increase in hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, droughts, and extreme temperatures, while other studies have determined that global warming is not to blame.

From a biblical perspective, we know that we live in a world groaning from the effects of sin (Romans 8:22). The earth has been established by God and its future lies in His hands. Because of the credibility of God's Word, we can be sure that the earth will be purged by fire in the future (2 Peter 3:10–12)—not destroyed because of CO₂ emissions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In considering the history of global warming, we find that evidence does suggest that the created world was warmer than the world today. In fact, it wasn't until after the global Flood of Noah's day about 4,300 years ago—only about 1,700 years after creation—that conditions were right to form permanent ice, which prompted the earth's one and only Ice Age. Scientists believe that the Ice Age peaked around 500 years after the Flood.

As stated above, we know that the average global surface temperature has risen approximately 1.2°F since 1880. We also know that the changes in atmospheric carbon dioxide—the alleged cause of global warming—do not always correlate well with changes in the earth's temperature. For example, the temperature of the earth rose from 1910 to 1940 at a higher rate than the levels of carbon dioxide found in the atmosphere.

We also have indication that although the temperature of the earth has dropped since 2002, the carbon dioxide levels continue to rise. And it has been discovered that there were substantial changes in global temperatures in the ninth and seventeenth centuries, yet this could not have been a result of industry contaminating the air with CO₂.

Historically, there doesn't seem to be any conclusive pattern as to how the temperature of the earth reacts to those of us who live on it. We do know that the earth is God's and we are its caretakers. We have no idea how long the earth will last—but we are called to use biblical principles and judgment in maintaining it until Christ returns and it is renewed in the Consummation (Revelation 21:1).

For more information on this topic see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Sovereign Lord, I praise you, for you have revealed to us great truths in your Word. As I study the lesson this week, help me desire truth. Because when I earnestly seek truth, I will discover you! Transform my mind to the mind of Christ. Don't let me be confused by what I have heard in the media about climate change. Help me convey your faithfulness as a promise keeper to the students, so they will not be fearful about the future of the earth. Help us all to recognize the difference between being good stewards of the earth and environmental idolatry.



COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will color the God Made . . . Trees coloring sheets. Talk to them about all the plants God created (including vegetables!).

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class. Remember, children learn by repetition and review.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the lesson pages from the Flip Chart. Remind the children of each lesson's focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds, and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Circle Time

In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs.

Bring your stuffed animal for prayer time, Bible, Flip Chart, potted plant, plush stuffed dog or cat, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.

PRAYER

This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets his/her turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.

We start our Bible Study with prayer. Let's pray. Turn to the Prayer page in the Flip Chart. Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I'm sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

Today Thanksgiving is suggested. You might proceed this way:

Today let's say prayers of thanksgiving—and tell God thank you for all He does for us and gives to us.

The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their confidence in praying to God.

➤ Prior to making your transition to circle time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.

➤ Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the circle time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

I'll start. Dear God, there are so many things to thank you for. Everything we have is from you. Today I want to thank you especially for . . . *(insert personal prayer)*.

Pass the stuffed animal around the circle giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer telling God thank you.

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away and we'll get into God's Word.

GOD'S WORD

These first four questions will be repeated each week. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

? Before we begin, what is this? *Hold up your Bible. The Bible!*

? What is in this Bible? *God's holy Word!*

? What does the Bible tell us? *Everything we need to know!*

? And all God's Words in this Bible are what? *True!*

Take a look at this plant I have here. *Hold up potted plant.*

? What if I gave you this pretty plant to take care of for me? What would you do to take care of it and make sure it stays healthy? *Water it, put it in the sunshine, prune it, etc.*

You're right! There are a lot of things you could do to care of it. Now let's pretend that this dog/cat is real and I've asked you to take care of it for me. *Hold up stuffed dog or cat.*

? What kinds of things would you do to take care of my pet for me? *Feed it, give it water, brush it, pet it, take it for walks, etc.*

Wow! It sounds like you would be very responsible. That means you would do a good job taking care of these things for me. Now let's take a look at our Flip Chart. *Turn to the Lesson 7 Flip Chart page. Point and discuss the pictures. Look here, someone is watering this plant. And this person is feeding a dog. These are people taking care of things in the world. Review the pictures on the Flip Chart.*

? But what about this? *Point to the picture of the earth. What is it? The earth. That's right! Wait a minute! Are we supposed to take care of the whole earth? How would we do that? Allow for answers.*

Well, guess what? We are supposed to take care of God's earth because God tells us to in His Word. He created the earth and everything on it. Then He created man and gave man the responsibility to care for the earth. Here is what God's Word says about that. *Show them the verse. Read Genesis 1:26 emphasizing "dominion over the birds of the air, the cattle, and creeping things."*

► As you teach, refer often to the Flip Chart picture to keep the children engaged.

