

An Earth Day Sermon

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Earth Day

Scripture: Genesis 2:15

Memory Verse: 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

The Children's Sermon

How are we supposed to take care of the Earth? That's a good question. Fortunately, the Bible provides help. In Genesis, when God placed the man in the garden and states "till it and keep it." This means we have the right to till the Earth in order to make it fruitful. But does this mean we are to till all of it? No, we also have the duty to "keep it" which means to protect it – to "keep" the Earth by taking care of it. "Till it" yes, but know when to stop.

God speaks to some through the mountains. Perhaps for you, you feel closest to God at the beach or the lake. For me, and perhaps for you, nature is the most real sign of God's presence. Our spiritual journey is still more mystery to me than understanding. But day by day, one step at a time, with God's help, the understanding grows, if we will take the time to listen for his guidance and read his holy word.

Let us pray.

Lord, we thank you for this occasion to think about your creation and our duty to be good stewards of these gifts. Help us to know that each of us has a key job in caring for

the earth, by the choices we make and by the actions we take. Give us good judgment to choose thoughtfully, and to act with care, to show our love for you, and your love of this good Earth, our home. Have a happy Earth Day. Amen.

Now, let's talk a bit more about this special day, Earth Day. Earth Day is like a big birthday party for our planet. It's a day we set aside to think about the Earth and how we can take better care of it. Just like you might clean up your room or help out at home, Earth Day reminds us to clean up our planet and help it out too.

You see, every little thing we do can make a big difference. When we recycle our paper, plastic, and cans, we're helping to keep the Earth clean. When we turn off lights when we leave a room, or turn off the water when we brush our teeth, we're saving energy and water. These are small actions, but if everyone does them, they add up to a big help for our planet.

God gave us this beautiful Earth to live on, and it's our job to take care of it. We can think of ourselves as Earth's helpers. Just like superheroes, we have the power to make a positive change. We can plant trees, clean up trash in our parks, and even use less plastic by choosing reusable bottles and bags. Every choice we make can help protect our Earth.

Sometimes, we might wonder if our small actions really matter. But they do! Imagine if every kid around the world did one kind thing for the Earth every day. That would be a lot of kindness, and it would help our planet a lot. We can be leaders in taking care of the Earth, showing others how easy and important it is.

Let's remember, too, that taking care of the Earth is not just for Earth Day. It's something we can do every day. Every morning when we wake up, we can think, "What can I do today to help the Earth?" Maybe it's choosing to walk or ride a bike instead of asking for a ride in a car. Maybe it's picking up litter we see on the ground. There are so many ways we can help.

In the Bible, God talks about how everything on Earth is connected. The trees, the animals, the water, and us – we're all part of God's creation. When we take care of one part of creation, we help all of it. It's like a big family. And just like in a family, we need to work together and take care of each other.

So, let's make every day Earth Day. Let's promise to be kind to our planet, to take care of it, and to love it just like God loves us. We can be Earth's superheroes, making sure our planet is healthy and happy for many, many years to come.

Let's pray again.

Dear God, thank you for the beautiful Earth you've given us. Help us to remember to take care of it every day, not just on Earth Day. Guide us to make choices that protect your creation, and inspire others to do the same. Help us to be superheroes for the Earth, showing love and kindness to everything you've made. Amen.

Remember, every little action counts. You have the power to make a difference. Let's celebrate Earth Day not just today, but every day, by being the best Earth helpers we can be. Happy Earth Day, everyone! Let's go out there and show the Earth some love.

Bible Memory Verse

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

You Will Need:

- Construction paper (green, blue, brown, and any other colors for flowers or animals)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Crayons or markers

Get Ready:

- Gather all the materials on a large table.
- Cut out shapes beforehand if working with younger children (e.g., tree shapes, animal shapes, flower shapes).

Do This:

1. Explain the memory verse to the children, emphasizing how God wants us to take care of the Earth, just like Adam was asked to take care of the Garden of Eden.
2. Ask the children to create their own 'Garden of Eden' on the construction paper using the materials provided. They can draw or glue on trees, animals, rivers, and anything else they imagine would be in the Garden.
3. Once everyone has finished their garden, have a short discussion about the different ways we can take care of the Earth today, linking it back to the memory verse. Encourage them to share their gardens and explain what each part represents in taking care of God's creation.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Small pots or recycled containers (like yogurt cups)
- Potting soil
- Seeds (flowers, vegetables, or herbs)
- Watering cans or cups
- Bible or printed verse of Genesis 2:15
- Coloring materials (crayons, markers)
- Paper and pencils
- Stickers or decorations for the pots

Get Ready:

1. Set up a table with all the materials spread out: pots, soil, seeds, watering cans, coloring materials, and decorations.
2. Print out Genesis 2:15 on a large paper or have it ready in a Bible to read aloud.
3. Prepare a simple explanation of Earth Day and how it relates to Genesis 2:15.

