

Enjoying God My Creator!

Meaningful Activities *to* Connect Children's Hearts *to* God

70+
hands-on
activities!

*Use for family
devotions, Sunday
school, children's
church, homeschool
or any other time
you teach children
about God!*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Frequently Asked Questions.....	1
Theme 1: God Made Everything.....	5
Theme 2: God Made Me.....	15
Theme 3: God Knows Best.....	27
Theme 4: God Sustains the World.....	40
Appendix.....	51



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Why did you write *Enjoying God My Creator!*?

We are parents and leaders in children's ministry who want our children and the children we teach to learn to relate to God in a personal way. Like you, we don't want our kids to simply know about God and recite facts or doctrine (though that's important!). We want them to enjoy a relationship with God. We believe that learning to enjoy God while young will connect children's hearts to God and establish a foundation of love and trust.

This activity guide was designed to help children enjoy and delight in God their Creator by teaching the way children learn best—through play, activity, and FUN—while still teaching solid biblical truth! We wanted a resource that will equip parents, teachers, and other adults to teach children about God the Creator in an active, meaningful way. Play is the work of childhood, and these activities harness the power of imagination with the power of God's Word. Our ultimate goal is helping children know, enjoy, and respond to God, their Creator.



What age is this written for?

The activities in this guide are designed for 3-11-year-olds. Most can be easily adapted for other ages or taught to a multi-age group.

We designed activities with our own preschoolers in mind, so if you have preschoolers, they can join right in! Preschoolers love to touch, move, explore, and wonder. These are the main components of most of the activities.

Older kids love to lead. These years are a great time to help them develop skills while they continue to learn about God. If you have older children or teens, they can help you with the research or prep for activities. Suggestions are also given on ways to adapt activities so they challenge older children.



How are the activities organized?

There are four themes developed in this guide. They are:

God Made Everything

God Made Me

God Knows Best

Why Was I Created?

These themes are the "big ideas" that you and your children will explore together as you learn to enjoy God, our Creator.

Each theme is further divided into topics that explore the theme in more depth. There are 4 – 6 topics per theme. The topics are key biblical truths that support and expound on the theme. Every activity will teach the main theme and at least one of the topics.

Each theme also has a "foundational" category of activities. These activities include a key phrase, key verse, verse game, song suggestions, etc. These foundational activities can be taught alongside any of the topics. They can be done at any time, and can even be repeated several times to support the overall theme.



Can I simply read these activities as they're written to my children?

Yes! We tried to make these as simple to use as possible. Children respond more to how you say something than what you actually say. While it's important to speak truth, your enthusiasm and love for what you are saying will be the most meaningful to your children long-term. Model awe, wonder, admiration, and love towards God the Creator, and your children will easily follow in your footsteps.



Can I see demonstrations of any activities?

Yes! Check out the *Kids Enjoying Jesus* YouTube channel where you can find video demonstrations and explanations of many activities.



How much time will it take to prepare these activities?

All of the activities in this guide are low prep. Each activity uses materials commonly found in the average household (which keeps it low cost too!). Every activity uses this general format:

- **Prepare**—this tells you what you need to gather or prepare to successfully complete the activity.
- **Say**—This includes suggested things for you to say and Bible verses to read.
- **Do**—The instructions to have the most FUN with the activity.
- **Ideas**—some activities have extra ideas to make the activity accommodate older children or larger groups.

You can take a few minutes to plan which activities you want to do, gather the materials listed in the “prepare” section, pray, and then get started!

You can save even MORE time and effort by buying the digital printable pack! This pack contains **every single printable** you need to teach these activities, plus some extra bonus activities too! This “time saver” symbol within an activity  indicates a printable resource.

You can purchase the printable pack file at www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com and www.KidsEnjoyingJesus.com.



What supplies will I need to do these activities?

A materials list is available in the printable pack of every supply needed for every activity so you can see it at a glance. Here are some supplies that are used repeatedly that you’ll want to have on hand:

- Bag or container to put activity cards in
- Pencils and pens
- Paper
- Crayons, colored pencils, etc.



Do I need to do every activity?

In short ... no! Each activity stands alone, so you can pick and choose what will work for your group. You don’t have to do them all or even do them in the order they’re written! There’s no need to check off boxes or feel like you have to accomplish the whole leader’s guide in order to successfully help your children enjoy God as their Creator. You’ll want to choose activities based on the following:

- **Ages**—are you teaching a preschool class? Choose activities that are high involvement, aren’t reading-based (or adapt for non-readers), and are fairly short. If you have a mix of ages, consider how you can involve both the very young and the older kids.
- **Abilities**—Are the children very active? How long is their attention span? Can they read? Do they like being outdoors? You can pick activities according to what the children can do or what they like.
- **Setting**—Are you using this for family devotions or for children’s church? Do you have one

child or twenty? Are you teaching inside or outside? There is enough variety in these activities to have something for everyone, but considering your teaching setting will help you choose activities.



Is there a gospel presentation?

Yes! Before children can fully treat God as their Creator, they need to know him as Savior. Each theme has an activity that points to the gospel in some way. The printable pack includes a full-color object lesson called “The Gospel Robot” that can be used at any point as you work through this activity guide. You may want to present the object lesson first to introduce the children to the gospel message. Or, you may feel led to use it in the middle, or even at the end. It’s crucial to introduce children to God the Creator’s salvation plan at some point. You know your children best, so use it as God leads you.



Are there helps for leading a discussion?

An excellent way to help children make connections with biblical content and deepen their walk with God is through having discussions. Asking questions is one of the best ways to gauge what children are learning and thinking. One of the goals of this book is to help draw children’s hearts closer to God. Talking with and listening to them can help you direct their hearts towards a deeper relationship with God. It’s important to create an environment where children feel comfortable talking and sharing.

Many of the activities in this guide lend themselves well to a discussion either during or after the activity. Each theme has “Discussion Starters” in the “foundational” activities’ category. These discussion starters can be used by themselves, or in conjunction with any other activity.

The “Respond” sections in some activities contain questions or a natural way to respond to God. You could also allow time to answer questions children have about the topic, or about God.



Can I extend these activities?

This activity guide is based on the content of the 4-week devotional book called *God is My Creator!* It is a great resource for a child’s individual study or for more in-depth teaching in a group setting. The devotional book is written at a 3rd grade reading level and is ideal for children to do on their own as they establish a daily time with God. Its goal is to help children relate to God as Creator and then respond to him from their hearts.

A free digital leader’s guide is available to help you engage in conversation around the content. This devotional is available for purchase as a digital file at www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com or www.KidsEnjoyingJesus.com. A print version is also available on Amazon.



How can I use this in my homeschool?

This activity guide works well as a homeschool Bible curriculum. You could choose one or two activities to do each day, choosing the ones that suit your homeschool the best. The activities can be done as an entire family. The accompanying devotional book (see “Can I extend these activities?” question) can also be used daily for older children.



How can I use this for family devotions?

These activities can help you carry out Deuteronomy 6:4-9 as you look for ways to point out what creation teaches about God and ways God enjoys and sustains it each day. This can be a great way to really enrich your family time - either as a specific devotion time or as scattered activities during your week. Most of the activities can be completed in 15 minutes or less, which makes them easy to use. You could choose one activity per devotional time. The activities are interactive and fun, which makes

them perfect for a family to do together and convey that enjoying God is fun. Most activities have a corresponding Bible verse or way to respond to God. Additionally, you can learn a song, Key Phrase or verse together as a family.



How can I use this in my church? (Sunday School, children's church, weeknight programs, etc.)

This activity guide was intentionally designed to be very versatile. Because each activity stands alone, you may choose what would work best for your class. Each activity has an estimate for how long it will take. So, if you have 20 minutes, you may want to pick two or three activities. If you have an hour, you'd probably want to pick five or six activities, including the Key Phrase and Key Verse for that theme to add depth to your teaching. You may want to pick activities within the same theme and topic for the class to give continuity to your teaching. See the sample schedules in the appendix for ideas on how to best plan your time!



How many weeks of teaching can I fill with these activities?

This activity guide could easily take you through eight weeks of content. If your class meets once a week, you could spend two weeks on each theme. There are enough activities for you to use one a day (such as for family devotions or homeschool). You may take more or less time—it all depends on how many activities you choose to use and how much time you want to fill.



Is there a sample schedule I can see?

Yes! In the appendix there are sample schedules (and corresponding blank schedules) for the following:

- 20-minute class—Elementary
- 60-minute class—Preschool
- Use at home (family devotions, homeschool)

The samples show how to take the content and divide it up depending on your setting.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

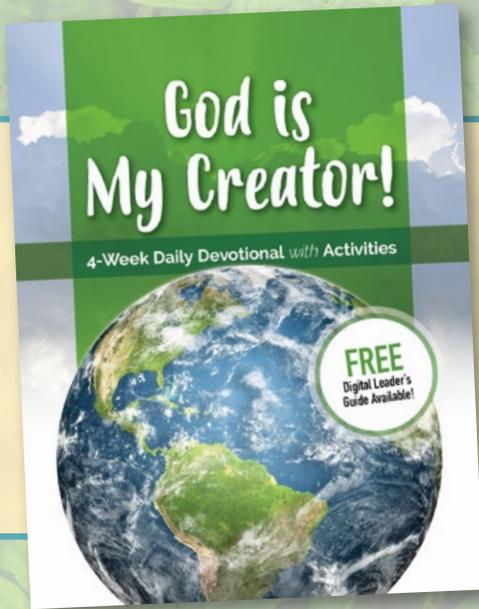
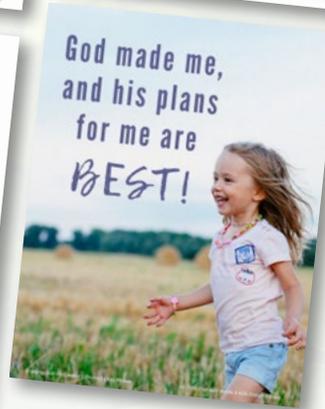
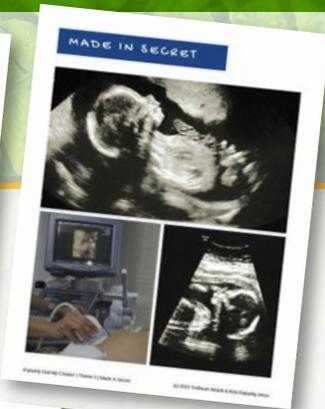
Save time and effort!

Get the digital printable pack and implement these activities even quicker and easier!

Includes:

- ▶ 90+ pages of visuals, activity pages, game pieces, materials lists, coloring pages, and more!
- ▶ A printable for each of the 46 activities that suggest visuals
- ▶ Bonus content not found in the Activity Guide (Additional coloring pages, activities, and a Gospel Object Lesson)

Visit www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com or www.KidsEnjoyingJesus.com and download it today!



This companion devotional builds on the same themes and topics as this Activity Guide. It provides 4 weeks of devotionals for kids ages 7-11. Each day includes interactive elements and a weekly final activity to help them draw near to the Creator!

Purchase digital files at www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com or www.KidsEnjoyingJesus.com. Printed books available from Amazon.

THEME 1:

God Made Everything

Overview: Theme 1 focuses on God's creativity and ongoing sustaining of his creation. Children will have fun identifying all the details God had to think of as he created various plants and animals. They will enjoy immersing themselves in creation's tastes, smells, details, and wonders. They will marvel at God's power as they consider all he does every day to care for creation. As they observe nature, the goal is that their hearts would be filled with awe, love, and praise for the Creator of all things.

For Reflection: Before leading this theme's activities, ponder these verses and questions. Ask God to help you wonder at his power and creativity so you can naturally share from your own heart and experience.

Colossians 1:15-20

Romans 1:18-25

Psalm 95

What aspects of creation amaze and fascinate you?

What does creation teach you about God?

What do you want to happen in the hearts of your children as they encounter God the Creator?

Topics and activities covered in this theme include:

Foundational Activities

- Key Phrase: God made, enjoys, and sustains his creation.
- Key Verse: Psalm 95:6
- Amazing Animal Actions Verse Game
- Song Suggestions
- Daily Detectives Activity
- Discussion Starters

God Thought of Everything

- Create a Critter
- Observe a Plant

God Made the World

- The Story of Creation
- Tastes & Smells of Creation
- Mud Mania!
- Discovering Unusual Animals
- Enjoy Some Rest

God Sustains the World

- God Does It All!
- God Keeps it Running

The World Declares God's Greatness

- The Reflection Connection
- Watch & Worship
- Nature Scavenger Hunt

Pick and choose whatever number of activities help you cover the topics you desire in the time you have available. You could teach one topic per week, or highlight several topics all at once. Use one activity at a time, or put several together to create a longer teaching time.



Key Phrase | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Phrase: God made, enjoys, and sustains his creation.

Prepare: Key Phrase Visual (*printable*)

Do: Introduce the phrase for this week with motions.

God made (*move hands as if forming something*)

enjoys (*hug yourself*)

and sustains (*hands circle around and around each other*)

his creation (*spread out arms in front of you*)

Say: Ask questions to help children think about what each aspect of the phrase means.

Made: *How did God make the world? What are some things in creation God made?*

Enjoys: *What animal do you think makes God laugh the most? What does God enjoy about snowstorms?*

Sustains: *How does God help plants grow? What does God do every day so we can live on earth?*

Do: Repeat this phrase several times. You could say it together between questions, assign a motion to each child and say it, or see who can say it by themselves. Post the phrase where children can see it.



Key Verse | **Related Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Prepare: Psalm 95:6 Verse Visual (*printable*) , Bible, “Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down” song

Say: (*Have children line up at one end of the room while you stand at the other end.*) When I call your name and say, “Come!” I want you to run over to where I am standing. (*Call each child one by one to come to you. If there are a lot of children, call several at one time.*) I called you to come to me, and you came! Our verse talks about coming and doing something very important.

Do: Read Psalm 95:6 from the Bible and from the printed visual.

Say: This verse says to come and worship God! To worship is to tell God how amazing and wonderful he is. Bowing down and kneeling means to treat God as the King he is. God is our Maker—he made us and he is amazing! This verse helps us remember to come to God and treat him as our Creator and Maker. That’s something we should remember every day!

Do: Play Amazing Animal Actions Verse Game and/or sing the verse using the song, “Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down.”



Amazing Animal Actions Verse Game | Topic: Foundational | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Animal Action cards (*printable*) , container or bag

Do: Play a game to showcase God's creativity while learning the key verse together! Write the amazing animal actions below on pieces of paper. Put the papers in a container or bag. Have children take turns grabbing a paper, reading the animal action, and leading everyone in that action while saying the verse together.

Say: God made such amazing creatures! He is even more amazing than the things he has made. We can and should worship him for being so wonderful and creative!