Genesis 1:26

? This verse tells us that God made man. Who was the very first man ever created? *Adam!*

? And this says that God gave Adam “dominion” over the earth. What does that mean? *Allow for answers.*

It means that God gave Adam the responsibility to take care of His creation and to use it wisely. God said Adam would have dominion over the fish, the birds, the cattle, creeping things—well, everything.

After God made all the wonderful things in His creation, He told Adam to take care of the earth. Since then, God expects all of us to take care of it too! We are to take care of God’s good earth while we are living on it.

God called Adam and all of us to be good stewards of the earth. Can you say that, “good stewards”? *Have the children repeat it.*

? What do you think “good stewards of the earth” means? Look at the Flip Chart. This will give you a hint. *Allow for answers based on the pictures.*

Being a good steward means taking care of the earth. The earth really belongs to God. But God told us to take care of it by being good stewards. So, all the way from the beginning God has given people the responsibility to watch over the earth and all the creation. We can enjoy and take care of all the wonderful things He made—even in very small ways!

? What are some ways we can enjoy and take care of God’s good creation? You can look at the Flip Chart for hints. *Play outdoors, camping, pets, flowers/trees, birds, throwing trash away, recycling, etc.*

We can love the great outdoors and everything in it. We can take care of it in some simple ways—you should always pick up your trash after a picnic, never throw garbage out of the car window, recycle your cans and plastic if you can, take good care of your animals. These are ways YOU can help! These are ways you can take care of God’s earth.

We know that this is God’s world and that God cares for the creation—He is in charge of everything that happens. God owns it. But He has asked us to be good stewards—to take good care of it. And we should do that because we want to please God, the one who created it all! We should learn how to take care of God’s earth while always praising Him for the beauty around us.

SONG

OK! God created everything—including the earth—just about 6,000 years ago. Let’s sing the “God Created!” song. Remember, God spoke everything into existence. EVERYTHING! And it was just about 6,000 years ago! And He wants us to do all we can to take good care of it. *Sing the “God Created!” song.*

► Turn to the Flip Chart Song page and Memory Verse page during this part of the lesson.

That was wonderful! We can't sing about creation without singing about the dinosaurs. When did God create the dinosaurs? *About 6,000 years ago! Sing the "God Made Dinos!" song. Add clapping, stomping, and marching or do the hand motions.*

? **Who remembers our memory verse song?** *Show of hands.*

Let's sing that. It is Exodus 20:11. *Sing the Memory Verse song.*

Lyrics to these songs can be found on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

Great job, everyone! Now sit down quietly and show me you're ready to listen so I can tell you what we're going to do next.



Ups and Downs

We are going to play the Ups and Downs game now. But it's a listening game, so open up your ears and show me you're ready!

MATERIALS

- Ups and Downs Ideas sheet

INSTRUCTIONS

Have students stand up in an area without chairs or other objects that might be in the way. Read each idea from the sheet, one by one, giving the students time to decide if it's a good or bad idea. They should squat down if it's a bad idea, and stand up if it's a good idea. After each situation, briefly discuss why it is a bad or good idea.

I have some ideas here that I'm going to read to you. Some of these ideas are good ways to care for God's creation, and some are bad ways that do not care for God's creation. Listen carefully as I read them. If you think it's a good idea, then stand up

tall and reach up high on your tip-toes. But, if you think the idea is a bad idea, then quickly squat down and touch the floor with your fingers. *Show how to squat down and reach up as you explain.*

Discuss some of the ideas on the list and why they are a good way or a bad way to take care of God's creation.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Good job everybody! We can take care of God's creation, even in easy ways. The Bible tells us that God gave us this responsibility way back in the beginning when He first made man. And when we are careful to take care of God's creation, we are honoring Him. Remember, He owns the world. He created it. He will do what He wants. But, He wants us to take care of it while we are here.

Transition children back to their tables quietly.



Peanut Butter Bird Feeder

Note: Be sure there are no peanut allergies before proceeding with this activity. If there is a problem with peanuts, you can use vegetable shortening.

Show your completed bird feeder. We can take care of God's creation by feeding birds in the winter. Birds are part of God's creation and sometimes it can be hard for them to find food. Using bird feeders is a fun way to enjoy watching birds that come to the feeder as well as giving them some extra food. Let's go quietly back to our tables and we will help you make your very own bird feeder to hang in the yard! The birds will love it.

MATERIALS

- Peanut butter divided into several bowls
- Stale bread slices—one per student
- Yarn and yarn needle
- Bird seed
- Plastic knives
- Paper plates
- Paper towels
- Plastic sandwich bags with students' names
- Hand wipes

INSTRUCTIONS

Before class begins, prepare the stale bread for each student. Use a yarn needle to thread a 12 inch piece of string or yarn through the bread. Tie the ends together making a loop to use for hanging the finished bird feeder.

