

5 minute family devotional CREATION

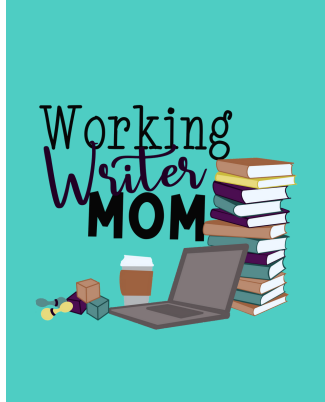
Depending upon your season and setting, this devotional can be used in different ways. It is designed to be a short introduction to Scripture that can then be explored as a family, based on interest, skill level, and attention span. While the language of this devotional is geared toward younger children, it can be a great starting place for any child.

This devotional is a great way to start homeschooling or remote learning day, while offering a spiritual foundation and getting the cognitive wheels moving. You can use this as a morning or evening devotional with the family and work through it every day or split it up for just a few days a week. It can be used for craft time, or as a meal-time discussion – the choice is up to you and your family!

Each devotion will have a reading from the Common English Bible, a reflection with questions, two activity options, and a closing prayer. I will include a creative “crafty” activity option and a “get up and move” activity option. While you can do both (or neither!), each family is encouraged to pick what works for you – and it could change day to day! My hope is that a love for Scripture and a family culture of conversation around faith is born from this study. May it be a blessing to you, as the creation of it has been a blessing to me.

With abundant joy and grace,
Rev. L. Brekke Wagoner





5 minute family devotional

Day 1

CREATION

Read It: Genesis 1:1-5

When God began to create the heavens and the earth— the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God's wind swept over the waters— God said, "Let there be light." And so light appeared. God saw how good the light was. God separated the light from the darkness. God named the light Day and the darkness Night. There was evening and there was morning: the first day.



Think it: The very first story in the whole Bible is the story of creation. This story tells us that God took chaos and created order. There was no shape or form but God's "wind" – which can also be God's breath or Spirit – swept over the void and created structure. From chaotic nothingness, God spoke the very world into being. Have you ever been in a really messy room? When you're trying to find just the right Lego piece or dress up outfit, it can be frustrating to look for it if the room is in disarray. If toys, crafts, and clothes are laying around, it makes it challenging to find what we need! Now think of the whole world as a messy room. God desired order and used God's breath to bring order. God's first act of order? Creating night and day!

Talk It: What makes night and day special? How are they alike and how are they different? Why does creating order out of chaos help us flourish? What do we learn about God from reading this Scripture?

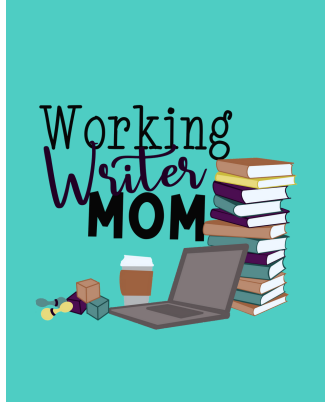


Create It: Day and Night are both important in the way we order our lives. Draw, paint, or sketch a scene of the sky during the day and at night. Focus on the details – what makes each special?

Do It: Is there chaos in your home? How does it feel to be in a messy space? Work as a family to bring order to one spot. How does the order make you feel?



Pray it: Dear God, thank you for all of creation. When we feel messy inside, remind us that your Spirit is always with us. We pray this with Jesus, Amen.



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Day 2

CREATION

Read It: Genesis 1: 6-8

God said, "Let there be a dome in the middle of the waters to separate the waters from each other." God made the dome and separated the waters under the dome from the waters above the dome. And it happened in that way. God named the dome Sky. There was evening and there was morning: the second day.