Ideas:

- ▶ Pistol shrimp **CLAP** their claw to shoot bubbles!
- ▶ Sloths move so **SLOWLY** that plants grow on them!
- ▶ Secretary birds **STOMP** on dangerous snakes!
- ▶ Barbastelle bats can **WHISPER** to sneak up on moths!
- ▶ Kangaroos can't walk. Their legs are made to **HOP**!
- ▶ Flamingos can **STAND ON ONE FOOT** when they're asleep!
- ▶ Some frogs can **FREEZE** solid without dying!
- ▶ Spinner dolphins can **SPIN** around in the air!



Image from Pixabay



Song Suggestions | Topic: Foundational | Time: 5 min

Prepare: musical instruments (*homemade, wooden, etc.*), songs (*see list below*)

Say: You can worship God anywhere, with or without instruments, quietly or loudly! God will hear and enjoy your praise!

Do: As the children sing and worship God, have them play instruments, sit quietly, or march around the room.

Song Suggestions (*available on YouTube*):

- “God Made Me” by Slugs and Bugs
- “Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down”
- “He is God” by Jana Alarya

Note: Specific songs are suggested alongside relevant activities throughout this guide as well as in the sample schedules in the appendix.



Daily Detectives Activity | Topic: Foundational | Time: 15 min per day

Prepare: Daily Detectives Handout (*printable*)  or paper for child to write down observations, colored pencils or crayons

Say: You're going to be creation detectives this week! Your job is to closely observe nature and discover things around you God made, enjoys, and sustains and record it each day on this handout.

Idea: If you can observe creation alongside the children, ask questions to help them think more deeply about their observations. How does God enjoy that? What is God doing right now to sustain that? What can this teach you about God? How is this the same (*or different*) from something else God made? How does God care for you in a similar way?

Do: Go outside together for 10 minutes. Be sure to model the thrill of discovery. Find something that causes you to marvel at the Creator—then share it! Allow children to draw their pictures and share an observation with everyone. Draw out their wonder at the detail, imagination, and power of God.

Respond: Repeat the Key Phrase each time you observe creation. Model saying this with awe and wonder.



Discussion Starters | Topic: Foundational | Time: 10 min

Idea: Discussion can help children think through and consider ideas in a different way. It can help you discern their perspective and hearts. Use these questions after another activity or as a stand-alone activity. Choose the questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have. You don't have to have all the answers. Simply point children to the God who does!

When holding a discussion, it is often best to find a way to engage children in quiet activity (*especially little ones*). Let children eat a snack, color a picture, or build with blocks to keep their hands busy. Or go on a walk together as you discuss these ideas!

Discussion #1: **God Knows**

Say: What are some questions you have about how things work in nature or with animals? (*Examples: How do mosquitoes survive the winter? How do monarchs know how to fly to Mexico? How do people in different parts of the world see different stars but the same moon?*) Do you think God knows the answers to these questions? He had to think of them before he made each plant, animal or part of nature! How many things do you think God had to think of when he made the world? Do you think he forgot anything? What word would you use to describe our great God? Finish this sentence, "God, you are _____!"

Discussion #2: **God Cares**

Say: God cares about his creation. He names the stars and remembers their names (*Psalm 147:4*)! He feeds the birds (*Luke 12:24*). He sees the mountain goats being born (*Job 39:1*). Think about your week. When might God have seen you enjoying life and smiled? When might God have seen you crying and comforted you? When might God have laughed at you being silly? When did God give you something you needed?

Discussion #3: **Being in Charge**

Say: Imagine you had to be in charge of the world for a day. Would you remember everything that has to be done? What might go wrong? What parts would you enjoy? What would you not enjoy? Would nature enjoy you being in charge? Would other people enjoy you being in charge? Why are you glad God is the one in charge of the world? What do you want to say to him?



Create a Critter | **Topic:** God Thought of Everything | **Time:** 15 min

Prepare: Bible, creative materials such as:

- ▶ Building bricks or blocks
- ▶ Natural materials (*twigs, leaves, rocks, mud, etc.*)
- ▶ Art supplies (*pipe cleaners, pom poms, colored paper, pencils, crayons, etc.*)
- ▶ Play dough

Say: Read Colossians 1:16. God planned and designed every teeny tiny detail of every animal on earth. No one else is wise or powerful enough to do that! Let's imagine you were trying to make a new kind of animal. What parts would you use? What would it look like? Let's find out!

Do: Join the children as they create critters of their own. (*Some children may prefer to write out a description.*) While you work, remind the children that God just had to speak and instantly all the animals were created! Let children briefly share what they created. Ask, Did it turn out just like you imagined? Would it be harder to make a real animal? How is God's creation better than ours?

Idea: Connect this idea to the Key Verse. Worship God who is all-wise and all-powerful.



Observe a Plant | **Topic:** God Thought of Everything | **Time:** 10 min

Prepare: Bible, several different plants or flowers, magnifying glasses or jeweler's loupes, plant-based snack (*optional*)

Say: Read Genesis 1:11-12. There are over 300,000 different kinds of plants in the world and God made them all just by speaking! Can you name 10 different plants? We're going to enjoy God's creation by looking closely at a plant and answering some questions.

Do: Investigate a plant or plant parts. Look for ways God made the plant similar to or different from other plants. Gather information about the plant such as color, size, shape, smell, and texture. Observe the plant up close. Are there parts you've never seen or thought about before? If appropriate, talk about what medicinal or food purposes the plant serves. Praise God for showing his thoughtful and creative wisdom by making so many incredible plants.

Idea: You could also use the Internet or a plant field guide to help children learn more about the plants they observe.

Respond: If possible, finish by eating a plant-based snack like apple slices, grapes, or cucumbers. As children eat, have them name as many plants as possible. At the end read Genesis 1:11. Imagine God speaking those words and creating every one of those plants (*plus many more*) in that one moment! Let's praise God together by saying, "Wow, God, nothing is too hard for you!"



The Story of Creation | Topic: God Made the World | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible or Bible storybook (such as *The Jesus Storybook Bible*), Creation Coloring Page (printable) , Six Days of Creation Page (printable) , crayons or colored pencils, “God Made Me” song

Say: Who was the only one who was there when the world was made? God! He tells us how he made the world in his book, the Bible.

Do: Read the story of creation directly from Genesis 1, listen to a dramatic reading, or read from a Bible storybook. As you read, have children color a picture of creation or draw what God made on each day of creation. After admiring their work, take a few minutes to praise God for his work in making this good and wonderful world!

Idea: Sing “God Made Me” or play the song as children finish their pictures.

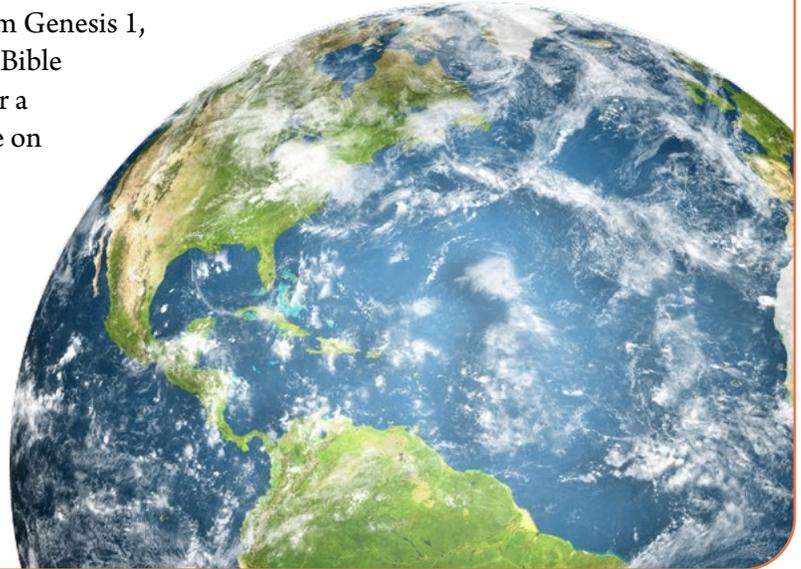


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Tastes & Smells of Creation | Topic: God Made the World | Time: 15 min

Prepare: items that are safe for children to smell and taste and put each in a separate container, paper and pencils for older children

Item ideas:

- ▶ cinnamon
- ▶ basil
- ▶ dandelion
- ▶ fruits like raspberries, blueberries, oranges, bananas, etc.
- ▶ chocolate
- ▶ nuts (*be careful of allergies*)
- ▶ pine needles or pinecones (*not edible*)
- ▶ flower (*may be edible depending on the type*)

Say: When God made the world, he not only made it look beautiful, but also he made it with things for us to taste and smell! God didn't have to make food taste good or smell good. But because he is so kind, he made food that tastes good and smells good. He made other things in his world that also smell good. What things can you think of that smell good?

Do: Have children close their eyes and smell each item first. If it's edible, have them take a small taste and guess what it is. For older children, have them smell each item then write their guess on a piece of paper. Once they have guessed, reveal the answers.



Mud Mania! | **Topic:** God Made the World | **Time:** 1–2 hours

Prepare: play clothes, buckets of water, cups, pans, vehicles that are “mud safe,” container to observe bugs or plants that are discovered

Do: Review or read the Key Phrase together

Say: When God made the world, he made everything good, including dirt! What does God make grow in dirt? Why is dirt important? What lives in dirt? What would happen if the earth didn’t have dirt? What do you think God enjoys about dirt? How does dirt help keep life going? Today we’re going to explore dirt—up close and personal!

Do: Put on play clothes, go outside with a bucket of water (*or two!*) and make some mud! Let it squish between your feet and fingers. Let the children make mud pies or dig with construction equipment.

Ideas: Encourage children to discover what lives in the mud/ dirt and talk about the kinds of creatures they find. You may find an earthworm or two! You may want to put any interesting bugs or plants in a container to observe for a few days. When the children are done, you can add to the fun by having everyone wash off with the garden hose.



Discovering Unusual Animals | **Topic:** God Made the World | **Time:** 5–15 min

Prepare: Bible, Discovering Unusual Animals Cards (*printable*) ⌚ cut apart and put in a bag, Researching Unusual Animals (*printable*) ⌚ —one per older child, resources for research (*access to Internet, printed articles, nature books, encyclopedias, etc.*) or Unusual Animal Fun Facts (*printable*) ⌚

Unusual Animal Suggestions:

- ▶ panda ant
- ▶ red-lipped batfish
- ▶ umbrella bird
- ▶ leafy seadragon
- ▶ axolotl
- ▶ glass frog
- ▶ frogmouth
- ▶ poodle moth

Say: I’ve got some crazy sounding animal names in this bag and I want you to guess which ones are actually animals God created.

Do: Let the children take turns pulling an animal name paper out of the bag and reading the animal’s name out loud. Have everyone give a thumbs up or thumbs down to vote on whether or not they think it’s a real animal’s name. Say that you will tell them at the end which animals are real. When all the papers have been chosen, say, Guess what?! All these animals are real! Are you surprised? Let’s discover more about them!

Read “Unusual Animals: Fun Facts” to younger children. For older children, give each child a “Researching Unusual Animals” paper and find answers to questions like “What does it look like?” “What does it eat?” “Where does it live?” and “How does it show God’s awesomeness?” They can research using the Internet, printed articles, encyclopedias, nature books, etc. You can even have them research and report back with something new they’ve learned about one of those animals.

Respond: Read Psalm 86:8. Lead a popcorn prayer time. Say, God, there is no one like you. Only you could imagine and create _____” then let a child fill in the rest of the sentence with an animal and something interesting about it. Continue as time and interest allow.



Enjoy Some Rest | **Topic:** God Made the World | **Time:** 2–4 hours

Prepare: Bible, set aside a couple hours or an afternoon to rest together as a family or group; choose a location everyone will enjoy

Say: What did God do after he made the world? Read Genesis 2:2. What does it mean to rest? Rest doesn't just mean taking a nap or being still and quiet. Rest means taking time to enjoy what is around you. What do you think God enjoyed after he created the world? What do you think made him smile? What do you think made him laugh? Who do you think he spent time with?

Do: Go to the location you chose. Put away electronics. Resist the urge to plan every moment. Spend time playing, talking, and laughing together. Wander around outside. Enjoy a special food treat. Delight in getting away from responsibility. Enter the rest God exemplified in creation.

Respond: Notice the refreshment rest brings. How was this time beneficial to you? To your children? Did anything unexpected happen? How could you incorporate this into your weekly or monthly schedule?



God Does It All! | **Topic:** God Sustains the World | **Time:** 15 min

Prepare: God Does It All Charades Cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag or container, Bible

Charade Ideas:

- ▶ God knows about every bird and animal (*Psalms 50:11*).
- ▶ God gives breath to every person (*Job 12:10*).
- ▶ God tells the sun when to rise (*Job 38:12*).
- ▶ God stores up snow and hail (*Job 38:22*).
- ▶ God feeds the lions (*Job 38:39*).
- ▶ God tells the ocean's waves where to stop (*Job 38:11*).
- ▶ God feeds the birds (*Luke 12:24*).
- ▶ God keeps track of every hair on your head (*Matthew 10:30*).

Say: Read Colossians 1:17. God is always at work directing the entire universe in order to care for his creation. I've written down some things the Bible says God does every day. We're going to act them out and guess what they are.

Do: Let children take turns pulling statements from the bag and silently acting them out while everyone else tries to guess what it is. Then have an older child or teen find and read the verse that accompanies each statement. Emphasize that God sustains the world by saying things like, God keeps all these systems running at the same time. We can think about and praise him for his power each time we see the world working.

Idea: For younger children, act out each statement together.

Respond: Have children close their eyes and imagine what God does every day to sustain them. Say activities that they would all do each day to help them think of different things. Ideas could include: wake up, eat, play, talk, see, hear, cough, run fast, breathe hard, sneeze, sleep. At the end, thank God for these specific things he does and worship him with the words of the Key Verse.



God Keeps It Running | Topic: God Sustains the World | Time: 20 min

Prepare: God Keeps It Running (*printable*)  or blank paper, God Keeps It Running Cards (*printable*) , pencil, Bible, “He is God” song.

Say: Every day, God does billions of things to keep the universe running, like spinning the earth, causing toenails to grow, and feeding the hummingbirds. What other things would stop happening if God stopped sustaining everything? When I say “Go!” you’ll have two minutes to list as many things as possible.

Do: Divide the children into teams and give paper and a pencil to an older child/teen on each team. (*You could also work as one team and write everything on a whiteboard.*) When time is up, have the children briefly share their answers.

Play several more rounds if you’ve got time. For older children/teens, make it more difficult by assigning different categories such as outer space, the ocean, or the jungle for each round.

