

Made in the Image of God: Caring for Creation



This Bible study will reflect on God creating people and planet and the relationship that climate has to issues of justice. Humanity was created by God to care for the world, and for each other.

At Christian Aid we don't just talk about climate change, or even the climate crisis. We talk about climate justice.

Climate justice emphasises that any action to stop climate change must recognise that the poorest people in the world have been the worst affected by climate change. They have also done the least to cause climate change. Vulnerable communities have been battling climate change and its impacts for decades. This climate crisis hurts us all. But people living in poverty fight the worst of it every day.

This Bible study will enable you to explore climate justice within a faith context. You could follow-up these conversation starters with other Christian Aid resources which support children and young people to speak out about climate change.

We have rooted the sessions in Genesis and, specifically, within the concept of being made in the image of God. As you explore these ideas with your children and young people, stay alert to our responsibility to care for God's creation: both planet and people. With each age group, it is important to consider what being made in the image of God means for how we relate and show love to others.

As you explore this passage together, remember that the creation story in Genesis is a poem through which the Israelites understood the nature of their relationship with God. It is not a literal, historical account of creation but a story which explains why God created us, and our purpose as God's image bearers.

Be a changemaker

As someone who works with young children, you will be well aware of the need to emphasise foundational key principles. In this session, we focus on what it means to be made in the image of God. Remind the children that there is nothing that they can do to make God love them more, and there is nothing they can do to make God love them less.

By first laying a strong foundation of God's unconditional love, we can then ask the children questions about other people and how we relate to them.

It can be tempting to tell 5-8s what the 'correct answers' are. But by leaving open space for conversation, you will most likely find that they will have ideas and questions that are deep and profound.

Start the session by watching a four minute video called

"God's Story: God Made People". You'll find it by searching the title on YouTube or using this url:
[youtube.com/watch?v=ZZPfcWV81pE&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZPfcWV81pE&t=2s)

Explain to the children that you want to ask them some questions and hear their thoughts. It might be a good idea to set out some ground rules such as not talking over other people, and listening to what each other has to say.

Before you have the short conversation together, make sure that everyone has some paper and colouring pens handy. Invite each child to draw a picture of something people can do to show the image of God. This activity is to help them get into a reflective space that should help the conversation.

Some questions to get you going:

- What is God like?
- If all humans are made like God, what are some of the characteristics that make us like God?
- Think about the people you love. How are they like God?
- What are some of the things you can do to be more like God?
- The creation story tells us that God created the world and humans. Does this mean that we should show love to the world and look after nature, as well as looking after people?
- If everyone is made in the image of God, does that mean that we should show love to everyone? How can we show love to other people?
- Lots of people struggle to cope with not having enough money and as the climate changes. How can we show love to people across the world who are struggling to get by?

Ending the session well

It is useful to draw the conversation to a close in a positive way. You might want to suggest ways in which the children can explore how to put what they have learned into action.

Next steps

There are many fun and engaging ways to get involved with climate justice! You will find lots of climate-related resources for young people on our website.

Windows on the World is a great way to introduce primary school children to global issues. The learning resource focuses on how young people around the world are tackling climate change.

If young people wrote Letters for the World, what would they

say? Encourage your children and young people to join with others across the UK sharing messages of hope for the environment, and for people struggling with climate change.

If you and your young people are passionate about climate justice and want to support those living in vulnerable communities, we would love for you to fundraise with us.

You'll find lots more ideas and all our climate justice youth resources at:
caid.org.uk/youth-climate

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