

SERIES RESOURCES



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introduction

The Scriptures—and *especially the Psalms*—repeatedly and emphatically declare the wonders and beauty of God’s creation. The Earth is the Lord’s! (Psalm 24) The heavens declare the glory of God! (Psalm 19) How many are your works, Lord! (Psalm 104) Creating humankind in his image, God entrusted us to wisely steward his rule, yet our relationship with God’s world is distorted and damaged.

This guide is a practical companion to the separate overview which details our three-part series on creation care (“The Earth is the Lord’s: God’s World and Our Role”) exploring the goodness of God’s creation and our rule, the problem and impact of sin, and how we are to live in anticipation of New Creation. Our hope is that this guide provides a practical framework to help us grow as disciples and stewards of God’s creation.

WHY CARE FOR CREATION?

Whilst creation care can be a peripheral part of following Jesus for some, in this series we are challenged from the Bible to take God’s world and our role seriously. As Douglas and Jonathan Moo put it:

Our human vocation is to work and take care of the place where God has planted us, to serve him in our rule in creation as priests in his temple. Caring for the earth is not, in this light, a peripheral biblical theme; it is central to our identity as God’s image bearers... Biblical wisdom requires attentiveness both to Scripture and to the realities of God’s creation if we are to care well for the earth and live out our vocation as God’s image bearers.¹

We understand the shape of our responsibility especially by considering *creation, the fall, and new creation*.

God’s Creation & Our Rule

In the beginning, God made creation, declared it very good, and set it apart to declare his glory. Whilst part of the created order, humans were uniquely *made* in God’s image and *entrusted* with special responsibility to ‘rule’ in cooperation with God (cf. Genesis 1:28). This rule was never intended to be

¹ See Douglas Moo and Jonathan Moo “Creation Care”, pp.78 and 195.

domineering, exploitative, nor destructive, but a delegated authority to act in service of God's purposes and will. As rulers *under God*, our role is to *work and take care* of creation (Genesis 2:15), not abuse it. Humans are to seek a comprehensive peace (i.e., 'shalom') inclusive of the totality creation.

Fallen Creation & Our Part

As sin entered the world (i.e., the fall) and fractured our relationship with God, it also damaged our relationship with one another and creation. The letter to the Romans reminds us that not only *all have sinned* (3:23), but that *creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth* (8:22) because of the sin subjected to it. The result of our sin means that we have neglected our God-given image and role (to care, protect, and use creation according to God's purposes) damaging the earth. Creation experiences the 'curse' of sin (cf. Genesis 3), which continues to be evident through greed, selfishness, and a failure to rule wisely.² Responding to the Gospel involves: (a) *repenting for our sin—along with the damage that it causes*; (b) *genuinely seeking to live differently in response the Good News that Jesus is Lord*; and (c) *living in response to the one who has redeemed us and will renew the entirety of creation*.

New Creation & Our Future

Jesus' resurrection marked the beginning of a new era in which the power of death and decay has been broken. It also points to the renewal of all things which will be made complete when he returns. It is in Jesus—as we put our trust in him—that we are made a new creation (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17) and look forward to a time when our bodies *and our world* will no longer be subject to the effects and curse of sin. How we live now matters. Not because it is through our labours that we can bring about salvation of the world, but because our actions *reflect who we are now in Christ and anticipate the reality of the future which is to come*. As those who are reconciled to God, Jesus restores us to our rightful place as his image bearers who are to rule the world under him. Or as Lionel Windsor put it:

*We can't save the world — that's Jesus' job. But you can make a difference, because you can live as an heir of this world, rescued from death, renewed in God's image, ruling under God.*³

² We witness this in a variety of ways. For example, *the challenges associated with accelerating world population growth, depletion of the earth's resources, excessive waste disposal, and climate change*.

³ See Lionel Windsor "Is God Green?" p.46.