Think It: Did you know that there is a process by which water from rivers, lakes, and seas evaporates into the air and eventually becomes rain? This is called the water cycle. As God continues to create an orderly world during the first days of creation, God puts in place a system for water to be recycled. Water is holy throughout scripture. Moses parts the sea when liberating the Israelites from slavery. Jesus walks on water and calms a storm while the disciples are fishing. We Christians use water in baptism to symbolize the holy work of God redeeming us. Water is a big deal! And just like there is a system for the sun to rise and set each day, there's a system for rain to fall and then evaporate back into the sky. God's ways are pretty awesome!

Talk It: God is intentional in how creation takes place. What do we learn about God's character in the first two days of creation? What does the care God takes in making creation teach us about how we should care for creation?



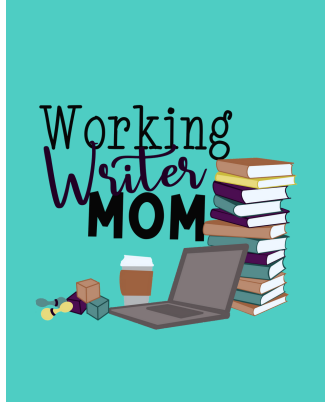
Create It: How is water important in your own life? Draw or paint pictures of the ways water is important for you. And if you get thirsty, go grab a drink of water too!

Do It: Look up the water system in an age-appropriate way. Learn as a family how it works. Boil water to show how steam and evaporation work. When it rains next, take a walk in the rain (safely). Be thankful for God's good system!



Pray It: Dear God, thank you for lakes, rivers and rain! Help me to see you in both the storms and sunshine of my life. We pray this with Jesus, Amen.





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Day 3

CREATION

Read It: Genesis 1: 9-13

God said, "Let the waters under the sky come together into one place so that the dry land can appear." And that's what happened. God named the dry land Earth, and he named the gathered waters Seas. God saw how good it was. God said, "Let the earth grow plant life: plants yielding seeds and fruit trees bearing fruit with seeds inside it, each according to its kind throughout the earth." And that's what happened. The earth produced plant life: plants yielding seeds, each according to its kind, and trees bearing fruit with seeds inside it, each according to its kind. God saw how good it was. There was evening and there was morning: the third day.



Think It: Think about what you had for breakfast – were there any plants in your meal? If you had cereal, you might have had rice or corn. You could have eaten oatmeal made from wheat oats, with blueberries or even walnuts. Maybe you had a banana and peanut butter. Amazingly all of these are plants God made! Bananas and peanuts might look and taste different, but they each are plants that God created. And best of all, when God created each of these plants, seeds, and fruits God called them good – not because they are tasty for kids to eat but because God valued them just as they are. Creation exists by and for God's good pleasure, and we are so lucky to share all of creation with God!

Talk It: We know that God created order out of chaos and put a system for rain in place during creation. How does this system help plants to flourish? How does it help us flourish? What is your favorite plant? Is it something beautiful like a flower or something tasty like a strawberry? Why do you think God called all these plants good?



Create It: Get in the kitchen and cook up a recipe with your favorite plants! Work as a family to make a salad, a pot of vegetable soup, or even cookies (flour comes from plants, after all)! Talk about each ingredient and how plant or animal-based it was created and called good by God. Or, if cooking isn't an option, identify all the plants in your next meal or snack.

Do It: Plant a seed! Using soil and a small pot, or a little patch of dirt, plant a seed and watch it grow. Say a prayer for your seedling. If this isn't an option, try re-growing some of your groceries. Celery hearts put in water will regrow small shoots.



Pray It: Dear God, thank you for all the amazing plants you have created. I am especially grateful for the ones that taste so good! Remind me when I look outside that you made all these plants and called them good. We pray with Jesus, Amen.



