



TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

The firstfruits of hope
(Rom 8:19-25)

Daily Reflections
Companion Questions

Week 1 - God made a good world, which still belongs to him and praises him

Week 2 - God loves and cares for his world

Week 3 - Our mandate and manual for caring for creation

Week 4 - Listening and learning from nature

Week 5 - Jesus: redeemer, hope, and healer of all things.

Week 1 - God made a good world, which still belongs to him and praises him

- Q1 How does knowing that God created the world and it belongs to him, impact how we think about and treat the world?
- Q2 We are told that when God saw what he had made he thought it was 'very good'. What are some good things God has made that we can thank him for?
- Q3 What do the mountains, stars, seas, forests, animals and plants tell us about God's nature and character?
- Q4 What does it tell us about God when we read that he knows every bird in the mountains, and how does this make you feel? (Psalm 50:9-11)
- Q5 How do you think the sun, moon, shining stars, great sea creatures, ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds, mountains and hills, fruit trees, wild animals, cattle, small creatures and flying birds praise God? (Psalm 148:1-10)

Week 2 - God loves and cares for his world

- Q1 What are some of the words used to describe God's feelings towards the world he has made?
- Q2 How are these feelings followed up by action?
- Q3 When God flooded the earth, he saved not only Noah and his family but also two of every species of animal. What does his covenant following the flood tell us about God's commitment and faithfulness to all he has made?
- Q4 The common sparrow is mentioned numerous times to illustrate God's love, even for the humblest of tiny birds. How does this help us to appreciate God's love for us?
- Q5 How might our attitude and behavior towards animals and nature need to change if we want to align our hearts with God's heart, and grow more like him?

Week 3 - Our mandate and manual for caring for creation

- Q1 What was the first instruction or job given to people in Genesis? Do you think this has ever been revoked?
- Q2 We read in the Psalms that God has given the earth to mankind, we also read that Jesus is the heir of all things. How might this responsibility to look after Christ's inheritance impact on the way we care for the world?
- Q3 What *environmental sustainability* and *social justice* principles can you see in these verses relating to the treatment of crops, animals and plants?
- Q4 What instructions are given regarding birds, oxen, donkeys and trees? What does this tell us about God?
- Q5 What difference is there in the world around us when we are in right-relationship with God compared to when we are not following God's ways?

Week 4 - Listening and learning from nature

- Q1 When you read that animals, birds and even fish can teach us things about God and faith how does this change your view of science, and the study of the natural world?
- Q2 From these verses what are some of the things we can learn from animals and plants? What can looking at the birds and the flowers in the field teach us?
- Q3 Nature speaks to more than our intellect. From Psalm 23 verses 1-3a what benefits can we experience from spending time outdoors?
- Q4 In what ways are both the Kingdom of heaven and those who delight in God's word like trees?
- Q5 What practical steps might you be able to take to learn about God from nature, and experience his blessings from spending time in nature?

Week 5 - Jesus: redeemer, hope, and healer of all things.

- Q1 We read that God's covenants in the Old Testament and also Jesus' work of restoration on the cross include "everything" and "all things". All of the frustrations, bondage, decay, and broken relationships that followed the fall in Genesis are to be reversed, How does this broaden your understanding of the "good news" of the gospel?
- Q2 Isaiah speaks of wolves, lambs, leopards, cows and bears. What elements of continuity and difference does this suggest between the world today and when Jesus returns?
- Q3 In what ways do we see and experience creation groaning? Why is it groaning and when will its groaning end?
- Q4 The book of Revelation tells us that when Jesus returns, the new Jerusalem will descend from heaven - described as a beautiful city with gates, walls, streets, a river, and a tree of life, with fruit and leaves. How does this inform your view of eternity?
- Q5 How does this vision of eternity change our view of cities, the place of nature in them, and how we plan and manage the places we live today?