

Week 3: September 16, Sky Sunday: Dominion and Exploitation

Psalm 19

Note to the Teacher

The key emphasis for this week (for this lesson Psalm 19 and Genesis 1) is that God is the Creator and has given humanity made in God's image the opportunity to share in the dominion of creation. The Ice Breaker invites youth to reflect on where they are thankful for creation. The Discussion encourages students to reflect on the Genesis 1 creation story, to see God's true focus in that story and what it means to be made in the image of God. The Activity allows youth to share in an activity where they will think about aspects of the earth and about how well they feel humanity is appropriately honoring God with it. Times are based on a 50-minute lesson period, but can be adjusted as is necessary.

Time Description of Activity

10 min **1. Ice Breaker**

Ask the students to take a moment to think about something in creation that they have been thankful for in the last week. Then, ask them to tell a story about that thing. Where did they experience it? How did it make them feel? Who else was with them?

5 min **2. Read Scripture**

Our Scripture reading today will focus on Psalm 19:1-4a and Genesis 1:1-5 – with a special focus on how Genesis 1:1-5 is more the story of who the Creator is and why God created the earth, rather than explaining the exact process God used to bring forth Creation. Help students to see that the creation story perhaps seeks most to answer Who? (God) and Why? (to express love outwardly by entering a loving relationship with humanity, making humans in God's own image.) God could have made Genesis 1 a hundred volume science book explaining exactly how Creation was made; but that doesn't seem to be God's true purpose or focus in Genesis.

Read Psalm 19:1-4a

- What do these verses say about the heavens that God has created?

Read Genesis 1:1-5

15 min **3. Discussion**

- Who created God?
- What existed before God created the heavens and earth?
- You are likely familiar with the story of Genesis 1. Day by day, it shares the story of God being the Creator of all Creation. When you learned to write a story or a paper in school, you learned that stories often try to answer questions such as Who, What, When, Where, Why and How? Which of these questions do you feel that Genesis 1 is most trying to answer?"
- What does it mean to be made "in God's image," as it states in 1:27?

- As humans were made in God’s image, they were entrusted with having dominion over the earth and caring for it. Where does one draw the line between appropriately using something and exploiting it for one’s own purposes?

20 Min 4. Activity and Discussion – If the Earth Was Made of Playdough

Take this lesson to the next level by getting students’ hands and imaginations involved using the activity “If the Earth Was Made of Playdough” from the Youthworker Collective: (<http://www.youthworkercollective.com/if-the-earth-was-made-of-playdough>):

Close in the manner that is typical for you. Consider taking joys and concerns from the students, then asking for a volunteer to close in prayer.

50 min

NEEDED RESOURCES:

One small can of play-dough for each small group that you’ll break your group into for the activity.