Ideas: Between each round, read a verse about God’s creative/sustaining power. Verse suggestions:

- ▶ Hebrews 1:3a
- ▶ Psalm 119:90-91
- ▶ Proverbs 3:19
- ▶ Colossians 1:16-17
- ▶ Psalm 93:1

Challenge children to keep enjoying and worshipping God every day by noticing his constant involvement in the world around them. Sing “He is God.”



The Reflection Connection | Topic: The World Declares God's Greatness Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, picture (*or actual item*) of a favorite part of God’s creation, large mirror, objects to hold in front of the mirror, The Reflection Connection handout (*printable*)  or paper, crayons or markers

Say & Do: Mirrors reflect what is in front of them. Have children hold up items in front of the mirror. Mirrors show exactly what is in front of them. Nature is like a mirror. It reflects a part of what God is like. Read Romans 1:19-20. Share something you love in nature and what it reflects about God. Go outside or use the pictures or nature items to have children think of what each one reflects about God. For preschoolers ask, What shows us that God is _____?

Ideas:

- ▶ Waterfall – God’s power
- ▶ Trees – God’s strength
- ▶ Flowers – God’s creativity
- ▶ Mountains – God’s majesty
- ▶ Birds – God’s care
- ▶ Fruit – God’s provision

Say: God wants everyone to know and trust Jesus. This is why nature reflects God. Nature causes people to know there is a God and ask questions about him. People can hear the good news that Jesus died to bring us to God. They can trust Jesus to save them. If you have questions about God or Jesus, you can ask me anytime.

Respond: Draw a picture of something in nature that reflects God. Write one way it reflects God—God, you are _____!



Watch & Worship | **Topic:** The World Declares God's Greatness | **Time:** 10 min

Prepare: nature montage video on the Kids Enjoying Jesus YouTube channel

Say: We're going to watch a video of things God created. While we watch, we're going to look for ways God displays his beauty, wisdom, creativity, faithfulness, or other attributes. We can also look for colors and say the names of animals we see!

Do: Watch the video. Young children can call out colors and animal names while they watch. Older children and teens can write down how many different ways God displays his attributes before the movie is over. After the movie, ask questions like, What did you see that reminded you God is powerful/faithful/good? What animals helped you see that God is beautiful/creative/wise?

Respond: Choose to sing, pray or repeat the verse as a way to communicate the awe in your hearts to God.



Nature Scavenger Hunt | **Topic:** The World Declares God's Greatness

Time: 10 – 45 min

Prepare: Nature Scavenger Hunt (*printable*)  or make your own list, a container for nature treasures

Ideas of things to look for:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Something the size of your fingernail | Something the size of your foot |
| 2 different kinds of leaves | Something an animal would eat |
| 4 items that are 4 different colors | Something you enjoy |
| Something beautiful | 2 different rocks |
| Something wet | Something that grows in the ground |

Do: Go outside and find nature treasures. Spread out the items.

Say: Imagine God making and caring for each of these treasures. What can this treasure remind you about God? Imagine what this item might say to God. How could it praise God? (*sing, clap, rejoice, bow down*)
What do you want to say or do to praise God?

Respond: Praise God together. Sing a song. Say the Key Verse or Phrase. Adore him in some other way.

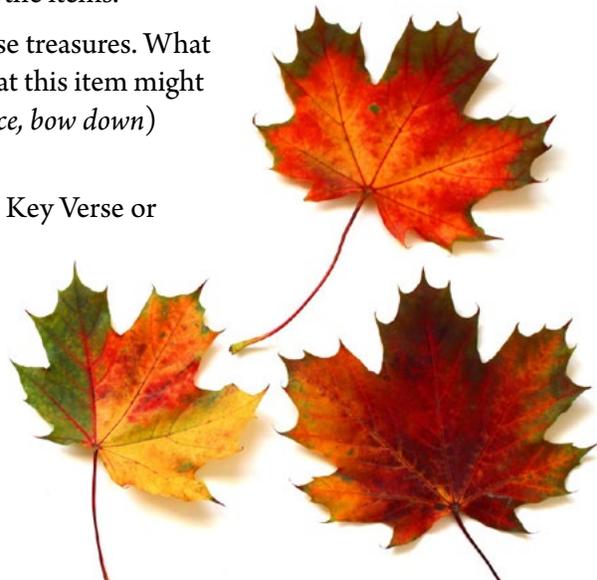


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THEME 2:

God Made Me

Overview: Theme 2 focuses on God's personal and unique creation of people. Children will explore the depth of God's care for and design of them as they are "fearfully and wonderfully made." They will be introduced to the powerful truth that they, and every single person on earth, are made in the image of God and therefore have value. They will see evidence of God's ongoing knowledge and care of them as they live life now and into the future. The goal is for children to see themselves as valuable, cherished image-bearers of a God who made them, knows them intimately, and sees their future.

For Reflection: Before leading this theme's activities, ponder these verses and questions. Ask God to help you wonder at his personal care and love for you so you can share from the abundance of your heart.

Psalm 139

Genesis 1:26-27

Psalm 8

What does it mean that you are made in the image of God?

How has God made you unique and wonderful?

What do you want to happen in the hearts of your children as they consider how God designed them uniquely?

Topics and activities covered in this theme include:

Foundational Activities

- Key Phrase: God made me, knows me, and sees my future.
- Key Verse: Psalm 139:14
- Wonderfully Made Verse Game
- Song Suggestions
- Discussion Starters
- Birthday Party!

God Made Me with His Hands

- Treasure Hunt
- Mirror Image
- Handprint Poster

God Made Me Unique

- Unique Prints
- I Want to Be...
- Delightful Differences

God Watched Me Grow

- Made in Secret
- God Loves Babies

God Knows All About Me

- God Knows!
- You Have Searched Me
- God Knew Before

I Am Wonderfully Made!

- What Do You Value?

God Sees My Future

- Decorate Cookies
- Copy My Clapping

Pick and choose whatever number of activities help you cover the topics you desire in the time you have available. You could teach one topic per week, or highlight several topics all at once. Use one activity at a time, or put several together to create a longer teaching time.



Key Phrase | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Phrase: God made me, knows me, and sees my future.

Prepare: Key Phrase Visual (*printable*)

Do: Introduce the phrase for this week with motions.

God made me (*move hands as if forming something*)

knows me (*point to head*)

and sees my future (*shade eyes with hand as if looking into the distance*)

Say: Help children imagine God actively involved in these ways in their own life. Make it as personal as possible.

Made me: Imagine God getting ready to make you. He imagined (*insert color*) hair, (*insert color*) eyes, (*insert unique feature*), and (*insert personal interest*). He took such special care in making you! Nothing about you is a mistake!

Knows me: Of course God knows you! He made you! He knows what no one else knows about you. He knows what's going on inside - what makes you sad or afraid. And he cares about it all. Imagine God holding you close and showing you love!

Sees my future: Close your eyes and imagine being 16 years old. Imagine having a job doing something you love. Imagine being a parent. Now open your eyes. You can imagine your life but you don't really know what will happen. God does! You will never be out of God's sight or off his mind. He will always be loving you, watching you, and ready to help you!

Do: Repeat this phrase several times. Say it together between questions. Have each child say it as a declaration of truth. Post the phrase where children can see it.



Key Verse | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Prepare: Psalm 139:14 Verse Visual (*printable*) , Bible, "Wonderfully Made" song

Say: Have you ever made something wonderful that made you say, "Wow!"? Tell about something wonderful you made. Our Bible verse today tells us some wonderful things God made!

Do: Read Psalm 139:14 from the Bible and from the printed visual.

Say: God's works of creation (*amazing animals, detailed plants, objects in space*) were wonderful. Many of them make us say, "Wow!" God also made you "fearfully and wonderfully". No one can really understand just how amazing, complex, and full of detail you really are. You are made in God's own image. You are made to be unique, one-of-a-kind. You are valuable. When God looks at you, he says, "Wow!" Close your eyes and imagine God looking at you and saying, "Wow! I love the way I made (*insert name*)." How do you feel knowing God thinks of you this way?

Ideas: Have children take turns saying "Thank you, God, that I am fearfully and wonderfully made". Play the Wonderfully Made Verse Game to help children learn the verse by heart. Sing "Wonderfully Made" by Seeds Family Worship.



Wonderfully Made Verse Game | Topic: Foundational | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Wonderfully Made Verse Game Cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag

Do: Use this game to help children see just how wonderfully they are made. Write fascinating facts about the human body on pieces of paper and put them in a container. Let children take turns grabbing a paper and reading the fact. Then you can lead everyone in saying the verse while doing the motion that corresponds to that fact.

Say: God created you in a wonderful and fascinating way! Your entire body is a reminder that you should praise Him. We're going to learn about our amazing bodies while we practice our key verse.

Ideas:

- ▶ You have a tongue print that's one of a kind. (*Hold your tongue.*)
- ▶ Your eyeball has over 2 million tiny parts. (*Blink your eyes.*)
- ▶ You breathe over 20,000 times every day! (*Take one breath.*)
- ▶ Half of all your bones are in your hands and feet. (*Clap and stomp.*)
- ▶ Your smallest bones are in your ear. (*Wiggle your ears.*)
- ▶ Your toenails grow more slowly than fingernails. (*Wiggle your toes.*)

Respond: Think about Psalm 139:14 whenever you see yourself in a mirror. Thank God for making you in a wonderful way.



Song Suggestions | Topic: Foundational | Time: 5 min

Prepare: musical instruments (*homemade, wooden, etc.*), songs (*see list below*)

Say: God is so amazing! One way we can tell him he's amazing is by singing songs to him. Singing songs to God is one way we can draw closer to him and show him we love him. We can sing songs as a prayer to God.

Do: As the children sing and worship God, have them play instruments, sit quietly, or march around the room. Some of these songs are reflective worship songs. Help children see what it means to listen to or sing songs as a prayer to God.

Song Suggestions: (*available on YouTube*):

- ▶ "Who Made You?" by Dana Dirksen
- ▶ "Wonderfully Made" from Hidden in My Heart Volume 2
- ▶ "Wonderfully Made" by Seeds Family Worship
- ▶ "You Have Searched Me" from North Coast Sessions by Keith and Kristyn Getty
- ▶ "You Know" from Songs Jesus Said by Keith and Kristyn Getty

Note: Specific songs are suggested alongside relevant activities throughout this guide.



Idea: Discussion can help children think through and consider ideas in a different way. It can help you discern their perspective and hearts. Use these questions after another activity or as a stand-alone activity. Choose the questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have. You don't have to have all the answers. Simply point children to the God who does!

When holding a discussion, it is often best to find a way to engage children in quiet activity (*especially little ones*). Let children eat a snack, color a picture, or build with blocks to keep their hands busy. Or go on a walk together as you discuss these ideas!

Discussion #1: **Nothing About You Is A Mistake**

Say: I want to tell you about a time I made a mistake. (*Share a small or large mistake.*) Can you tell me about a time you made a mistake? Aren't you glad God never makes mistakes?! He gets everything right the first time! When he made you, he made you exactly the way he wanted you to be. Nothing about you is a mistake. He meant for you to (*insert descriptors... be a boy, draw well, remember details, etc.*).

We don't always know why God chose to make us in certain ways. Is there any part of the way God made you that you don't understand or wish was different? Let's think of how God might use that one day. (*Imagine how God might glorify himself or help others.*) One day you'll know why God made you that way. Until then you can trust that you are exactly the way he wanted you to be. He loves every part of you!

Idea: You could share the story of Amy Carmichael who longed for blue eyes as a little girl. God gave her brown instead because he knew they would help her fit in better as a missionary in India.

Discussion #2: **You Are Wonderfully Made**

Say: As you listen to this song, listen for something that surprises you or something that makes you feel loved. (*Play "Wonderfully Made" from Hidden in My Heart Volume 2.*) Allow time to share. Continuously point to the compassion and joy of God in personally relating to each child.

Idea: If conversation is slow, ask these questions.

- ▶ How do you feel to know God knew your name before you were even born?
- ▶ Imagine God looking into your eyes, calling you beautiful and smiling. How does that make you feel? How does it change how you see yourself?
- ▶ God promises he will always be with you, watching you, ready to help. How does this show God's love for you? Could anyone love you more? Why or why not?
- ▶ What does it mean to you to belong to God? (*This could lead into a presentation of the gospel depending on the answers and how God leads you.*) How does God care for a person who belongs to him?



Image by Rainer Matiores from Pixabay



Birthday Party! | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 30–60 min

Prepare: birthday party decorations (*balloons, streamers, etc.*), birthday food (*cupcakes, cake, ice cream, drinks, etc.*), birthday utensils (*plates, cups, silverware, etc.*)

Idea: This would make a great wrap-up activity for this theme!

Say: What day were you born? (*Let each child share.*) Do you know what time you were born? (*Share your own birthdate and time.*) God is so amazing that he knows exactly what day and at what time each person will be born. He had that all planned out even before your mom knew she was going to have a baby! God has made every person who has ever lived! In all the years of history, there has only ever been ONE of each person! (*Use the names of the children and say, “There is only one _____!”*) God has never copied a person—each one is unique. That is worth celebrating with a PARTY!

Do: Sing “Happy Birthday to You.” If you have a small group, you might sing it with everyone’s names in the song. Say the months of the year and have children born in those months stand up when their month is said. Have children run around the room and say, “God made you unique!” to as many people as possible in 15 seconds. Enjoy the birthday treats as each child shares something they especially enjoy doing or one way they are unique. Bring an atmosphere of joy and worship to this time as you celebrate God’s creation of people.

Respond: At the end of the party, have children sit in a circle. Have them turn to the person next to them and say, “Thank you, God, for making (*child’s name*)!” Close with a prayer thanking God for making all of you.



Treasure Hunt | **Topic:** God Made Me with His Hands | **Time:** 10 min

Prepare: “treasures” (*sparkly gems, gold or silver coins, costume jewelry, play money, etc.*), a bin full of rice and beans (*if using*), container to collect the treasures

Say: What is treasure? Treasure is something valuable, worth money, or precious because of what it is or where it comes from. Today we’re going on a treasure hunt!

Do:

► **Option 1:** Make a sensory bin with rice and beans and hide the “treasures” in it. Have children dig through and find the treasures. You may want to set a limit on how many treasures each child can find at first. Collect the treasures in another container.

► **Option 2:** Do a treasure hunt! Hide the “treasures” throughout the room before children arrive. Let them find all the treasures, putting them in a container as they find them. You may want to set a limit on how many treasures each child can find at first.

Say: Admire the treasures. What makes this a treasure? These are copies of what people think are valuable things. God says you are more valuable than the most precious earthly treasure. You are valuable because God made you! You are precious to him because he made you with his hands and he puts his great love on your life. This is the greatest treasure of all—to be made and valued by God!