HOW WE CARE AT FOR CREATION AT ST BART'S

St Bart's is intentional in environmental stewardship through its infrastructure design, process delivery, and through focused activities.

Infrastructure design:

- Building and garden design (e.g., large windows opening to daylight and bushland; prayer garden).
- Resource efficiency (e.g., solar panels, water tanks).

Process delivery:






- Whenever we gather, we try to use crockery and cutlery that can be washed and reused.
- Double-sided printing, adjusting air conditioning (up in summer and down in winter), and reminders to switch off lights when not in use.

Focused activities:

- Creation Care group who are active in regenerating bushland to the rear of church property. Removing invasive weed has allowed increased native bush growth and biodiversity of native bird species in successive audits.
- Garden working bees.

RESOURCES FOR SERIES

Key Resources

- *Read (book):* "Creation Care" by Douglas Moo & Jonathan Moo. 
- *Read (book):* "Is God Green?" by Lionel Windsor. 
- *Read (book):* "John Stott on Creation Care" by Sam Berry & Laura Yoder. 
- *Read (book—suitable for reading age of Year 10 and up):* "A Christian's Guide to Planet Earth: why it matters & how to care for it" by Betsy Painter. 
- *Read (book—suitable for reading age of 8-12 and up):* "All Of Creation: Understanding God's Planet and How We Can Help" by Betsy Painter. 



Available to borrow from the St Bart's Church Library (stbarts.com.au/library)

Extended Resource List

For an extended *resource list*, visit: stbarts.com.au/sermon-series/creation

Companion Resources

In addition to this *series resources guide*, please also refer to the *series overview* for extended reflections on the theology of creation.



Series Overview:

The *series overview* provides an outline of the sermon series. In addition to an overarching outline, each week highlights the Bible passage in focus, a brief reflection, a question (or two), and a short prayer.

To access these resources, visit: www.stbarts.com.au/sermon-series/creation



Series Resources

This collection of *series resources* has been specially designed in conjunction with our VISION 2025 'Environmental Stewards' Working Group. It will help us to enjoy, learn about, and care for God's creation.

**VISION 2025 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS WORKING GROUP
& ADAM LOWE (SENIOR MINISTER)**

St Bart's Toowoomba, September 2025

3 ways to grow as disciples & stewards of God's creation

The following section provides three key ways that we can grow as disciples in our role as stewards of God's creation. Additional resources (and activities) are also suggested.

- ENJOY God's creation with gratitude, rejoicing in the Creator of all.
- LEARN more about the biblical basis for stewarding God's creation.
- MAKE CHANGES at home to reduce your impact on God's creation.

enjoy

Enjoy God's creation with gratitude, rejoicing in the Creator & Redeemer of all.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning — the sixth day. Genesis 1:31

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness. Psalm 96:11-13

Even though marred by the fall, our world is the work of God's hands which he created good. Creation declares the glory of God and invites us—part of creation yet made in God's image—to rejoice in the splendour and goodness of our God. God invites us to delight and enjoy the work of his hands.

PRACTICAL IDEAS 💡

- **Nurture your attention to notice nature's beauty and direct your prayer in praise and adoration of God.** Look for changes in the seasons (e.g., the colours of leaves changing or the crunch of Autumn leaves underfoot; the crispness of the Winter air or the flowers in Spring) and the rhythms of the day (e.g., sunrise and sunset).
- **Keep a journal of prayers and share these with others (e.g., small group).**
- **Enjoy the beauty of creation daily with outdoor activities.**
You could even join one of our outdoor (cycling and walking) social groups (stbarts.com.au/gather/social-groups).
- **Grow in your knowledge about what particularly sparks your awe.**
There are a number of local groups that can help you with this:
St Bart's Creation Care Mission Group
Friends of the Escarpment Parks Toowoomba (fep.org.au)
Toowoomba Bird Observers (tboc.org.au)
Aussie Bird Count (aussiebirdcount.org.au)

learn

Learn more about the biblical basis for stewarding God's creation.




Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. Genesis 2:19

Praise the LORD. I will extol the LORD with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly. Great are the works of the LORD; they are pondered by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:1-2

The Scriptures invite us over-and-over again to not only enjoy the beauty and richness of God's creation, but also to learn more about it. As we learn more about God's creation it helps us to: delight in the majesty of the one who created it (for creation declares God's glory); be faithful stewards of what God has provided for us; and actively care for what has been entrusted.

KEY RESOURCES

There is an expansive range of biblically rich and theologically thoughtful resources that can help us learn more about our role (and the basis of our role) in stewarding God's creation. Some are available in the St Bart's Library.

- *Read (book):* "Creation Care: A Biblical Theology of the Natural World" by Moo & Moo. 
- *Read (book—suitable for reading age of Year 10 and up):* "A Christian's Guide to Planet Earth: why it matters & how to care for it" by Betsy Painter. 
- *Read (book—suitable for reading age of 8-12 and up):* "All Of Creation: Understanding God's Planet and How We Can Help" by Betsy Painter. 
- *Read (article):* "Redeemer Report: John Stott and Caring for God's Creation": <http://bit.ly/3VRhtgg>

 Available to borrow from the St Bart's Church Library (stbarts.com.au/library)

change

Make *changes* at home to reduce your impact on God's creation.

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 earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. Psalm 24:1

The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to mankind. Psalm 115:116

As followers of Jesus, we can sometimes adopt a selective type of discipleship, picking only particular aspects of God's calling for our lives. But John Stott said, "because Jesus is Lord, we have no right to pick and choose the areas in which we will submit to his authority."⁴ Our calling includes our role in cooperating with God to conserve and nurture his creation, especially in light of some crucial trends (e.g., accelerating world population growth, depletion of the earth's resources, excessive waste disposal, and climate change). Every disciple—as image bearers of God—has a role in being active in making changes as a response to the Lordship of Jesus.

A PRACTICAL APPROACH 🧐

Knowing where to start making changes at home can feel overwhelming, as there are so many opportunities! One way to prioritise your next step is to consider the waste hierarchy, an internationally recognised approach to reducing waste, from biggest impact (and most preferred) to least. The aim is to extract the maximum use from products while generating the minimum amount of waste. Please note that these tips have been adapted for the Toowoomba context from the Brisbane City Council (see <http://bit.ly/41RR2uv>).

⁴ See "The Radical Disciple: Some Neglected Aspects of our Calling" by John Stott.



PREVENT. The easiest way to avoid waste is not to purchase in the first place. So before purchasing anything, ask yourself:

1. What kind of consumer do I want to be, and what will my actions mean for the environment?
2. Choose mindful and worshipful options. A site such as ‘Baptist World Aid’s Ethical Fashion Guide’ might help.
3. Do I *really* need it? Do I have something else that will suffice?
4. Is it high quality and expected to last: “buy less, buy quality”. Is it easily repairable?
5. Can I borrow it instead, particularly if I only plan to use it occasionally or for a short period of time?

Other Tips:

- Avoid disposable/single-use items. Use reusable items instead. e.g., *bento boxes* for “nude food”, *reusable coffee cups/drink bottles*, *cutlery*, *refillable containers*, *cloth nappies*, *rechargeable batteries*, *hankies*, *cloth napkins*, *refillable ink cartridges*, *durable razors*.
- If you find advertising material goes straight in your recycling bin, get a 'no junk mail' sign for your letterbox.



REDUCE

Reduce your **food waste** by following the tips and advice:

- Reduce your unavoidable kitchen waste by transforming scraps into compost with a compost bin, worm farm, or bokashi bin. Alternatively, feed food scraps to your pets.
- Choose products with little packaging, or packaging that can be recycled or composted. 'Bulk foods' shops offer ways to buy *groceries without packaging*.
- Seek out items which can be upgraded or repaired.
- Learn to repair items instead of replacing them (or approach your local men's shed for assistance).
- Buy only what you need. *Use a shopping list (avoid impulse buys)*.

