



God Saw How Good It Was

(based on Genesis 1:1–2:3)

In the beginning of everything, there was nothing. Just God. Nothing else. Just God.

God decided to create the world and began to sing a beautiful song of creation.

God said, “Let there be light!” And light burst forth, separating the darkness. God saw that the light was good. (Day 1)

Then the universe started to unfold. There was the vast space, stretching on and on. There were the skies below surrounding the world, giving it room to breathe. It was beautiful! (Day 2)

God formed the valleys with their rivers, the oceans, the wide plains, the dry deserts, and the tall, tall mountains. God was enjoying this. It was fun to make something out of nothing. So God continued by filling the world with plants. Trees grew strong and tall, and the flowers covered the land with their beauty. The earth produced grain, fruit, and many good things to eat. God looked at everything and saw good. (Day 3)

God put the sun and moon and stars and every planet into the right place. There would be light even in the dark of night, and there would be seasons for the earth. And God saw that it was good. (Day 4)

Then it was time for the creatures of the waters and skies—fish and birds. Great and small, they swam. Great and small, they flew. And God smiled at all that was good. (Day 5)

“More,” God thought. So God made all kinds of creatures. Creeping, crawling, buzzing, slithering, running, scuttling animals filled the land. God looked at all the beautiful animals and saw how good they were. “Something else?” God wondered. God thought. “Let there be people on the earth! They will be like me. They will look after this good world I have created.”

With joy and love, God created people. Some were tall, and some were small. Some were boys, and some were girls. Some had curly hair, and others had straight. The people were all shapes, sizes, and shades. They all had different gifts and abilities. They all were different, but they all were made to be like God, so they were full of love, joy, and grace. God blessed each one.

“Go into my beautiful world,” God said. “You are free to go where you wish; settle down and make families. Bring joy and love to the land.”

“Take care of all I have made on earth,” God said. “I have made all kinds of good fruit and grain for you to eat. Take care of my world. It is fine and beautiful.”

“Look at that!” God declared. “This world and everything in it is good. It is very, very good.” (Day 6)

God was so very happy, and satisfied, and a bit tired from all the work of creating, so God rested. God said, “This is a holy time, a time to rest.” (Day 7)



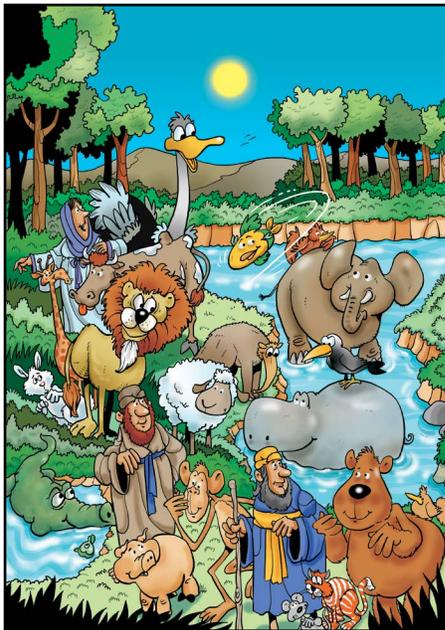
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your child—imagine and wonder.
- Take turns naming favorite parts of God's good creation and telling one another why it is so beautiful. Remember that God created people to care for one another and for creation. Imagine ways to take care of yourselves, others, and the earth.
- Invite everyone to look at his or her hands, feet, and faces. Ask: What do you think it means for you, me, and other people to be created in God's image?



Responding to God's Grace

- Help your child make small signs that read, "Created in the image of God," and tape them to the mirrors in the house. Every time someone looks in a mirror, invite that person to pray one of these prayers: "Thank you, God, for creating me." "Thank you, God, for others." "Thank you, God, for creating the world."
- Take everyone on a walk in your neighborhood or a nearby park. Shout, "I spy God's good creation," and name something to see, hear, touch, or smell—for example, a bird, dog, hot dog vendor, trash can, tree, flower, or police officer.
- Put a piece of masking tape on everyone's arm, sticky-side out. Go for a walk and collect small items from nature—such as twigs, feathers, flower petals, or leaves—by placing them on the tape bracelet. Use the items to make a creation collage.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Create greeting cards for people who live alone or in a nursing home. Decorate them with messages of thanksgiving and hope. For example, on the outside of the card, write, "God created someone delightful." On the inside of the card, write, "You." Deliver the cards. In gratitude for God's grace for everyone, select one person—someone who needs a friend—to visit regularly.
- As an expression of gratitude for God's gift of creation, adopt one part of God's creation to care for weekly or monthly: pick up trash on your street, feed and care for animals at a shelter, or plant and tend flowers at your church.
- Pray this prayer each day this week:

Thank you, God, for creating the world and everything in it. Help us celebrate your good and gracious creation by taking care of all the things you made, including others and ourselves. Amen.