Respond: Have everyone say together, “I am valuable to God! He loves me! He made me with his hands!” Close in a prayer of thanksgiving to God.



Mirror Image | Topic: God Made Me with His Hands | Time: 15 min

Prepare: floor length mirror, Mirror Image Cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag, Bible, “Who Made You?” song

Say: Put your hands on your head if you can think of a time when you use a mirror. You might use a mirror when you brush your teeth, fix your hair, or need to check and see if your face is dirty. A mirror reflects the image that’s in front of it. The Bible tells us that God made you with his hands and in his image—to reflect him! (*Read Genesis 1:27.*) You are valuable because God made you to reflect himself.

Do: Put the Mirror Image cards in a bag and have children pull them out one at a time. Talk about how that attribute belongs to God but can be seen in us. After each one, have a child stand in front of the mirror and say, “I’m made in the image of God! I can reflect God’s (*insert trait*).”

Respond: Because God made people in his image, every single person has value. Turn to the person next to you and say, “You are made in the image of God!” Now say, “You can reflect God!” Ask God to help you see yourself and others as valuable because you reflect God’s image. Sing “Who Made You?”



Handprint Poster | Topic: God Made Me with His Hands | Time: 20 min

Prepare: poster board/butcher paper with “God made me!” written on it, craft supplies, Bible, Key Phrase Visual

Say: We’re going to make something with our own hands. But first I want to read from the Bible about God making you with his own hands. I want you to point at yourself every time I read the words “me” or “my.” (*Read Psalm 139:13-16 and lead the children in pointing to yourself at the correct time.*) This reminds us that God wisely and wonderfully made you with his own hands. We’re going to make a big poster that says “God made me!” while we think about the wonderful way God made us.

Do: Listen to some of the suggested songs while you use poster board/butcher paper and craft supplies to make a large banner that says “God Made Me!” Make it personal by having them trace their hands and feet or, if possible, use paint to make fingerprints, handprints, and even toeprints or nose prints as you celebrate the thrill of being God’s wonderful creations.

Respond: Encourage children to repeat the Key Phrase during the week each time they make something with their own hands.



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Unique Prints | Topic: God Made Me Unique | Time: 10 min

Prepare: washable inkpad or washable marker, Unique Prints Design Ideas (*printable*) , paper (*one per child*), wipes to clean hands, “Who Made You?” song

Say: Everyone hold up your thumb. When God makes each person, he gives everyone fingerprints that are unique! No one has the exact same fingerprints. Even identical twins have different fingerprints. We’re going to look at our fingerprints today and see how unique each one is.

Do: Using the inkpad or marker, help children make a design with their fingerprints on the paper (*flowers, birds, snake, etc.*). You can also have children compare thumbprints with another child. (*Consider increasing the size of the print on a copier.*) Have them try to copy the design of the thumbprint and then compare to others. How are they the same? How are they different?

Older children might enjoy looking into how fingerprints are used in solving crimes. Forensics experts use this technique because everyone’s prints are different.

Respond: Sing “Who Made You?” Encourage children to thank God for making them unique and one-of-a-kind every time they look at their thumb.



I Want to Be... | Topic: God Made Me Unique | Time: 10 min

Prepare: I Want to Be Cards (*printable*) , cut apart and put in a bag or images of people and the equipment they use (*doctor, dentist, construction worker, etc.*) arranged face down on a table, “Who Made You?” song, Key Phrase Visual

Say: I have some cards here that are all mixed up! I need your help to match the right person with the equipment he or she needs to do their job.

Do: Have children match the equipment with the person who needs it. You could have two sets and divide the children into teams if you have a large group. After they are done, take the cards with people on them and put them around the room. You could have a helper do this while the group sings, “Who Made You?”

Say: Are any of those jobs something you’d like to do when you’re a grownup? When I say, “Go!”, I want you to go to the job that you’d most like to have as a grownup. After the children do this, talk about their choices. You may want to do another round and have them choose a different job to go stand by. Have the children all go back to their seats. It’s fun to think about what we might be when we grow up! God made you unique, with talents and abilities to do special things. God made you and knows exactly what you will do when you grow up. He has a job all ready for you to do! What a wonderful God!

Respond: Have children repeat the Key Phrase.



Image by Iván Serrano from Pixabay



Delightful Differences | Topic: God Made Me Unique | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Identical Twins picture (*printable*) , Delightful Differences pictures (*printable*)  or magazines and books with pictures of people from around the world, Bible

Say: Show a picture of identical twins. Have you ever seen identical twins? They look the same. But did you know their fingerprints are different and so are many other things about them? God made the first people unique—they were one of a kind. He told them to have children and he planned their children, grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren to be unique too! (*Read Genesis 1:26-28.*) There have never been two people who are exactly the same. God made each person unique on purpose.

Do: Show pictures of people from around the world and help the children notice and enjoy the ways God made each person unique. Model a sense of wonder as you admire the variety of colors, shapes, and sizes God planned for the human race. Ask questions like “Is her hair curly or straight?” and “What color are his eyes?” Celebrate these unique features by saying things like “Curly hair is God’s idea!” and “God planned for him to have blue eyes.”

Respond: Encourage children to think about how their appearance, abilities, likes, and dislikes are unique and to thank God for choosing to make them that way.



Made in Secret | Topic: God Watched Me Grow | Time: 5 min

Prepare: Ultrasound Image (*printable*)  of a baby (*or images of a baby’s development month by month*), Made in Secret cards (*printable*)  or make your own using the ideas below, Bible

Ideas:

1. Your face and mouth begin to form.
2. Your fingers, toes and bones formed.
3. All the parts of you were fully formed!
4. You could suck your thumb and make faces!
5. Hair began to grow on your head.
6. Your fingerprints could be seen and you could open your eyes.
7. You responded to light, sound and pain.
8. You could see and hear.
9. You were ready to be born!

Say: As you were growing inside your mom, people couldn’t tell much about you. You were pretty well hidden! They may have had a few images from an ultrasound (*show image*), but it wasn’t until you were born that they could see the shape of your nose, color of your eyes, or how much hair you had. But there was someone else who watched you as you grew inside your mom! He knew everything about you! (*Read Psalm 139:15-16a.*)

I’m going to give you a set of 9 cards. I want you to put them in order based on what you think God saw first, then second, etc. as he watched you grow.

God got to watch you for 9 months before you were born. You brought him great delight and joy as he watched you form and take shape. He rejoiced when you were born and welcomed you into the world! God has always been present in your life and wants to be part of your life for the rest of your life too! There’s no better way to live than to live life close to God!

Respond: Have children close their eyes and listen to “Wonderfully Made” from Hidden in My Heart Volume 2. Have them imagine God singing the song to them. At the end have them pray popcorn prayers to God in response to his care for them.



God Loves Babies | Topic: God Watched Me Grow | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Caring for Babies Cards (*printable*) with actions to care for babies, Growing Relay Cards (*printable*) with ways babies move (*sit up, crawl, stand, etc.*), two containers or bags, baby dolls (*preferably one per child*), baby supplies (*burp cloths, diapers, bottles, etc.*)

Say: Do you have a baby in your house? Babies need a lot of help! They can't do anything by themselves.

Do:

- ▶ Younger Children: Give each child a baby doll, if possible. (*Or have children take turns with the dolls.*) Use the Caring for Babies cards and have children do the actions with their doll. You may have to show them how to do it first! Encourage them to be gentle with the doll and to speak kind, soft words as they "help" the doll.
- ▶ Older Children: Have children share a time they had to care for a younger sibling or baby and help with something the baby couldn't do on his own.

Say: Babies need a lot of help! Even though they can't do anything for themselves, God loves each one because he made them! Each baby is a miracle, uniquely created by God. No baby is the same as another one—each looks different, acts different, and likes different things. Babies are precious to God! God also made each baby with the ability to grow and learn new things. He loves watching them grow and change! He loved watching YOU grow as a baby.

Do: Use the Growing Relay cards and have the children act out the action in the order a baby learns to do them. With each one say, "God saw you when you learned to (*insert action*)."

Have children line up in relay teams. The first person should run to the end point, do the first action, then come back. The next child runs and does the next action, etc. until all the actions are done.

Respond: Have children say with you, "Thank you, God, for loving me and helping me grow!"



God Knows! | Topic: God Knows All About Me | Time: 15 min

Prepare: one clear container with objects you have counted (*such as small candies*), one clear container with tiny objects (*rice, sugar, sand, etc.*), one clear container filled with small pieces of thread, Bible, "You Know"

Do: Have children guess how many objects are in container #1. Tell them the correct answer and let everyone have a treat!! Have children guess how many objects are in container #2. Explain that you don't even know how many because the pieces are too small to count. Next, spread the small threads on the table and have children try to count how many there are.

Say: There are some things that are easy for us to count (*like candy!*) and some things that are impossible to count (*hold up container #2 and the threads*). But who does know everything, even about the smallest things? God does! (*Read Matthew 10:30.*) God knows how many hairs are on your head. What is impossible for us is not impossible for God. Touch your head, and say with me, "God knows how many hairs are on my head!" It would be impossible for you to count the hairs on your head, but God knows, because he knows everything about every part of your body. What else does God know about your body that you might not know?

Respond: God knows everything about you. This is just one way God shows us how amazing and wonderful he is, and how much he loves us. Let's listen to a song that reminds us God knows the numbers of hairs on our head! (*Play "You Know."*)



You Have Searched Me | Topic: God Knows All About Me | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, Psalm 139 coloring page (*printable*) , God Knows... Goes... Does worksheet (*printable*) , crayons or colored pencils, pencils (*for older children*), Faith Comes by Hearing (*Bible.Is*) app for dramatized version of Psalm 139, “You Have Searched Me” song

Say: God’s Word, the Bible, tells us so much about how wonderfully and perfectly God made every person! We’re going to read one chapter from God’s Word that tells us how much God cares for every person he creates.

Do: Read or listen to Psalm 139 (*at least verses 13-18*) while children color. After reading, point out that this psalm (*song*) is about how wonderful and amazing God is. This God who is so powerful that he can create people chooses to be close to us and know us in a personal and caring way.

As older children listen, have them write down all the wonderful things God KNOWS, GOES, and DOES (*see printable pack*) and discuss their observations. Point them to how wonderful God is.

Respond: Listen to or sing “You Have Searched Me” as a prayer. Invite children to praise God for making and knowing them.



God Knew Before | Topic: God Knows All About Me | Time: 10 min

Prepare: God Knew Before Cards (*printable*) , two containers (*one for “Before” cards and one for “God Knew” cards*), Bible

Ideas:

Before	God Knew
Before the stars existed ...	God chose the color of my skin, eyes, and hair.
Before dinosaurs were created ...	God knew what my favorite animal would be.
Before Adam and Eve sinned ...	God knew what I would eat for lunch today.
Before the pyramids were built ...	God looked forward to watching my first steps.
Before calendars were invented ...	God enjoyed thinking about what I would look like.
Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem ...	God knew what my favorite food would be.
Before Jesus died on the cross ...	God knew when and where I would be born.
Before paper was invented ...	God looked forward to hearing me sing.
Before explorers sailed to America ...	God knew all my secrets.
Before computers were invented ...	God cared about every part of my life.

Say: Can you think of something that happened a long time ago? Before that happened, God already knew everything about you. (*Read Jeremiah 1:5b.*) Let’s think about some more things about you that God knew long before you were born.

Do: Have a child grab and read a card from the “Before” container. Then have another child grab and read a statement from the “God Knew” container to complete the sentence. To make it more personal, some statements can be followed up with questions like, “What is your favorite animal?” or “When is your birthday?” Encourage children to marvel at how deeply their Creator knows and cares about them.

Respond: Challenge children to plan a time to be still and thank God for knowing them so completely.



What Do You Value? | Topic: I Am Wonderfully Made! | Time: 10 min

Prepare: paper, magazines for collage, scissors, glue, pencils, crayons, mirror, Bible, Key Verse Visual

Do: Have children draw a picture of something they value, or have them look through magazines and create a collage of things they value. Allow children to show their pictures and share what is valuable to them.

Say: Others might not value the same things you do. But you give the things that are special to you their value. God gives value to something very special. I need you to get really close together and I'm going to show you what is most valuable to God. (*Have everyone squish together and then hold out the mirror so they can see themselves.*) You are most valuable to God! He gives you value! God says all people are valuable (*important*) to him. Listen to his words to his people. (*Read Isaiah 43:4a.*) You are valuable to him not because of what you do, but because of who you are!

Respond: Have children say together, "I am valuable to God!" Finish by saying the Key Verse together.



Decorate Cookies | Topic: God Sees My Future | Time: 15 min

Prepare: cookies ready to decorate, icing, decorations

Say: We're going to make something today! You get to decorate your cookie exactly how you want it to be. You can plan it, decorate it, and enjoy it.

Do: Allow the children to decorate their cookie(s) however they would like. While they're working, talk about how each child is decorating with his own hands to make it just the way he wants it to be. Ask them what they enjoy about their cookie design.

Respond: God made you just the way he designed you to be. He not only had a plan for how he would make you, but he has a plan for what you will be one day. He knows what your future looks like. He knows everything about you and what will happen in your life. He wants to be with you, ready to help you every step of the way. He promises to do this if you belong to him. If you want to talk more about what it means to belong to God, come talk to me in a few minutes. (*Be available to talk to children.*)



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Copy My Clapping | **Topic:** God Sees My Future | **Time:** 10 min

Prepare: Bible

Do: Have the children copy you while you clap your hands in several different ways. (*Clap up high, down low, to the side, and even behind your back.*) Next have them try to predict which way you will clap before you actually clap. They can clap their hands to show where they think you will clap, and then you can clap your hands to reveal the answer. Do this several times.

Say: It was difficult for you to copy me when you didn't know what I was going to do. You can't see my future, but God sees everyone's future. He knows everything you will think, say, or do before it happens! (*Read Psalm 139:1-4.*) God can see all of your future right now! He knows more about you than you could ever know about yourself. (*Read Psalm 139:6*) God wants you to trust that he knows better than you what's best for your life.

Respond: Discuss future events most children will encounter (*future education, occupation, spouse, home, and even future problems*). Let them share about their plans for these future events and challenge them to ultimately trust God's wisdom and guidance for every part of their future.

THEME 3:

God Knows Best

Overview: Not only did God make us, as we explored in Theme 2, but he also made us in the way that he deemed best. He is the Potter. We are the clay. Who among us hasn't wrestled with the decisions of the Potter in making us? From our human perspective, some things about ourselves are less than best. Some of us are born with genetic diseases or malformations. Others of us wrestle with conditions that affect thinking, feeling, and learning. How is that best? What is the Potter doing?