Do this:

1. **Read and Reflect:** Start by reading Genesis 2:15 aloud to the children. Explain that God gave us the beautiful Earth to take care of, just like a garden. Discuss what Earth Day is and how it helps us remember to care for our planet.
2. **Decorate the Pots:** Give each child a pot or recycled container and let them decorate it with stickers, markers, or crayons. While they decorate, engage them in conversation about how taking care of plants is one way to take care of the Earth.
3. **Planting Seeds:** After decorating, help the children fill their pots with soil and plant their chosen seeds. Teach them how to gently water the seeds without flooding the pot.

4. **Creation Care Pledge:** On a piece of paper, have each child draw or write one way they can help take care of the Earth, inspired by Genesis 2:15. They can pledge to water their new plant, recycle more, save water, or anything else they think of. Display these pledges around the room or on a bulletin board.

5. **Closing Prayer:** End with a short prayer, thanking God for the beautiful Earth and asking for help in taking care of it, just like we take care of our new plants.

Snack Activity: Eden's Garden Cups

You'll Need:

- Clear plastic cups
- Chocolate pudding (pre-made or instant)
- Crushed chocolate cookies
- Gummy worms or other gummy insects
- Fresh mint leaves or any edible green herb to represent foliage

Get Ready: Prepare the chocolate pudding according to the package instructions if not using pre-made. Let it set if necessary.

Do this:

1. Fill each clear plastic cup about two-thirds full with chocolate pudding to create the 'soil' layer of your garden.
2. Sprinkle a layer of crushed chocolate cookies on top of the pudding to represent the fertile 'earth' that we are tasked to take care of, as mentioned in Genesis 2:15.
3. Add a few gummy worms or insects on top of the crushed cookies to bring your garden to life. These represent the creatures we share the Earth with.

4. Finally, plant a fresh mint leaf or any small edible green herb into your edible garden to symbolize the plants and trees that are vital for our planet's health. This step reminds us of our responsibility to care for all of God's creation, just as He intended in the Garden of Eden.

Game Activity: Guardians of Eden

You'll Need:

- A large open space (outdoors preferred)
- Several small potted plants or seed packets
- Biodegradable cups or small pots
- Soil
- Watering cans or bottles
- Markers and stickers for decoration

Get Ready: Before the game, prepare a 'Garden of Eden' area by placing the potted plants or prepared cups with soil at one end of the playing area. This will be the 'garden' that the children will help to grow.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that just as God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it (Genesis 2:15), they too will become the guardians of their own little Eden. Today, they will plant a seed (or care for a plant) to celebrate Earth Day and learn about stewardship of the Earth.
2. Divide the children into small teams and give each team a seed packet or a small plant, a biodegradable cup or pot, soil, and water. Let them decorate their cups or pots with markers and stickers.

3. Each team will then 'plant' their seeds or care for their plant by placing it into the soil in their decorated cup or pot, watering it, and placing it in the 'Garden of Eden' area. Encourage them to think of a name for their plant and share how they plan to take care of it, reflecting on their role as caretakers of the Earth.

Prayer Activity: Praying for Our Planet

You'll Need:

- A globe or world map
- Green and blue ribbons
- Small sticky notes

Get Ready: Before the class, set up a small table with the globe or world map in the center. Cut the ribbons into short lengths, enough for each child to have one of each color.

Do this:

1. Start by reading Genesis 2:15 to the children, explaining that God gave us the beautiful Earth to live on and it's our job to take care of it.
2. Ask each child to think of one way they can help take care of the Earth, like recycling, saving water, or planting trees. Have them write their ideas on the sticky notes.
3. Then, invite the children to come up one by one to the globe or map. Ask them to place their sticky note on it and tie a green and blue ribbon around the globe or map as a prayer to God, asking for help to take care of the Earth and to remember their commitment to being Earth's caretakers.