



## 2 Creation care is biblical mission (part 1)

**Purpose: To relate specific biblical passages in the Old Testament to the issue of creation care with a view to an appropriate mission lifestyle in our own community.**



### To set the ball rolling

**Go out of doors and look up at the sky quietly for several minutes. It doesn't matter if it's daylight or dark.**

**Read together Job 38: 4-7, 31-33.**



### Introduction

God is ultimately the one in control of the earth and we are servants to God's vision of creation and shalom (literally, well-being). The Hebrew word for 'rule' denotes kingship, but to the ancients' understanding it wasn't a kingship of privilege or power but carried a deep weight of responsibility, even to the point of suffering or sacrifice for those one ruled.



### Using FAQ videos

Consider the option to show FAQ videos 3 and 4 before the discussion.

**FAQ video 3** *Are creation care problems too big for us to solve?*

**FAQ video 4** *Surely it's God's job not ours to care for creation?*



### For discussion

**1 Read Psalm 104.** Which verses inspire you to worship God, to greater faith and to pray? Perhaps some of you have other reactions as well?

**2** How do these verses in Psalm 104 show God as a creator God actively concerned for all he has made?

**3 Read Genesis 1: 26-28.** What two things do these verses say about men and women?

**4** What does it mean for us to be made in the image of God?

**5** How can we be good stewards of creation?

**6** How might being made in the image of God and being good stewards of creation together affect the way we live?



### For further thought

Genesis 1: 26-28 seems to have in mind a spiritual dimension to our existence which sets us apart from everything else in creation. What does it say about the way we treat other people as well as the rest of creation? Has our position ever made it feel OK to exploit creation for our own purposes or does it increase our urgency to be more accountable to God?



## 2 Creation care is biblical mission *(part 1) continued*



### **Practical suggestions to consider for action by government, the local church and yourself as an individual**

#### ● **Government**

Consider your own voting in local and national elections. How high in your list of priorities are environmental (creation care, stewardship) issues in deciding how you will vote? How would Jesus vote? Study the policies of the main parties, if necessary contacting your local politicians to find out where they stand. Perhaps even get your church, along with other local churches, to host a 'Green Forum' for local politicians.

#### ● **Church**

If your church has a 'mission statement' or 'mission plan', does creation care feature in it at all, or is it entirely focused on people? How could this be incorporated?

Encourage the children's and young people's groups in your church to produce something (art work / drama / prayers / song) based on the story of Noah's ark, and what it has to say to us today.

#### ● **Individual**

Each morning this week read one of the many Psalms (eg Psalms 19, 24, 65, 96, 104, 148 or Job 38-40) that talk about God's creation, and reflect on both God's relationship with creation, and your own.

The Genesis 1: 26-28 charge to humanity is about ruling over, and looking after other creatures. If you eat meat, have you considered how ethically the animals have been treated? It may be worth considering eating meat less often in order to afford eating 'happier' meat.

Save energy and save money! Is it possible for you to turn down your thermostat by one or two degrees? This can both save money and save on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. If you are older or on a limited income, you may be able to receive grants to help insulate your home more effectively.

If you have any other suggestions not mentioned here or in the other studies, please do not hesitate to send them to our Futureshape Green Forum by e-mailing [mail@futureshape.org](mailto:mail@futureshape.org) They will be posted on our website.