This theme will help children consider God's good design in making them, even if it's not what they would prefer. God chose everything about each person, didn't make any mistake, and finds joy in each person just as they were created to be. We can freely come to God with our hurts and questions, but ultimately, he is the Potter who asks us to trust him and submit to his plan.

The best news, though, is that one day the things we perceive as imperfections and the sufferings we endure will be wiped away. The Potter will wipe away all our tears—all of them! forever!—and we will see that he really did know best.

For Reflection: Before leading this theme's activities, ponder these verses and questions. Ask God to help you submit to the loving hands of the Potter and help the children see that God always does what is best.

Jeremiah 18:1-6 **Isaiah 29:16; 64:8** **Romans 8:18-39** **Revelation 21:1-7**

How have you struggled with God the Potter's work in your own life?

What aspects about the way the Potter designed you can you thank him for? What specific thing can you trust to his hands today?

What do you want to happen in the hearts of your children as they encounter God the Potter?

Topics and activities covered in this theme include:

Foundational Activities

- Key Phrase: God made me, and his plans for me are best.
- Key Verse: Psalm 18:30a
- Pottery Puzzle Verse Game
- Song Suggestions
- Discussion Starters

The Potter and His Clay

- Jeremiah and the Potter
- Watch the Potter
- The Potter's Hands
- The Greatest Artist

God Chose Everything About Me

- Wonderfully Made Booklet
- Shaped by God's Hands
- God Chose My Interests

Topics and activities covered in this theme include:

Everything About Me Is Best

- Personal Thank You Prayers
- God Does What's Good

Asking the Potter Questions

- Asking Questions
- Why Am I Sick?
- What's in the New Earth?

Saying God Is Not the Creator

- Tall Tales of Evolution
- Meet the Scientists

Pick and choose whatever number of activities help you cover the topics you desire in the time you have available. You could teach one topic per week, or highlight several topics all at once. Use one activity at a time, or put several together to create a longer teaching time.



Key Phrase | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Phrase: God made me, and his plans for me are best.

Prepare: Bible, Key Phrase Visual (*printable*) 

Do: Introduce the phrase for this week with motions.

God made me (*move hands as if forming something*)

and his plans for me (*open hands like a book*)

are best (*two thumbs up*)

Say: Ask questions to help children think about what each aspect of the phrase means.

God made me: What is your favorite thing about yourself? What things did God think about when he made you?

His plans for me are best: How much does God know about your life? Who knows more about your life, you or God? What does it mean to you that God's plans for you are best? (*Consider reading Ephesians 2:10.*)

Do: Repeat this phrase several times. You could say it together between questions, assign a motion to each child and say it, or see who can say it by themselves. Post the phrase where children can see it.



Key Verse | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Prepare: Bible, Psalm 18:30a Verse Visual (*printable*) , "This God" song

Say: Do you ever wish you could do everything perfectly? No human can do everything perfectly, even though we may want to! But the Bible tells us who does do everything perfectly, all the time!

Do: Read Psalm 18:30a from the Bible and from the printed visual.

Say: Everything God does is perfect! He is the one true God who can't do anything wrong. Because he does everything perfectly, we can trust that he is doing the best for us in our lives.

Do: Play Pottery Puzzle Verse Game. Sing "This God" (*Psalm 18:30-31*).



Pottery Puzzle Verse Game | Topic: Foundational | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible and/or Key Verse Visual, Pottery Puzzle (*printable*)  or picture of pottery cut into an 9-piece puzzle with actions written on the back of each piece

Ideas for Actions:

Point at something blue	Spin around	Touch your toes
Lean toward something small	Point at something round	Stand on one foot
Clap your hands	Nod your head	Close your eyes

Say: (*Show the completed puzzle to the children.*) This picture shows something a potter made from clay. Wouldn't it be silly if the clay complained that it wanted to be a pizza or an airplane instead? A potter knows better than the clay about the best way to shape and use it. In a much greater way, God knows what is best for you and me. You may not always like everything he does, but his ways are perfect and you can trust him. (*Read Psalm 18:30a.*) We're going to use a pottery puzzle to help us remember this verse.

Do: Flip the pieces over and mix them up. Let children take turns choosing a puzzle piece, then leading the group in following the instructions on the back while they say the verse together. Then they can place the piece in the puzzle.



Song Suggestions | Topic: Foundational | Time: 5 min

Prepare: musical instruments (*homemade, wooden, etc.*), songs (*see list below*), music player

Say: Did you know that God is the one who thought of and created music? The Bible even says that God sings (*Zeph. 3:17*). He gave us the gift of music so we can worship him, but also that we can sing in hard times. We can be reminded that God is good and we can come to him with our problems and questions.

Do: As the children sing and worship God, have them play instruments, sit quietly, or march around the room.

Song Suggestions: (*available on YouTube*):

- ▶ "Change My Heart, O God" (*There is one showing a potter at work at his wheel.*)
- ▶ "Help Me See" by Jana Alarya
- ▶ "This God" (*Psalm 18:30-31*) by Remembering

Note: Specific songs are suggested alongside relevant activities throughout this guide.



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Idea: Discussion can help children think through and consider ideas in a different way. It can help you discern their perspective and hearts. Use these questions after another activity or as a stand-alone activity. Choose the questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have. You don't have to have all the answers. Simply point children to the God who does!

When holding a discussion, it is often best to find a way to engage children in quiet activity (*especially little ones*). Let children eat a snack, color a picture, or build with blocks to keep their hands busy. Or go on a walk together as you discuss these ideas!

Discussion #1: **God Shapes Your Heart**

Prepare: "Change My Heart, O God" song

Say: God didn't just shape your body in your mom's belly. He is still shaping your heart to be more like him. He wants to shape you to be more like him in the way you love, obey, help, and trust. Let's watch a video of a potter while we listen to the song, "Change My Heart, O God." Who made the changes to the shape of the pottery—the clay or the potter? Who makes the changes in your heart—you or the Potter? How have you seen God change your heart recently? Let's listen to the song again, and as you hear the words, pray them to God.

Idea: Tell how you have seen God shape the hearts of the children you are teaching.

Discussion #2: **Two Worldviews**

Prepare: Bible, whiteboard and markers or large piece of paper and pen

Idea: People who treat God as their Creator should value all people. Help children think through the difference this makes in how they treat others. Treating God as Creator should result in people who

- ▶ Believe all life is valuable (*from conception through natural death*)
- ▶ See value as innate to every person, not based on what they can do
- ▶ Welcome and show kindness to all people
- ▶ Accept how God made us and look for how to use the gifts he has given

Say: We've talked about how God made man in his own image (*Genesis 1:26-27*). This means every life reflects God and has value. We've also talked about how God formed us each in our mom's belly (*Psalms 139*). Should this make a difference in how we treat all people – babies, grandparents, those who are not like us? Let's talk about it.

Do: Draw a vertical line on a large piece of paper or whiteboard. Label one side, "God is Creator" and the other "God is not Creator". Write the children's feedback on the corresponding side of the line as you discuss the difference between these two worldviews.

Say: If you know God as Creator, how should you

- ▶ treat people?
- ▶ value people who can't take care of themselves?
- ▶ think about who God made you to be?
- ▶ love others who are not like you?

After each one, ask the contrasting question about what people might do if they don't believe God is the Creator.



Jeremiah and the Potter | Topic: The Potter and His Clay | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible or Faith Comes by Hearing (*Bible.Is*) app for dramatized version of Jeremiah 18:1–6, Jeremiah and the Potter coloring page (*printable*) , blank paper for older children, crayons and colored pencils, “Change My Heart, O God” song

Do: Read or listen to Jeremiah 18:1–6. Have children color or draw while they listen.

Say: Who was Jeremiah? Why did God tell him to go to a potter’s house? What did he see there? What did God say he could do to Israel? What do these verses teach us about God?

Respond: Close in prayer, thanking God for being the Potter. Sing or watch the video of “Change My Heart, O God.”



Watch the Potter | Topic: The Potter and His Clay | Time: 15 min

Prepare: video of a potter working, “Help Me See” song

Do: Watch a video of a potter using a wheel to make something out of clay. Ask the questions below as you watch. Variation: Make arrangements to visit a local potter for a field trip (*check out schools or businesses*).

Say: What do you think the potter is making? Do you think he will make any mistakes? Did you see him start over at any point? What tools did the potter use? Who is the only one who knows what the potter will make? Why is God called the Potter? Does the clay have any choices in the way it’s made? What did you learn about God by watching the potter?

Respond: Sing “Help Me See.” Remind children that God’s plans are always good, even if we don’t always understand them. He makes us to bring glory (*honor*) to himself. He chooses everything about us out of love.



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The Potter's Hands | Topic: The Potter and His Clay | Time: 15 min

Prepare: moldable substance (*play dough, clay, or air-dry clay*), tools for forming designs in the clay, example of something made from clay (*mug, bowl, etc.*), “This God” song, potter’s wheel (*optional: children’s versions can be purchased online*)

Say: Do you know what someone is called who forms things out of clay? A potter’s job is to take a lump of clay (*hold up clay*) and make it into something useful or beautiful (*hold up something made from clay*). The Bible calls God a Potter because he forms each person as he sees fit. God always has a plan and knows exactly what he is doing.

Do: Give each child the playdough or clay.

Option 1: Encourage the children to make something out of their clay and be prepared to share what they made and why they made it.

Option 2: Let children take turns using the potter’s wheel, explaining how it works.

Say: Was it harder or easier than you thought to make something? Did you have an idea in mind when you started? Did that idea change as you worked with the clay? Did you ever feel like you lost control of the clay during the process? Why do you think the Bible calls God the Potter and us the clay?

Respond: When God makes people he makes them as he sees best. He never loses control or changes his mind partway through. He is a good, loving Potter. Sing “This God.”



The Greatest Artist | Topic: The Potter and His Clay | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, modeling clay or play dough, The Greatest Artist (*printable*)  or pictures of professional artwork

Do: Have the children guess what you are making as you form a piece of clay into several simple objects (*snake, snail, egg, heart, leaf, fish, etc.*). Ask the children if they think you could bring any of these things to life. Show the pictures of professional artwork and ask the same question.

Say: No other artist or potter can do what God has done. (*Read Genesis 1:26-27 and 2:7.*) Even if all the greatest geniuses and artists who have ever lived worked together for 100 years, they could never create a living person out of dust. Do you think the prophet Isaiah was thinking about this when he wrote these words? (*Read Isaiah 64:8.*) Only God has the power and wisdom to do this. He is your awesome Creator, the greatest artist ever!

Respond: Play with clay together while you list different things God would have needed to make when he formed the human body (*muscles, bones, eyes, blood, skin, hair, tongue, teeth, etc.*). Thank God that every child in your class is a masterpiece formed by God himself.



Wonderfully Made Booklet | **Topic:** God Chose Everything About Me | **Time:** 10 min

Prepare: Wonderfully Made Booklet (*printable*)  or paper with fill in the blank sentences folded and stapled to make a booklet, crayons or colored pencils, stickers, Key Verse Visual

Page Ideas:

Cover—I Am Wonderfully Made!

God chose _____ hair and _____ eyes for me.

God made me _____ and _____.

God knew I would love _____.

Do: Have a booklet ready for each child. Help children complete the sentences on each page about themselves. Talk about their answers and how God made them as suggested below. Let them color and decorate the booklet.

Say: God chose everything about you. He doesn't make mistakes! God wouldn't change anything about you. You are valuable to God exactly how you are. God has great plans for your life! I wonder how God will use what you love to glorify him and help others?

Respond: Have children say together, "I am wonderfully made!" Give each one an opportunity to say, "God, thank you for making me _____." Finish by saying the Key Verse together.



Shaped by God's Hands | **Topic:** God Chose Everything About Me | **Time:** 15 min

Prepare: Bible, clay or play dough, 10 small objects to make impressions in clay (*penny, rock, toy dinosaur, toy car, twig, button, fork, etc.*)

Do: Show the children how to form shapes (*impressions*) by pressing small objects into clay. After doing this together for several minutes, have them look at the shapes in the clay and try to identify which object made each one.

Say: Did the clay choose which shapes it would have? No, you chose what to put into the clay to give it the shape you wanted it to have. In a much greater way, God chose what to put into you to give you the shape he wants you to have. (*Read Psalm 119:73a.*) God made you and shaped you with his own hands. He chose what to put into you that makes you unique from everyone else. He imagined everything you would be good at and everything you would enjoy. He is in charge and he wants you to enjoy the way he chose to make you.

Respond: Pray for each child by name, thanking God for shaping each of them in a unique way. Encourage the children to tell God they want to enjoy being who he made them to be.

Idea: Follow up this activity by sharing the gospel with the children and challenging them to share it with others. Pray with the children for those who don't know God. (*There is a Gospel Robot object lesson available in the printable pack to help you do this.*)



God Chose My Interests | Topic: God Chose Everything About Me | Time: 10 min

Prepare: God Chose My Interests cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag, Key Verse Visual, “This God” song

Say: Tell the children something that you or your children showed interest in even when you were babies. Sometimes you can tell what people like even when they’re tiny babies! Some kids like balls, cars, baby dolls, or running. Those interests just keep developing the older someone gets. When God made you, he imagined all kinds of things you would be interested in. He gave you those interests.

Do: Have the children take turns pulling a card out of the bag or container. If that interest describes them, have those children stand up and say the Key Verse together. At the end have everyone say the Key Verse.

Respond: Sing or listen to “This God.” At the end of the song have children shout, “God, you chose everything about me!”



Personal Thank You Prayers | Topic: Everything About Me Is Best | Time: 5 min

Prepare: Ball or soft toy, music

Do: Form a circle on the floor and pass a ball around while you play or sing a song about God being our Creator. Every time you pause the music, the children should freeze in place. Look at whoever is holding the ball and briefly say a very specific “thank you” prayer to God about the way he made that child, such as, “Thank you, God, for giving Eric brown eyes,” or “Thank you, God, for giving Carol a contagious laugh.” Once the children grasp the concept, have them pass the ball and take turns saying “thank you” to God for the ways he made them unique.

Respond: Challenge the children to thank God for something about themselves every day for one week.

*Thank You,
God, for...*



God Does What's Good | Topic: Everything About Me Is Best | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, whiteboard and markers or large piece of paper and pen, “This God” song

Do: Ask the children what good things they enjoyed today and write down their answers. (*If you've got time, children may prefer acting out or drawing what they enjoy while others try to guess what it is.*)

Say: We enjoy doing what seems good to us. This reminds me of a Bible story about a potter. (*Read Jeremiah 18:1-4.*) In this story, the potter did what seemed good to him as he made the clay into something useful. God does this too! You are like clay in God's hand and he enjoys doing what seems good to him in your life. (*Read Jeremiah 18:5.*) Think about yourself and the way God made you. Is there something you wish was different? Maybe you think it would be good if you were prettier, taller, thinner, faster, stronger, healthier, smarter, or different in some other way than how God made you. God enjoyed making you the way you are. He wants to help you enjoy the good way he made you.

