



Earth Day

April 22, 2020



Today's lesson is all about appreciating our planet and the One who created it.

When was the last time you simply gave thanks to God for the planet we live on? For most of us, living on planet Earth is something we simply consider a birthright. After all, it's the only world we've ever known. We really have nothing else to compare it with.

But when you really look into the detail and creativity on display on our planet... it might help you gain an appreciation for the Earth.

Now, Earth Day isn't typically celebrated as much as other holidays. Your family probably doesn't throw a big party and everybody gathers together.

So, what exactly is *Earth Day*?

Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22nd. It began in 1970 and the celebration "marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement."

The Earth is the first of God's creations we learn about in the Bible, mentioned in the very first verse of the very first book.

Read Genesis 1-2:3

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶ And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." ⁷ So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

⁹ And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. ¹¹ Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit

with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

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,^[a] and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” ²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because he rested from all the work of creating all he had done.

We see the importance of giving thanks for God’s creation... for the light... and the water... and the sky... and the land... and the animals.

It’s our job to be good stewards of what God has given us. Including the Earth. After all, we want a healthy Earth for ourselves and for generations to come.

Activity: Earth Day Trivia

1. True or False: The Earth moves around the sun at approximately 67,000 miles per hour. (TRUE)
2. True or False: The Earth is 193 million miles from the sun. (FALSE – it's only 93 million.)
3. True or False: The world's longest mountain range is actually underwater. (TRUE)
4. True or False: The lowest recorded temperature on Earth was minus 128.6 degrees Fahrenheit in Antarctica. (TRUE)
5. True or False: The highest reported temperature was 138 degrees Fahrenheit in the country of Brazil. (FALSE – it was in Libya.)
6. True or False: Earth is the only planet not named after a Roman god. (TRUE)
7. True or False: 80% of the Earth's surface is covered with water. (FALSE – 70%)
8. True or False: The highest point on Earth is Mount Kilimanjaro. (FALSE – Mount Everest)
9. True or False: It takes about 15 minutes for light from the sun to reach the Earth. (FALSE – it's closer to 8 minutes.)
10. True or False: The Amazon rainforest is home to nearly one third of the Earth's land species. (TRUE)
11. True or False: You would weigh more if you lived at the North Pole than you did if you lived at the Equator. (TRUE – a person who weighs 150.8 lbs at the North Pole would only weigh 150 lbs at the Equator because of the gravitation pull at the Earth's poles.)
12. True or False: Lightning strikes somewhere on the Earth 5.2 million times per day. (FALSE – it's actually 8.6 million times.)
13. True or False: The first photo from the Earth taken from space was in 1958. (FALSE – 1968)
14. True or False: The Nile River, the longest on Earth, is 4,160 miles in length. (TRUE)
15. True or False: The Earth is round. (FALSE – it's actually flattened at the poles!)

Answer key: 1. (TRUE), 2. (FALSE – it's only 93 million), 3. (TRUE), 4. (TRUE), 5. (FALSE – it was in Libya.), 6. (TRUE), 7. (FALSE – 70%), 8. (FALSE – Mount Everest), 9. (FALSE – it's closer to 8 minutes), 10. (TRUE), 11. (TRUE – a person who weighs 150.8 lbs at the North Pole would only weigh 150 lbs at the Equator because of the gravitation pull at the Earth's poles.), 12. (FALSE – it's actually 8.6 million times.), 13. (FALSE – 1968), 14. (TRUE), 15. (FALSE – it's actually flattened at the poles!)

At Home Challenges:

Kitchen/Food:

- Keep track of all the trash you throw away in one week.
 - What do you throw away?
 - What do you recycle?
 - Do you have an area in the house or backyard where you can create a location to start recycling?
- Pray for people and communities who do not have enough food; pray for the farmer, restaurant workers, and family members who work to grow and prepare the food you eat.
- Reflect on the plant, animal, and human life energy given so we can eat meat, and what it means to honor this food as a gift from God.
- If you know someone who farms, gardens, hunts or fishes, have a conversation with them about how a relationship with God impacts the way you each relate to the land, plants and animals.
- Help make your family's meal plan for the week or (if you already do this) invite someone else in your family to help you think through a meal plan that is nutritious and reduces food waste.

Bathroom/Water

- Time how long you spend running water in the shower.
 - How much water could you save only using what's needed to get clean?
- Pray for the health of the rivers and lakes and groundwater in your region, and pray for communities worldwide who do not have access to clean water.
- Reflect on what the importance of the ritual of Christian baptism might mean for how we care for the waters near our place of worship.

Backyard/Park

- Take one hour to walk around a familiar outdoor environment and pick up trash.
 - How many pieces did you find?
- Spend an hour in the place of your choice, reflecting on God's beauty in creation, and noting the ways each of God's creatures and ecosystems feed or care of each other.
- Give thanks for outdoor spaces that have been set aside for us to enjoy the beauty of God's creation, and pray for those who do not have access to healthy outdoor spaces such as these.

Electronics/Energy

- Get through a day on just one full charge of your phone.
- Go around your house and make a list of the things that draw energy 24/7 even when they're not in use.
 - How many can you practice plugging in only when you're using them?
 - Toaster? Phone Charger? Etc.
- Spend a day biking, using public transit, or carpooling—avoiding driving alone anywhere in a car.
- Pray for communities who do not have affordable access to electricity, for communities who suffer from being close to pollution from energy generation, and for those who make their living working in various kinds of energy industries.
- Pray for a transition to an energy economy that tends to every community's wellbeing.

So, on Earth Day remember that God values all of His creation. Take time to appreciate our planet, and the One who created it.