Reduce **water usage** and find water saving tips for residents to consider how you might best steward this precious resource.

- Consider transitioning your garden to align with permaculture and organic gardening principles. This might be as simple as prioritising locally native plants over imported species.
- You might like to attend an event held by a local permaculture or organic community garden group.

Reduce **electricity usage** by using electricity calculators.

- See Ergon Australia. <http://bit.ly/4nnfbBo>
- See Toowoomba Regional Council. <http://bit.ly/3VNyc4c>



REUSE

- Buy second-hand or pre-loved goods wherever possible. For example used furniture stores and Op Shops: thefieldguidetoowoomba.com/blog/toowoomba-op-shops
- Ask your local 'Buy Nothing Project' group for the item you are seeking: <http://bit.ly/4gkfESy>
- Borrow from friends. *Ask for a loan on items needed temporarily.*
- Join your local library to reuse books, magazines, and movies. *Did you know St Bart's operates a library of Christian resources?*
- Share with friends – household equipment or clothes.
- Use wastepaper for jotting notes or garden mulch.

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- Donate usable unwanted clothes, furniture, and household goods to our local Tip Shops, Op Shop, or 'Buy Nothing' group.
 - Reuse glass/plastic containers to store food/household items.
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RECYCLE

- Ensure recycling bin is easily accessible (*especially the kitchen!*).
 - Bookmark the 'TRC Household Waste' page to find your home's bin day, check items that belong in each bin, and find where to take used e-waste and mobile phones.
 - Reduce the organic waste output from your kitchen and garden by using (see related tips in the 'reduce' section above).
 - Purchase products made from recycled content and *help close the loop on recycling by supporting the recycled product market.*
-



RECOVER

Recover means extracting energy or resources from waste that cannot be reused or recycled, often through processes like composting organic matter or converting waste to energy. It aims to make the best use of materials before final disposal.

- Use your green-lid bin for garden organics, which are turned into compost for local farms and gardens.
 - Support or participate in programs that recover energy from waste (e.g., regional waste-to-energy initiatives).
 - Explore local drop-off points for hard-to-recycle items (like e-waste), which often channel materials into recovery streams.
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DISPOSE

Dispose is the last resort, where waste that cannot be *prevented, reduced, reused, recycled, or recovered* goes to landfill. The goal is to minimise this stage as much as possible.

Each of us live in different contexts and not all the suggestions provided will suit your household. *You might like to start with a step that's easiest to implement for your household and consider building from there. However, if you want to start with a big impact change, you could start with food waste.*

additional resources

The Theology of Creation Care / Stewardship

- “Creation Care” by Douglas Moo & Jonathan Moo. 
- “Is God Green?” by Lionel Windsor. 
- “John Stott on Creation Care” by Sam Berry & Laura Yoder. 
- “A Christian’s Guide to Planet Earth: why it matters & how to care for it” by Betsy Painter. (*Suitable for reading age of Year 10 and up.*) 
- “All Of Creation: Understanding God’s Planet and How We Can Help” by Betsy Painter. (*Suitable for reading age of 8-12 and up.*) 
- “The Dawn of Creation (Bible Speaks Today)” by David Atkinson.
- “The Message of Creation (Bible Speaks Today)” by Dallas Willard.
- “In the Beginning, God: Creation, Culture, & the Spiritual Life” by Marva Dawn.
- “Creation & New Creation: Understanding God’s Creation Project” by Donough, Paternoster, & Keynes.

A Christian or Australian Response to Climate Change

- Common Grace, *Creation and Climate Justice Resources*:
https://www.commongrace.org.au/climate_justice_resources
- “Dr Karl’s Little Book on Climate Change Science” by Karl Kruszelnicki.
- “Resources for a Journey of Faith and Justice” by TEAR Fund:
<https://www.tearfund.org.au/resources>



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