Respond: Play “This God” while children write or say a private prayer to God about anything they wish was different about the way he made them. Encourage them to thank him for doing what is good and ask for his help to enjoy the good way he made them.



Asking Questions | Topic: Asking the Potter Questions | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, play dough or clay, Asking Questions cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag

Ideas for cards:

- ▶ I don't like the shape I am.
- ▶ I wish I was a butterfly instead.
- ▶ Why did you make me this way?
I wanted to be just like my friend.
- ▶ I wish I could talk.
- ▶ Why couldn't I be bigger?
- ▶ I'm so plain. I wish I was more colorful.

Do: Show the children a piece of clay (*or play dough*) and tell them you are going to make something with it and they have to guess what it is. Form several different objects (*i.e., snake, snowman, cupcake, snail, pizza*) and have them guess what you made.

Say: Imagine that these creations started complaining to me about how I made them! What might they say? Draw cards out of the bag and have the objects “complain” about what the card says. That seems pretty silly doesn't it? But sometimes people, who are made by God, ask God questions about how he made them because their lives are hard or things about themselves make them sad. God wants you to come to him with your questions and sadness. He also wants you to know how much he loves you. (*Read John 3:16.*) He loved you so much he gave his Son for your sin. He made a way for you to be with him forever! God has a reason for the way he has made every person. He knows what he is doing.

Respond: Have you ever had questions for God about the way he made you? Take some time today to write them down and talk to God about it. Ask him to help you trust that he knew what he was doing when he made you.



Why Am I Sick? | Topic: Asking the Potter Questions | Time: 10–15 min

Prepare: “Why Am I Sick?” video on the Kids Enjoying Jesus YouTube channel, “Help Me See” song

Say: Have you ever wondered why God lets bad things happen? I want to show you a video about somebody that had bad things happen to him. During this video, watch for the answers to these three questions.

1. What questions did he ask God?
2. How did God use the bad things in a good way?
3. What can you do when bad things happen to you?

Do: Watch the “Why Am I Sick?” video and discuss the three questions above with the children after the video. Challenge the children to consider how they will respond the next time something bad happens to them.

Respond: Listen to “Help Me See” and encourage the children to pray the words of the song to God and trust him even when bad things happen.



What's in the New Earth? | Topic: Asking the Potter Questions | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, What's in the New Earth? cards (*printable*) , pocket chart (*optional*)

Ideas for cards:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| ▶ Picture of someone who is sick | ▶ Picture of someone crying | ▶ Picture of new Jerusalem |
| ▶ Picture of a cemetery | ▶ Picture of night | ▶ Picture of open gates |
| ▶ Picture of a devastating weather event | ▶ Picture of a lamb (<i>Jesus is the Lamb of God</i>) | ▶ Picture of happy people (<i>who have believed in Jesus</i>) |
| ▶ Picture of sun, moon, stars | ▶ Picture of angels | ▶ Picture of jewels (<i>city made of jewels</i>) |

Say: Sometimes we ask the Potter questions about why he does what he does. But someday God is going to do an amazing thing! He is going to make everything new again. The Bible says he is going to make a New Heavens and New Earth. Who will live there? The people who have believed in Jesus as Savior! It will be an amazing place. Listen to what the Bible says about it. (*Read Revelation 21:1-6.*) Let's see what will and will not be in the New Earth God is going to make.

Do: Take the “What's in the New Earth?” cards and put them face down on a table. Tell the children that some of the cards are things that will be in the New Earth, and some of the cards are things that will not be in the New Earth. Have them make two columns (*you can use a pocket chart for this*) and take turns turning over the cards and deciding if that will or will not be in the New Earth. Ask questions as you play, such as, “Why won't that be in the New Earth?” “What are you looking forward to when Jesus makes everything new?”

Respond: Give the children the opportunity to pray and thank God for specific things he will do when he makes everything new.



Prepare: Bible, Tall Tales of Evolution (*printable*)  or pictures of giraffe bending down and standing up

Do: Show pictures of a giraffe bending over and standing up. Explain that giraffes have a special system that controls blood flow when they raise or lower their heads so they don't pass out or die from too much or too little blood in their brains. Read the list below and have the children guess which other abilities a giraffe has.

- ▶ An extra strong heart pumps blood up the giraffe's long neck.
- ▶ Tight skin keeps a giraffe's blood from all flowing down to its feet.
- ▶ Veins in the giraffe's neck close automatically when the giraffe puts its head down and open when it puts its head up.
- ▶ Stretchy blood vessels in the giraffe's neck expand and contract to control blood pressure.
- ▶ A sponge in the giraffe's head collects blood when it bends down and then releases the blood into the brain when it stands back up.

Say: Giraffes have all these special abilities that work together every time they bend down or stand up. Only God could do that! Some people say God isn't really the Creator. They believe giraffes evolved from other kinds of animals by accident in a process that took millions of years. If it took millions of years for all of these abilities to evolve, the giraffes would have died from thirst or high blood pressure long before it evolved the complex system it needs to just bend over without passing out. The best explanation is that God is the wise and powerful Creator who designed giraffes with these abilities. (*Read Job 12:7-10.*)

Idea: Research other examples of irreducible complexity (*multiple parts performing crucial functions on which multiple other parts depend*) in creation such as the bombardier beetle or the human eye and share them with the children. Marvel together at God's design of such remarkable systems.

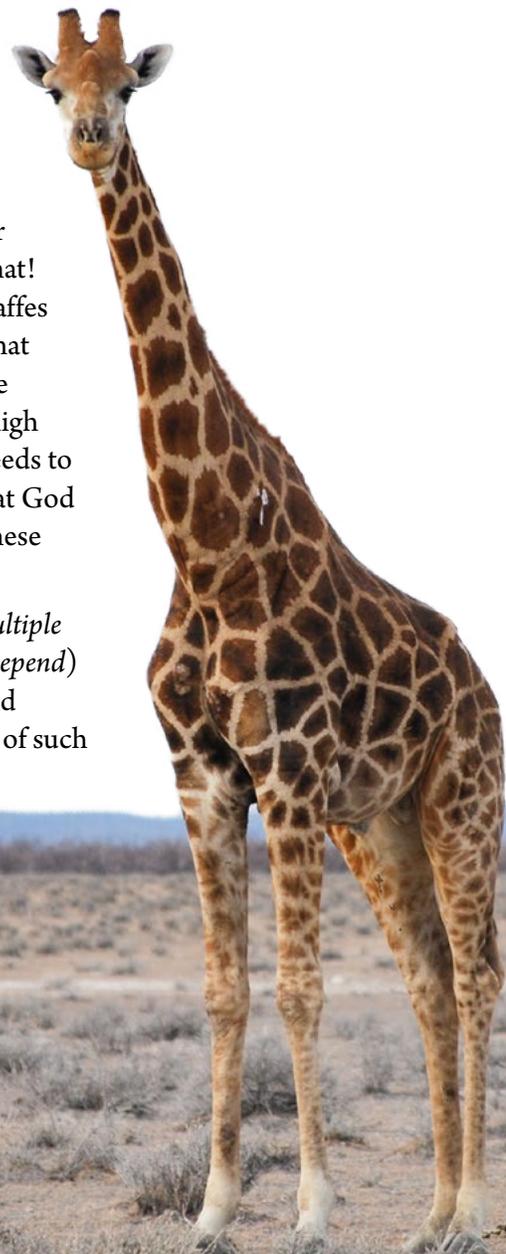


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Meet the Scientists | **Topic:** Saying God Is Not the Creator | **Time:** 15 min

Prepare: Bible, Meet the Scientists posters (*printable*)  or posters with the names of several creationist scientists and facts related to them taped to different walls in your teaching area

Say: Some people say, “Science proves the Bible isn’t true,” or “Real scientists don’t believe God created the world.” But did you know many of the most important scientific discoveries were made by scientists who studied the Bible and believed God is the Creator? I’ve put the names of four scientists on the walls. I’m going to tell you something one of them said or did and you have to guess who it was and go stand next to their name.

Do: Read each accomplishment/quote as the children move around the room to indicate which scientist to whom you are referring.

Isaac Newton	Johannes Kepler	George Washington Carver	Raymond Damadian
This scientist studied math and motion.	This scientist studied math and astronomy.	This scientist studied plants and farming.	This scientist studied medicine.
This scientist’s discoveries about gravity and motion are some of the most important scientific discoveries of all time.	This scientist made important discoveries about the way planets travel through space.	This scientist developed over 300 ways to use peanuts to make things like shampoo, milk, and plastic!	This scientist invented the MRI machine, a medical device that has saved millions of lives.
“Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who sets the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done.”	“The chief aim of all investigations of the external world should be to discover the rational order and harmony which has been imposed on it by God.”	“I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting system through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in.”	“The source of wisdom and understanding of all that we experience and all that we know comes from the Bible.”

Say: Many famous scientists believed that God is the Creator and that the Bible is true! They believed it because God has made it super obvious. (*Read Romans 1:19-20.*) God wants people to see his obvious work in the universe so they will want to know him as their Creator. Science doesn’t prove the Bible is wrong. Science is overflowing with evidence that God is Creator and his word is true.

Respond: Challenge children to notice God’s obvious handiwork in creation throughout the week and respond in prayer thanking God for providing such evidence that he is the Creator. Also encourage them to lovingly pray for those who don’t honor God as the Creator.

THEME 4:

God Sustains the World

Overview: In this last theme, children will learn the answer to this universal question. Even though God doesn't need us, he wants to be in relationship with us and enjoy us. When this truth is firm in our minds and hearts, it brings confidence and joy to our lives and praise to our lips. Even children were made to glorify and reflect God and exhibit these characteristics in their lives. This theme gives children concrete, biblical purpose for life and ideas for putting that purpose into motion. The goal is that children would enjoy, glorify and praise God while doing his will.

For Reflection: Before leading this theme's activities, ponder these verses and questions. Ask God to help you enjoy, glorify, and praise him in your daily life as you seek to do his will.

Psalm 37:3-7

Psalm 100

Isaiah 43:1-7

How do you enjoy interacting with God?

Have you ever questioned why you were created? Do you believe God enjoys you? Talk to God about your answers.

What messages do you want to lay the foundation in your children's hearts regarding why they were created?

Topics and activities covered in this theme include:

Foundational Activities

- Key Phrase: God made me to glorify and enjoy him forever.
- Key Verse: Ephesians 2:10a
- Mystery Makers Verse Game
- Song Suggestions
- Discussion Starters
- Doing Good Together

God Does Not Need Me

- Memory Match
- Shopping List
- The Mother of Invention

I Can Enjoy God

- "I Enjoy" Egg Carton Game
- Would You Enjoy? Game

I Can Glorify God

- Out of This World Trivia
- Consider the Heavens
- Receiving Compliments

I Can Praise God

- Praise Word Scramble
- Praise Around the World

I Can Do God's Will

- "Do This, Do That" Game
- Equipped by the Creator

Pick and choose whatever number of activities help you cover the topics you desire in the time you have available. You could teach one topic per week, or highlight several topics all at once. Use one activity at a time, or put several together to create a longer teaching time.



Key Phrase | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 5 min

Phrase: God made me to glorify and enjoy him forever.

Prepare: Key Phrase Visual (*printable*)

Do: Introduce the phrase for this week with motions.

God made me (*move hands as if forming something*)

to glorify (*wave hands in the air*)

and enjoy him (*hug yourself*)

forever (*rotate hands in a turning motion around each other over and over*)

Say: Ask questions to help children think about what each aspect of the phrase means.

Glorify: How can you show others what God is like? What can you say to tell God how amazing he is?

Enjoy: When is God with you? What are ways you can talk to God during your day? How do you enjoy spending time with God?

Forever: What are some things that only last a little while? How is that different from God? How does it feel to know you can enjoy a friendship with God that never ends?

Do: Repeat this phrase several times. You could say it together between questions, assign a motion to each child and say it, or see who can say it by themselves. Post the phrase where children can see it.



Key Verse | **Topic:** Foundational | **Time:** 10 min

Prepare: Bible, Ephesians 2:10a Verse Visual (*printable*) , “God’s Handiwork” song

Do: Talk about things people make (*cakes, houses, roads, computers, medicine, etc.*) and discuss reasons people make these things. Ask the children if they know why God made people. Show the printed verse visual for Ephesians 2:10a and read the complete verse from the Bible.

Say: God made you to do good work that he planned before you were even born! He didn’t just make your body—he also makes you new inside by saving you from sin when you believe in Jesus as your Savior. God wants to help you discover and enjoy the good work he has planned for you. God will show you the kinds of good work he wants you to do as you read the Bible, pray, and live life. He will give you ways to do these kinds of good work in your life, and He will help you do it!

Respond: Sing “God’s Handiwork” and then, with the song playing softly in the background, encourage children to talk with God about the good work he has planned for them this week.



Mystery Makers Verse Game | Topic: Foundational | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, Mystery Makers cards (*printable*) , Ephesians 2:10a Verse Visual (*printable*) 

Do: Let children take turns looking at a picture of something people make (*pizza, ice cream sundae, painting, scrambled eggs, birdhouse, music*) and pretending to make that item while everyone else tries to guess what they are making.

Say: People make things in lots of different ways, but God makes the very best things. God made your body in your mother's womb and when you believe in Jesus as your Savior, he makes you new by giving you new life with him! Now you can glorify God and enjoy him by doing the good works he has prepared for you to do. (*Read Ephesians 2:10a.*) We're going to pretend to make things while we learn this verse together.

Do: Turn the pictures facedown and mix them up. Let children have turns choosing a card and leading the group in pretending to make the item pictured on it while you say the verse together.



Song Suggestions | Topic: Foundational | Time: 5 min

Prepare: musical instruments (*homemade, wooden, etc.*), songs (*see list below*)

Say: Singing songs to God is one of many ways to praise God—to make much of how great and wonderful he is! These songs will help us “make much of God” and remember how wonderful and good he is.

Do: As the children sing and worship God, have them play instruments, sit quietly, or march around the room.

Song Suggestions: (*available on YouTube*)

- ▶ “God’s Handiwork” (*Ephesians 2:10*) by Lantern Music
- ▶ “Sing for Joy” (*Psalms 95:1-4*) by Seeds Family Worship
- ▶ “Why Did God Make You?” by Dana Dirksen
- ▶ “Million Reasons” by Group Publishing

Note: Specific songs are suggested alongside relevant activities throughout this guide.



