

# An Earth Day Sermon

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Earth Day

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:15

**Memory Verse:** Genesis 2:15 - The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

## 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 conserving it. "Till it" yes, but know when to stop.

For many, 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**

## **Genesis 2:15 - The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**

You Will Need:

- Construction paper (green, brown, blue, yellow, red)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons
- Seed packets or small plants
- Small pots or recycled containers
- Soil

Get Ready:

- Gather all materials and set up a work area for each child.
- Pre-cut shapes from construction paper to represent different parts of the Garden of Eden (trees, rivers, animals, etc.)

Do This:

1. Begin by having the children recite the memory verse together. Discuss what it means to 'work' and 'take care of' something. Ask them how they can take care of things God has given them.
2. Invite the children to create their own mini 'Garden of Eden' using the construction paper shapes, glue, and markers. Encourage them to be creative and include elements from the verse like trees, rivers, and animals.
3. Once their paper gardens are complete, move on to planting. Help each child plant a seed or a small plant in their pot or container. Discuss the importance of taking care of the earth and the plants, just as Adam was instructed to do in the Garden of Eden.

Remind them that taking care of their plant will help them remember the verse and its meaning.

4. Conclude the activity with a prayer, asking God to help the children be good caretakers of His creation.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of Genesis 2:15
- Biodegradable pots or recycled containers (like yogurt cups)
- Potting soil
- Seeds (flowers, herbs, or vegetables)
- Watering cans or cups
- Gardening tools (optional)
- Decorative materials (stickers, markers, paint) to decorate pots
- A world map or globe

Get Ready:

- Set up a station for each part of the activity: a reading corner, a pot decorating station, a planting station, and a watering station.
- Prepare a short explanation of Genesis 2:15 emphasizing stewardship of the Earth.

Do this:

1. **Reading and Discussion**: Start by reading Genesis 2:15 together. Discuss what it means to "work" and "take care" of the Earth. Ask the children why it's important and how they think they can fulfill this command in their daily lives.

2. **Pot Decorating**: Move to the pot decorating station. Let the children use the decorative materials to personalize their pots. While they work, encourage them to think about how taking care of plants is a way to take care of Earth.
3. **Planting**: At the planting station, guide each child to fill their pot with soil, plant their seeds according to the instructions on the seed packet, and then lightly water the seeds. Discuss how plants benefit the earth and contribute to God's creation.
4. **Watering and Commitment**: After planting, have the children water their seeds. As they do, encourage them to make a personal commitment to take care of their plant as a way to honor God's command in Genesis 2:15.
5. **Mapping Our Stewardship**: Finally, show the children the world map or globe. Have them place stickers or mark the map where they live, discussing how even small actions in their part of the world contribute to taking care of the Earth globally. Encourage them to share one action they will take to be good stewards of the Earth beyond taking care of their plant.

## Snack Activity: Garden of Eden Fruit Bowls

You'll Need:

- Various fruits (apples, grapes, berries, oranges)
- Wooden skewers
- Small bowls or cups
- Honey or yogurt (for dipping)
- Mint leaves (for decoration)

Get Ready: Wash all fruits and cut them into bite-sized pieces if necessary. Arrange all materials on a table where children can easily reach them.

Do this:

1. Discuss Genesis 2:15 with the children, emphasizing the importance of taking care of the Earth and the blessings of nature's bounty.
2. Allow each child to skewer their choice of fruits, creating their own 'Garden of Eden' fruit bowl. Encourage them to think about the variety of fruits as the different plants and trees in the Garden of Eden.
3. Once their fruit bowl is assembled, they can add a dollop of honey or yogurt on top to represent the sweetness of caring for creation. Decorate with a mint leaf.
4. As they enjoy their snack, encourage a discussion on ways they can help take care of the Earth in their daily lives, drawing parallels to tending the Garden of Eden.

## Game Activity: Garden Guardians

You'll Need:

- A large outdoor space (preferably with some natural elements like trees or bushes)
- Biodegradable items (leaves, twigs, flower petals)
- Buckets or baskets for each team

Get Ready: Divide the children into teams of 3-5. Assign each team a 'garden' area within the outdoor space. This can simply be a designated spot around a tree, bush, or any natural feature. Distribute the biodegradable items evenly among the teams, placing them in their buckets or baskets.

Do this:

1. Read Genesis 2:15 to the children, explaining how God entrusted the care of the Earth to us. Emphasize the importance of taking care of our environment as stewards of God's creation.

2. Each team's goal is to beautify their assigned 'garden' area using the biodegradable items in their bucket. They can lay out the items to create patterns, shapes, or even spell words related to Earth Day and stewardship.

3. After a set time (e.g., 20 minutes), gather the children and have each team present their 'garden'. Discuss as a group how each design reflects our responsibility to care for the Earth, drawing parallels to Genesis 2:15. Conclude with a prayer for the Earth, asking for guidance in being good stewards of God's creation.

## Prayer Activity: Garden Keepers: A Prayer for Our Earth

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of Genesis 2:15
- Recyclable paper and eco-friendly pens
- A small plant or seed for each child

Get Ready: Prepare a comfortable, quiet space in your classroom or outdoors where children can sit and reflect. Gather all materials before the class begins.

Do this:

1. Start by reading Genesis 2:15 aloud to the group, emphasizing the responsibility God has given us to take care of the Earth. Discuss what this means in today's world.
2. Have each child write a prayer on the recyclable paper, focusing on asking God to help us be good stewards of the Earth, to guide us in protecting it, and to show us how to take care of His creation.
3. After writing their prayers, invite the children to come forward one by one to read their prayer aloud if they feel comfortable. Following their reading, they can plant their



small plant or seed in a pot or designated garden area as a symbolic action of their commitment to taking care of the Earth, just as God has entrusted us.