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Day 4

CREATION

Read It: Genesis 1:14 -19

God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will mark events, sacred seasons, days, and years. They will be lights in the dome of the sky to shine on the earth." And that's what happened. God made the stars and two great lights: the larger light to rule over the day and the smaller light to rule over the night. God put them in the dome of the sky to shine on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw how good it was. There was evening and there was morning: the fourth day



Think It: When ancient peoples set sail in exploration, they used the patterns of the stars to guide their way. The night sky is filled with thousands and thousands of stars! Even today, sailors still have star charts to guide them in case their GPS breaks. God ordered that there would be stars to guide our nights just as the sun guides our days. The Sun is actually a star too! The closest star to the Earth is the Sun, which is close enough to give us bright daylight and warmth. Both our days and our nights are “ruled over” by different kinds of stars. So even when the night might feel a little scary because it is dark, we can be confident that God is still guiding us with the stars.

Talk It: Stars are an important part of the Christian life. We know that a special star guided the Wise Men to baby Jesus. Stars have also saved lives by lighting the way. Harriet Tubman followed the North Star to guide her and hundreds of other slaves to freedom. How do night the stars guide us today? What comfort do the stars provide when the night is dark?

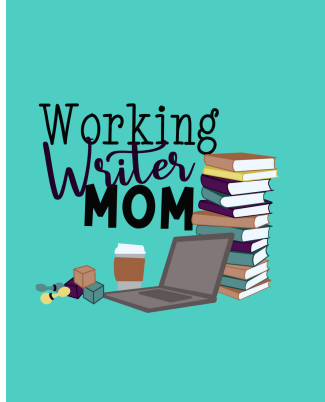


Create It: Cut out stars in various shapes and sizes. Get creative in the material you use – try old magazines, wrapping paper, even tin foil. Using paint-safe tape, add these reminders of God’s guidance around your home.

Do It: If you live in an area where you can see stars, stay up late one night and take a walk to look at the night sky. What star patterns can you identify? Look for the Big and Little Dippers, Orion, and the North Star. If you can’t see stars, look up constellations online and learn about all the different patterns – there are a bunch!



Pray It: Dear God, thank you for the sun and stars that guide us, day and night. Help us to follow you, just as wise men and women have followed your star before us. We pray this with Jesus, Amen.



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Day 5

CREATION

Read It: Genesis 1: 20-23

God said, "Let the waters swarm with living things, and let birds fly above the earth up in the dome of the sky." God created the great sea animals and all the tiny living things that swarm in the waters, each according to its kind, and all the winged birds, each according to its kind. God saw how good it was. Then God blessed them: "Be fertile and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth." There was evening and there was morning: the fifth day.



Think It: Scientists have uncovered a pattern in the way creation was formed – tiny bits of creation called atoms, all the way up to ginormous animals like hippopotamuses. Just like God ordered the chaos, there is an order in the pattern of evolution – simple life to complex life. Living creatures like amoeba made up of single cells evolved over time to more complex creatures, like jelly fish and chickens! Sometimes people think that the theory of evolution doesn't agree with the Bible, but the story of creation supports a gradual development to all of creation – that there's order and systems in the universe, and that they were put there by God. On the fifth Day we see God creating complex life first in the oceans then in the air – and this generally follows what scientists have discovered! God's systems are pretty great!

Talk It: What are your favorite sea creatures? What about animals that fly? Look up an age appropriate explanation of evolution. How can Christians see God's good order in this theory? What makes sense? What doesn't?



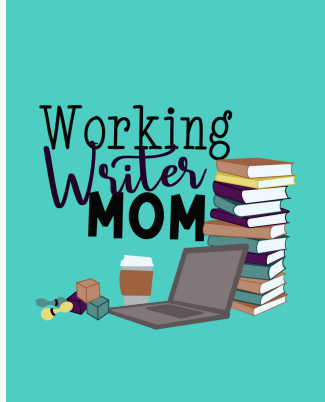
Create It: Using a shoebox or small cardboard box, build a panorama of the ocean or the sky. You can get creative with paint, crayons and markers, Lego pieces, leaves from outside – just about anything. Be sure to include your favorite fish or birds!