Divide peanut butter into several bowls for students to share. Lay out one piece of bread with yarn attached and one plastic knife on a paper towel for each student. Also, pour a small amount of bird seed onto a paper plate for each student. Have the students spread peanut butter onto both sides of their slice of bread. Then help students dip the bread into the birdseed on their plate until the birdseed sticks to both sides of the bread. Insert the finished feeders into plastic bags marked with students' names. Use hand wipes for cleanup.

Listen carefully now while I tell you how to make the bird feeder. I'm watching to see who's listening. You are going to put peanut butter on both sides of the bread. Then dip your bread into the birdseed. The birdseed will stick to the peanut butter on the bread. We'll put the bird feeders in a plastic bag for you to take home.

One last thing—if you get peanut butter on your fingers, wipe them on the paper towel. Do not wipe your fingers on your clothes.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Ask Mom or Dad to help you find a good place in your yard to hang up your bird feeder. And pretty soon, the birds should find it and you can watch them eat from it. We can have fun taking care of creation. But sometimes, there's a lot of work to do too. Remember, God owns the earth. He created it. We honor God by taking care of the earth.



Memory Verse/Snack

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them.

After thanking God for your snack, review the memory verse with the children while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite and/or repeat the memory verse.

Use the Memory Verse page in the Flip Chart. Explain the verse to the children as you go over the verse together. Say the verse and point at each picture several times. Ask the children if anyone wants to try and say it on their own.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God gave Adam dominion over the earth. That means God wanted Adam to take care of the earth and animals. God has given us that same job. We are to be good stewards. A good steward takes care of something that doesn't belong to him. God wants us to take care of the earth. The earth does not belong to us—it is God's. We honor God and His earth when we take care of it properly.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

We know now that there are many good ideas we can use to take care of God's creation. See if you can think of more good ideas. Ask your mom or dad if they have good ideas of things you can do. God has given all of us a job to do. It's our responsibility to be careful with His creation. But don't forget to enjoy it and thank Him for all He has made!

Now let's take some time to pray and tell God thank you for giving us His creation to use and enjoy.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

- Thank God for His wonderful creation that we can enjoy.
- Ask God to help us remember to take care of His creation and use it wisely.

Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring page, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.

Song Sheet

EXODUS 20:11—THE LORD MADE

(To the tune of "Jingle Bells")

Exodus 20:11! *(Everyone shout!)*

In six days, in six days,
The Lord made the heavens and the earth.
God made the heavens and the earth, the
sea,
And all that is in the—em!

In six days, in six days,
The Lord made the heavens and the earth.
God made the heavens and the earth, the
sea,
And all that is in them! Hey!
Exodus 20:11!

GOD MADE DINOS!

(To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?")

God made dinos. God made dinos.

*(Are you sleeping? Are you sleeping?)
Children point to one another.*

On Day Six! Yes, He did!

*(Brother John. Brother John.)
Hold up six fingers! Nod head.*

Behemoth-Brachiosaurus,

*(Morning bells are ringing!)
Circle hands around head; clasp hands together over
head.*

A tail just like a cedar.

*(Morning bells are ringing!)
Bring hands down in front; wave like a great big tail!*

Yes, He did! On Day Six!

*(Ding, ding, dong. Ding, ding, dong.)
Hold up six fingers. Nod head.*

Teacher asks: "When?"

Everyone shouts: "6,000 years ago!"

GOD CREATED!

(To the tune of "This Old Man")

Hold up 1 finger for Creation Day 1.

God made day, God made night,
God made everything in sight.
So let's stand up, turn around,
Thank God for His grace.
With a big, happy smile on our face!

Hold up 2 fingers for Creation Day 2.

He made the air, the blue sky too.
He knew exactly what to do.
So let's stand up, turn around,
Thank God for His grace,
With a big, happy smile on our face!

Hold up 3 fingers for Creation Day 3.

He made the plants and the land,
From the hardest rock to the softest sand.
So let's stand up, turn around,
Thank God for His grace.
With a big, happy smile on our face.

Hold up 4 fingers for Creation Day 4.

He made the stars, the moon, the sun.
Exploring the sky is so much fun.
So let's stand up, turn around,
Thank God for His grace.
With a big, happy smile on our face.

Hold up 5 fingers for Creation Day 5.

He made the fish, the birds that fly;
We see them daily in the sky.
So let's stand up, turn around,
Thank God for His grace.
With a big, happy smile on our face.

Hold up 6 fingers for Creation Day 6.

All the animals that roam the land,
He even created woman and man.
So let's stand up, turn around,
Thank God for His grace.
With a big, happy smile on our face.