Image by Matthias Böckel from Pixabay



Idea: Discussion can help children think through and consider ideas in a different way. It can help you discern their perspective and hearts. Use these questions after another activity or as a stand-alone activity. Choose the questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have. You don't have to have all the answers. Simply point children to the God who does!

When holding a discussion, it is often best to find a way to engage children in quiet activity (*especially little ones*). Let children eat a snack, color a picture, or build with blocks to keep their hands busy. Or go on a walk together as you discuss these ideas!

Discussion #1: **Glorifying God When It's Hard**

Prepare: whiteboard and marker or paper and pen

Say: When is it hard to glorify God? (*Glorify means to show honor to God by showing others what God is like or by telling him how amazing he is.*) When is it hard to glorify God with your words? How about with your attitude?

Do: Write down answers and then discuss practical ways to glorify God in each situation.

Ideas: (*use these to jumpstart the conversation if needed*)

Challenge	Practical Idea
When someone is sick	List things to be thankful for
When a friend is mean	Show kindness to that friend
When you have to move	Count the ways God is caring for you
When you're angry	Find something good to thank God for

Discussion #2: **Obedying God**

Prepare: Bible

Say: Imagine you had to cut down a tree. Would you choose an ax or a chain saw? Why? Which one would require the most effort and work? Why?

You have this same kind of choice when it comes to doing God's will. How do you find it hard to obey God? What kinds of things are the hardest for you to obey?

You can try really hard to obey God. You can try to always be kind, never lie, and read your Bible. But you know what? It's like trying to chop down a tree with an ax. You can make some progress but it will be slow and painful and easy to mess up along the way.

Have you ever found it easy to obey God? What was different about those times?

(*Read Philippians 2:13.*) God lives inside those who believe in him. The Holy Spirit gives the power to want what is good and right AND to do it! This doesn't happen because you try harder. It only happens when you trust God to change you inside and then to actually obey!

Idea: Share a personal story of a time you tried to obey God out of effort as well as a time you allowed God to do the work in you.



Doing Good Together | Topic: Foundational | Time: 20 min+

Prepare: Bible, needed supplies to accomplish the chosen project

Say: Doing good works and helping others do good works is one way we can do God's will. (*Read Proverbs 3:27.*) God wants us to look around and help when it is in our power to help. When we see others doing God's will by serving and helping others, we can encourage them. (*Read Hebrews 10:24.*) We can help those close to us, or those far away. Let's talk about some ideas of what we could do and choose one to do together.

Do: Work together as a family or class to choose a project you can do together to help others and / or further the Gospel message. Pray for your project.

Idea: Create a prayer reminder for everyone to put where they will see it and remember to pray for the missionaries or people you are going to help.

Ideas for projects:

- ▶ Contact a missionary your church supports and ask them for prayer requests. Pray for the missionary and requests regularly.
- ▶ Write a letter or record a video to a missionary to encourage them (*for ideas, watch "How to Teach Kids about Missions by Encouraging Missionaries" on the Kids Enjoying Jesus YouTube channel*).
- ▶ Find a creative way to raise money for a missionary project your church is connected with, such as a bake sale, car wash, garage sale, etc.
- ▶ Use a Doing Good Together Coin Offering to collect money to send to a missionary or to give to a family in need in your community. (*See the "Christmas Tree Offering Activity for Kids" video on the Kids Enjoying Jesus YouTube channel for the basic idea.*)
- ▶ Help in your community by volunteering at the food pantry, shopping for Christmas presents for a family in need, visiting the residents at a nursing home, etc.



Memory Match | Topic: God Does Not Need Me | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Memory Match Cards (*printable*)  arranged face-down on a table or floor, "Why Did God Make You?" song

Say: People throughout history have made things because they needed them. Sometimes that's as simple as making a blanket because of the cold, or as hard as discovering which medicines can cure certain diseases. In this game we're going to match the need people had with what was made to meet that need.

Do: Play as one big group or divide children into teams. Have children/ teams take turns uncovering two cards at a time. When a match is uncovered, that child or team gets to keep the match. As you play, talk about why those things are a match and how that met a need. Explain that while people make things to meet needs, God didn't make us because he needed us—he made us to enjoy us and for us to enjoy him.

Respond: Listen to or sing "Why Did God Make You?" Encourage children to remember how much God enjoys them every time they use a modern convenience that meets a need.



Shopping List | Topic: God Does Not Need Me | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Bible, weekly paper ads or catalogs from local stores, whiteboard and marker or paper and pen

Do: Imagine you're making a shopping list. Look through some paper store ads or catalogs and take turns pointing at items the children want to add to the list. Ask questions like, "Why would you like to have that?" or "Why do you need that?"

Say: If God was making a shopping list, what would be on it? Here is a clue. (*Read Acts 17:24-25.*) God already has everything he needs. He doesn't need sunshine, air, water, people, or anything else in the universe. You need many things to stay alive and be happy, but God doesn't need anything. He created everything for his own pleasure and enjoyment, but he doesn't need any of it. He made you so he could enjoy you and you could enjoy him. Ask "What do you think God enjoys about you?" and "What do you enjoy about God?" List answers on a whiteboard or paper.

Respond: Use the list to take turns praying brief prayers of praise and worship to God. Encourage them to make a similar list of their own and spend time talking with God about it this week.



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The Mother of Invention | Topic: God Does Not Need Me | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, The Mother of Invention pictures (*printable*) , "Why Did God Make You?" song

Say: There is a famous saying that goes like this: "Necessity is the mother of invention." What do you think that means? This means people invent new things because they need them.

Do: Show pictures of inventions (*cars, light bulbs, refrigerators, microscope, phones, computers, x-ray machine, shoes, wheelchair, etc.*) and discuss the needs met by each one.

Say: People make many things because we need them, but did you know God has never made anything that he needs? He created everything for his glory. (*Read Isaiah 6:3 and 1 Corinthians 10:31.*) God's glory is his perfect and powerful awesomeness. Making you is his way of saying, "Look what I can do! There is no one as perfect or powerful as me. I enjoy you and want you to enjoy me."

Respond: Encourage children to choose an invention they see/use daily (*phone, car, microwave, etc.*) and pause every time they see it to think about their own "inventor" and consider how their life is showing how perfect, powerful, and awesome God is. Sing "Why Did God Make You?"



"I Enjoy" Egg Carton Game | Topic: I Can Enjoy God | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, egg carton, penny or marble, Key Phrase Visual, "I Enjoy" Verse Cards (*printable*) 

Do: Write something most children enjoy in each segment of an egg carton and put a penny or marble in the carton ahead of time. (*Ideas: movie, candy, ice cream, animal, superhero, game, toy, smell, drink, sound, fruit, color.*) Take turns shaking the carton then open it to see which segment the penny or marble landed in. Let the child who shook it share something they enjoy that matches the category written in that segment.

Say: God created us with the ability to enjoy many wonderful things. The biggest reason he gave us this ability is so we can enjoy him most of all. (*Read Psalm 37:4a.*) God is way better than anything or anyone else you could ever enjoy. What are some ways you enjoy God?

Do: Continue playing the egg carton game. Pause every few turns to repeat the key phrase, discuss things you enjoy about God, and read a Bible verse to emphasize our God-given purpose of delighting in him. (*Ideas: Psalm 32:11, Psalm 33:1, Psalm 100:1-2, Philippians 4:4*)

Respond: Remind children the ability to enjoy things is a gift from God. Encourage them to enjoy God by thinking of him and thanking him whenever they enjoy their favorite things.

Egg carton by Imogen Oh from the Noun Project



Would You Enjoy...? Game | Topic: I Can Enjoy God | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Bible, Would You Enjoy...? Cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag or container, "Why Did God Make You?" song

Do: Draw a card (*or have a child do it*) and have children show which activity they would enjoy most by rushing to the right side of the room if they prefer the first activity or the left side of the room if they prefer the second. For example, you may say, "Would you enjoy shopping (*point to the right*) or talking on the phone (*point to the left*)?" Continue drawing cards as children rush back and forth to choose which activity they would enjoy most.

Ideas: Would you enjoy...

- ▶ eating pizza or drinking a milkshake?
- ▶ visiting a zoo or a science museum?
- ▶ swimming or playing sports?
- ▶ building a snowman or sledding?
- ▶ baking cookies or playing with a puppy?
- ▶ fishing or reading a book?
- ▶ painting a picture or watching a movie?
- ▶ camping in a tent or acting in a play?
- ▶ eating your favorite fruit or your favorite candy?
- ▶ riding a bike or decorating a cake?

Say: We choose to enjoy many things every day. Choosing to enjoy God is the most important choice of all. (*Read Psalm 16:11.*) Pleasure and delight are gifts from God. It's not wrong for us to enjoy other things. But none of the other things you enjoy are as wonderful as God. The best joy and delight come from being with God and knowing him. How can you enjoy God this week?

Respond: Discuss ways children can enjoy God and encourage them to implement some of their ideas this week. Sing or listen to "Sing for Joy" (*Psalm 95:1-4*).

Ideas to Enjoy God: draw God a picture, sing him a song, go on a walk and tell God how wonderful his creation is, tell God about something exciting in your life.



Prepare: Bible, Out of This World Trivia list (*printable*) 

Do: Read facts about outer space and have the children guess whether each statement is true or false. (*You could even have them “blast off” by jumping up like a rocket if they think it’s true or remain seated if they think it’s false.*)

Ideas:

- ▶ The sun is the largest star in the universe. (*False. Many stars are larger than the sun.*)
- ▶ There is a volcano on Mars 100 times bigger than earth’s largest volcano. (*True.*)
- ▶ Venus is the coldest planet. (*False. Venus is the hottest planet in our solar system with surface temperatures that could melt lead.*)
- ▶ The moon travels all the way around the earth every 27 days. (*True.*)
- ▶ “Shooting stars” and “falling stars” are not actually stars. (*True. Shooting stars are small pieces of dust or rock burning up as they enter our atmosphere.*)
- ▶ The red spot on Jupiter is an enormous storm larger than the entire earth. (*True.*)
- ▶ Scientists have discovered living creatures on Mars. (*False. Earth is the only planet where life is known to exist.*)
- ▶ One million earth-sized planets could fit inside the sun. (*True.*)
- ▶ Explosions are twice as loud in space! (*False. Space is silent because there isn’t enough air for sound waves to travel on.*)
- ▶ The stars (*besides the sun*) are so far away the fastest spaceship in the world would take 100 years to reach them. (*False. It would take the fastest spaceship more than ten thousand years to reach the nearest stars.*)

Say: Do you know why God made amazing things in outer space? (*Read Psalm 19:1.*) The sky and outer space show how wonderful, awesome, great, and wise God is. God created you to show his glory too. This same chapter in Psalms tells a special way you can show God’s glory. (*Read Psalm 19:14.*) The thoughts you think and the words you say should show how perfect, powerful, awesome, and great God is. When you use kind words, it shows people God is kind. When you have a right heart attitude and think pure thoughts, it gives people a hint of God’s perfection. You are much smaller than a star, planet, or moon, but God can use you to show his glory in big ways.

Idea: Extend this activity with Discussion Starter #1.

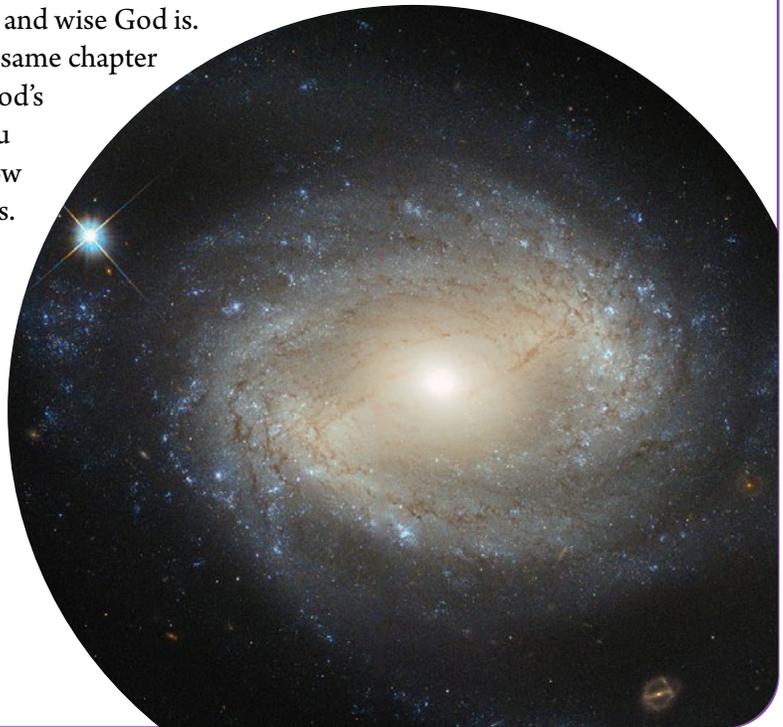


Image by NASA



Consider the Heavens | Topic: I Can Glorify God | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Bible, Consider the Heavens pictures (*printable*)  or a picture book about outer space

Do: Show pictures of amazing things in outer space. Have the children guess what each one is then share an interesting fact about it. Or read a picture book about outer space together.

Ideas:

- ▶ Jupiter—Jupiter is much larger than the earth so it has a much stronger force of gravity. This powerful gravity pulls comets and asteroids toward Jupiter so they don't crash into the earth.
- ▶ Spiral Galaxy—A galaxy is huge group of billions of stars. God filled the universe with billions of galaxies made of billions of stars. Earth is in a galaxy named the Milky Way.
- ▶ Saturn—Saturn has hundreds of rings made mostly of ice and dust. These rings are about 200,000 miles wide!
- ▶ Crab Nebula—A nebula is an enormous cloud of gas and dust in space. The crab nebula is so big it would take ten years to travel across it at lightspeed.
- ▶ Neptune—Neptune is about 17 times larger than Earth and is the windiest planet in our solar system with winds over 1,200 mph!
- ▶ Betelgeuse—Betelgeuse is a star that's 1,000 times bigger and thousands of times brighter than the enormous sun! Other stars are even bigger and brighter!

Say: Space is huge and is full of billions and billions of huge things! God created them to show his glory. (*Read Genesis 1:14-17.*) God used a man named David to write a song in the Bible that reminds us why God made these incredible things. (*Read Psalm 8:3-4.*) The mind-blowing things God created in space help us see how big and awesome God is and how small we are.

Respond: Take turns telling God how amazing he is—glorify him! Encourage children to pause and tell God how awesome he is when they see his handiwork in sky and space.



Receiving Compliments | Topic: I Can Glorify God | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Receiving Compliments Cards (*printable*)  cut apart and put in a bag or container

Ideas:

- ▶ You have such a beautiful voice.
- ▶ You're a really smart kid.
- ▶ Wow! You run super fast!
- ▶ You play the piano so well.
- ▶ You are a talented athlete.
- ▶ I appreciate how kind you are to others.