Do It: Take a virtual tour of an aquarium or zoo (or go in person if it is safe). Try to keep a list of all the ocean and air animals you see. What new creatures have you discovered?



Pray It: Dear God, thank you for the birds of the air and the fish of the sea. Help us to care for our seas and skies as much as you do. We pray with Jesus, Amen.





Day 6

Read It: Genesis 1: 24-31

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God said, "Let the earth produce every kind of living thing: livestock, crawling things, and wildlife." And that's what happened. God made every kind of wildlife, every kind of livestock, and every kind of creature that crawls on the ground. God saw how good it was. Then God said, "Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth." God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and master it. Take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, and everything crawling on the ground." Then God said, "I now give to you all the plants on the earth that yield seeds and all the trees whose fruit produces its seeds within it. These will be your food. To all wildlife, to all the birds in the sky, and to everything crawling on the ground—to everything that breathes—I give all the green grasses for food." And that's what happened. God saw everything he had made: it was supremely good. There was evening and there was morning: the sixth day.

Think It: We see that on the sixth day, God created all the land animals – including humans.



Just like each day before, there was order – a system in how creation came together.

Together, boys and girls were created in God's image, a special honor. With that honor

comes the responsibility to care for creation, from the littlest ant to the largest blue whale.

Creation care is sometimes called conservation – or the work of conserving (saving) nature.

As Christians, we work with God to care for creation – that can look like recycling, planting a garden, and choosing renewable packaging, all because we know God's creation is just as valuable as we are.

Talk It: What does it mean to be created in God's image? God created humans and land animals on the same day – what does this show us about how God values animals? What responsibilities do we have to the animals we share the planet with? How can you practice creation care?



Create It: Christians talk a lot about what it means to be made in God's image. This is called the Imago Dei. Draw a picture of what this means to you. Be creative – there's no right answer!

Do It: Round up your stuffed animals or other animal toys and set up a creation convention. Put them in order – try alphabetically, by height, or region of the world where they originated. Snap a picture of your creation convention!



Pray It: Dear God, thank you for all the diversity in creation! Help me to see that all animals and plants are good in your eyes, and that I am made good too! We pray with Jesus, Amen.



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Day 7

CREATION

Read It: Genesis 2: 1-3

The heavens and the earth and all who live in them were completed. On the sixth day God completed all the work that he had done, and on the seventh day God rested from all the work that he had done. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all the work of creation.



Think It: God spent six days creating everything, then took a rest on the seventh day. This is a pattern of creating and resting. Nature has a pattern – Spring and Summer are for growing new flowers and plants, while Fall and Winter are for resting. We follow patterns like this too! We play all day and sleep at night. We do school in the Fall, Winter and Spring, and take a break in the Summer. Just like God created order from chaos on the First Day, God helps to order our lives with seasons of work and seasons of rest. Every person is designed to have life-giving work and life-sustaining rest, but sometimes that doesn't happen. There are jobs that our communities don't always value, or there aren't enough good jobs to go around. And sometimes there are jobs that forget about rest and want people to work all the time! Meaningful, dignified, and good work for all members of creation is part of God's plan, just as real body, mind, and soul rest is too.

Talk It: What kind of pattern shapes your day? Do you have a morning or bedtime routine? How do routines or daily patterns help you? What can we learn about God from God's decision to rest? What other patterns can you identify in your life and in creation?



Create it: Can you remember everything that God created? Create a map of creation, starting with Day and Night on the First Day, and include something from each of the days of creation. Be creative – and don't forget to include a stop for rest!

Do It: God rested, and so should we! Create a resting nook somewhere in your home – it can be on your bed, in a chair, or even a quiet corner. Find stuffed animals, blankets, and pillows to make your resting nook special. Then, have a rest!



Pray It: Dear God, thank you for creating everything! Help me to see the goodness in resting just much as the goodness in working. We pray with Jesus, Amen.