Say: Sometimes people notice when we're good at something, and they tell us so! Those are called "compliments" and they're really fun to receive. One way you can glorify God instead of yourself is to give God the credit when someone compliments you. It's always good to say, "Thank you!" when someone praises you for something you do well. But then you can add to it by saying something like, "God is the one who helps me do that."

Do: Have children take turns drawing the compliments cards out of the bag or container and read it to the group. Work together to come up with a response to each one that gives God the glory for the talent or achievement. See how much variety you can come up with!

Respond: Challenge children to verbally give glory to God when someone gives them a compliment.



Praise Word Scramble | Topic: I Can Praise God | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Praise Word Scramble cards (*printable*) , Bible or printout of Bible passage with praise words

Ideas:

(*front of card*) **ANHOSAN** (*back of card*) **HOSANNA**—Hooray! The Lord saves! (*Matthew 21:9*)

(*front of card*) **RIPASE** (*back of card*) **PRAISE**—to make much of God (*Psalms 119:171*)

(*front of card*) **JALLUHELAH** (*back of card*) **HALLELUJAH**—a shout of joy, praise, or gratitude (*Revelation 19:1*)

(*front of card*) **SOWEEMA** (*back of card*) **AWESOME**—an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, and fear (*Psalms 66:5*)

Do: Scramble praise words from the Bible and have children try to unscramble them. Then have one child look up the Scripture reference for each word (*for younger children, have a bookmark in your Bible they can open to so you can read the verse*). Using the definitions, explain what each praise word means. This will help kids develop a language of praise and also recognize praise when they see these words in the Bible or in worship songs.

Respond: Encourage the children to underline or highlight praise words when they see them in their Bibles and then pause to praise God. If possible, show an example of this using your Bible or a printout of a Bible passage.



Praise Around the World | Topic: I Can Praise God | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Bible, Praise Around the World Cards (*printable*) , songs in other languages (*see playlist on the Kids Enjoying Jesus YouTube channel*), “Sing for Joy” song

Do: Print out verses about praise and hide them throughout your teaching area ahead of time.

Say: What does it mean to praise God? Part of praise is showing your excitement about who God is and what he has done! (*Read 1 Chronicles 16:23-25.*) You can sing, clap, dance, or pray to praise God. People around the world praise God in different ways with different words. But no one else on earth can praise God exactly like you can. Your clapping hands, dancing feet, and singing voice are one of a kind. We’re going to listen to people around the world praising God while we learn about ways you can praise God.

Do: Have children take turns searching for one of the hidden verses while you use YouTube or another music player to play praise songs in different languages. When a child finds a praise verse, help them read it out loud. Ask questions like, “Does this verse tell you anything about who should praise God?” “Does this verse tell you anything about how you can praise God?” “Does this verse tell you anything about why you should praise God?” Emphasize that God hears and enjoys each person’s unique praise.

Suggested Verses:

Psalm 66:1-2, Psalm 66:4, Psalm 139:14, Psalm 148:12, Psalm 150:2, Psalm 150:6

Respond: Challenge children to choose a favorite praise song and sing it to God in their own unique way every day this week. Sing or listen to “Sing for Joy” (*Psalms 95:1-4*).



"Do This, Do That" Game | Topic: I Can Do God's Will | Time: 10 min

Prepare: Bible, "God's Handiwork" song

Do: Tell the children to copy your action when you say "Do this." They should not copy an action when you say "Do that." (*They should just continue doing the previous action.*) If they copy you when you say "Do that," they are out and need to sit down. Use a variety of actions like hopping, clapping, waving, nodding, etc. Continue play until only a few children remain. You may want to do a practice round first.

Say: Some people think obeying God is just working hard to follow directions like "Do this" and "Don't do that." But obeying him is so much more. (*Read Philippians 2:13.*) Can you use this verse to answer three questions about doing God's will?

Q: Who helps you do God's will?

A: God lives inside those who believe in him. You can rely on him to help you do what he wants.

Q: Where does God work to help you do his will?

A: God works in your heart to give you a desire to obey him. It's more than just following rules on the outside. It begins with loving and enjoying God in your heart.

Q: Why should you do God's will?

A: Doing God's will pleases God. He helps you do what brings him joy!

Respond: Sing "God's Handiwork." Pray, asking God to help everyone love, enjoy, and obey him.



Equipped by the Creator | Topic: I Can Do God's Will | Time: 15 min

Prepare: Bible, Equipped by the Creator beaver cards and pictures (*printable*)  with fact cards taped to sticks (*optional*), Verse Reference Cards (*printable*) , "God's Handiwork" song

Do: Show pictures of a beaver and its lodge. Share how God equipped beavers for their life. (*Idea: Tape each fact to a stick and hide them. Have children find and read them.*)

Ideas:

- ▶ Valves inside a beaver's ears and nose close automatically when it dives underwater.
- ▶ A beaver's strong teeth automatically sharpen themselves for cutting wood.
- ▶ Transparent eyelids allow a beaver to see underwater with its eyes closed.
- ▶ Flaps of skin inside a beaver's mouth keep water out of its throat when it chews underwater.

Say: God is the wise and powerful Creator who equips his creation. You matter way more to God than a beaver and he wants to equip you for good work. Your works are far more important than a beaver's. (*Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.*) If you have believed in Jesus, God gives you the good gift of his Word to teach and equip you to do God's will. Let's take a look inside. (*Read and briefly discuss 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Ephesians 6:1, Philippians 4:6, and Matthew 22:37-39.*) Not every Bible verse will say, "This is God's will," but all of the Bible shows you what God's will looks like. As you learn what God's will is, he will help you want to do it and be able to do it. Will you let God teach you and equip you to do his will?

Respond: Sing "God's Handiwork." Spend time in quiet prayer. Encourage the children to ask God to help them do good works for him this week.

ENJOYING GOD MY CREATOR

Appendix



Sample Schedules for 20 Minute Class: **ELEMENTARY**

These schedules show how you can cover all the topics in Theme 1 of *Enjoying God My Creator* over the span of five weeks with elementary students.

Week 1 Topics: Foundational, God Thought of Everything

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Introduce Theme 1 Key Phrase with motions	4 minutes		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: Observe a Plant	10 minutes		Several plants or flowers Paper/ Observe a Plant printable Pencils Plant-Based Snack (optional)
Introduce Psalm 95:6 and play “Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down”	6 minutes		Psalm 95:6 visual Bible Music/ YouTube

Week 2 Topics: Foundational, God Made the World

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Review Theme 1 Key Phrase and ask related questions	4 minutes		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Play Amazing Animal Actions to review Psalm 95:6	8 minutes		Psalm 95:6 visual Bible Amazing Animal Action Cards
Activity: Tastes and Smells of Creation (write down guesses)	8 minutes		Items to taste and smell Paper, pencils



Sample Schedules for 20 Minute Class: **ELEMENTARY**

Week 3 Topics: Foundational, God Made the World

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Review Theme 1 Key Phrase	1 minute		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: Discovering Unusual Animals	6 minutes		Discovering Unusual Animal Cards Unusual Animal Fun Facts Cards
Activity: The Story of Creation - Genesis 1	10 minutes		Six Days of Creation page (one per child) Markers, Colored pencils
Sing "Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down"	3 minutes		Music/ YouTube

Week 4 Topics: Foundational, God Sustains the World

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Review Theme 1 Key Phrase	1 minute		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: God Does it All!	16 minutes		God Does it All! charade cards bag
Sing "Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down"	3 minutes		Music/ YouTube

Week 5 Topics: Foundational, The World Declares God's Greatness

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Review Theme 1 Key Phrase	1 minute		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: Watch and Worship	8 minutes		Video montage (on YouTube)
Activity: Nature Scavenger Hunt (find 1 thing that reflects God)	11 minutes		Outdoor space



Sample Schedules for 60 Minute Class: **PRESCHOOL**

These schedules show how you can cover one topic from Theme 1 of *Enjoying God My Creator* in a given week with preschool students.

Week 1 Topic: God Thought of Everything			
Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Introduce Theme 1 Key Phrase with motions	3 minutes		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: Observe a Plant	10 minutes		Plant or plant parts for children to touch
Sing “He is God”	3 minutes		YouTube
Introduce Psalm 95:6 + play Amazing Animal Actions Game	8 minutes		Verse visual Amazing Animal Action Cards Bible
Activity: Create a Critter (Make)	15 minutes		Creative materials
Sing “He is God”	3 minutes		YouTube
Activity: Create a Critter (Tell About + Repeat Verse)	9 minutes		
Daily Detectives Challenge <i>(challenge kids to look for things God made at home)</i>	2 minutes		
Snack Time	7 min		Plant-based snack



Sample Schedules for 60 Minute Class: **PRESCHOOL**

Week 2 Topic: God Made Everything

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials
Review Key Phrase with motions and ask questions	3 minutes		Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: Daily Detectives <i>(talk about what they saw at home + go outside now)</i>	18 minutes		Outdoor space
Activity: Discovering Unusual Animals	5 minutes		Discovering Unusual Animal Cards Unusual Animal Fun Facts cards
Activity: The Story of Creation	10 minutes		Bible storybook Coloring page (1 per child) Crayons
Sing “God Made Me”	2 minutes		YouTube
Review Psalm 95:6 + play Amazing Animal Actions Game	5 minutes		Verse visual Animal Action Cards Bible
Activity: Tastes and Smells of Creation	10 minutes		Items to smell and taste
Snack Time	7 min		Plant-based snack



Sample Schedules for use at **HOME**

These schedules show how you can plan a week of family devotion times or homeschool Bible time using activities found in Theme 1 of *Enjoying God My Creator*.

Day 1 Topic: Foundational

Activity	Time	Materials
Introduce the Key Phrase with motions and ask questions	5 minutes	Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Daily Detectives Challenge: go outside together and marvel at creation	10 min	

Day 2 Topics: Foundational, God Thought of Everything

Activity	Time	Materials
Review the Key Phrase	2 minutes	Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Activity: Observe a Plant	7 minutes	Plant (actual or picture) Paper Pencils
Daily Detectives Challenge: ask what they noticed when outside today	3 minutes	
Sing “He is God”	3 minutes	YouTube

Day 3 Topic: God Made the World

Activity	Time	Materials
Activity: The Story of Creation	8 minutes	Bible or Bible storybook Coloring page and/or Six Days of Creation Page (1 per child) Crayons, colored pencils
Activity: Discovering Unusual Animals	5 minutes	Discovering Unusual Animal Cards Unusual Animal Fun Facts Cards
Daily Detectives Challenge: see how many animals you can see in 2 minutes	2 minutes	



Sample Schedules for use at **HOME**

Day 4 Topics: Foundational, God Made the World

Activity	Time	Materials
Review the Key Phrase	2 minutes	Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Daily Detectives Challenge: send children out to get something and bring it back	10 minutes	
Sing “He is God”	3 minutes	YouTube

Day 5 Topics: Foundational, God Made the World

Activity	Time	Materials
Review the Key Phrase	2 minutes	Theme 1 Key Phrase visual
Daily Detectives Challenge: share a personal favorite aspect of creation	10 minutes	
Sing “He is God”	3 minutes	YouTube

Day 6 Topic: God Made the World

Activity	Time	Materials
Mud Mania!	1 hour	Dirt, water, buckets, cups, pans, etc.

Day 7 Topic: God Made the World

Activity	Time	Materials
Enjoy Some Rest	2 hours	Bible to read Genesis 2:2



Topics Covered: _____ Date: _____

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials



Topics Covered: _____ Date: _____

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials



Topics Covered: _____ Date: _____

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials



Topics Covered: _____ Date: _____

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials



Topics Covered: _____ Date: _____

Activity	Time	Teacher	Materials

MEET THE AUTHORS



Ashley Alden

Ashley loves kids! She's served in children's ministry for over 20 years within her local church and vocationally as a writer and teacher. She and her husband have two adorable and hilarious little boys, and a new appreciation for resources that engage and teach children who never stop moving or talking. Ashley enjoys collaborating on projects, teaching piano lessons, running her home, and savoring adventures with her boys. Her passion is helping kids know and enjoy Jesus in the ways they learn best—through play, relationship, and fun!



Nathan Hamilton

Nathan spent his childhood enjoying God's creation while searching the far corners of his parent's dairy farm for a real live dinosaur. While he still hasn't found the dinosaur, he is still in awe of the epic God of all creation and has been teaching children about him since he was a teenager. He's married to the world's loveliest woman, and they have four lively children who enjoy catching toads, counting stars, and searching for dinosaurs almost as much as he does. His children also generously serve as "guinea pigs" for him as he brainstorms, writes, and shares creative ideas and resources to help others share the love and joy of Jesus with kids. You can find him at www.KidsEnjoyingJesus.com.



Carol Johnson

Carol holds undergraduate and master's degrees in education fields and served in full-time ministry to children for 17 years. Carol has written children's lessons, developed children's curriculum, designed and implemented training for children's workers, and taught children in a variety of settings. Now she supports her husband in ministry, homeschools her son, writes from home, partners with others in ministry, and gets outside as much as possible! Carol's greatest desire is to come alongside others, including children, and practically help them grow in intimacy with Jesus. You can find her online at www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com

Do your children love animals, nature, and fascinating creation facts?

Do you need flexible activities suited to family devotions, home school, church ministry, community outreach, or to supplement your current curriculum?



Enjoying God My Creator! has multi-sensory, multi-age, play-based activities. Each one teaches children ages 3-11 to acknowledge and enjoy God as Creator. Most of the 70+ activities

- ▶ take 15 minutes or less to teach
- ▶ use common items
- ▶ include adaptations (*if needed*) for different age groups

Each theme includes a key verse, key phrase, suggested songs, discussion starters, and numerous interactive activities. (Themes: God Made Everything, God Made Me, God Knows Best, Why Was I Created?)

You'll enjoy God alongside the children you teach as you

- ▶ discover unusual animals like the panda ant and frogmouth
- ▶ consider how God anticipated your first steps even before the stars existed
- ▶ discuss how God uses the hard aspects of life to accomplish good
- ▶ wonder at the vastness of crab nebula, Betelgeuse, and spiral galaxies

Related Resources (Information regarding purchase included inside.)

Printable Pack – A colorful, beautifully designed, downloadable printable pack can be purchased. While not necessary, it will make it even easier to implement the activities. It includes materials lists, visuals, game pieces, activity pages, coloring pages and more. (90+ total pages) Bonus content includes extra activities, coloring pages, and a Gospel Object lesson.

Companion Devotional – *God is My Creator!* builds on the teaching in this Activity Guide. It provides 4 weeks of devotionals for kids ages 7–11. Devotionals can be completed individually or with input from a parent or mentor.

