
Loving Your Neighbor's Earth

Hymn: [Love One Another, Hymn 308](#)

Scriptures and Quotes:

[D&C 104:16-18](#) “But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low. For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves. Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment.”

[Moses 7:18](#) “And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.”

“When we waste what others desperately need, what physically happens to unity and our hearts?”—[Sharon Eubank](#)

“I hope we can learn to connect the dots and understand how we live and how we use resources and what resources we choose to use all affect the earth and the many communities of the poor across the world. We cannot pretend to live in isolation from these consequences. There is no scriptural foundation for believing that we live and act and consume in a vacuum.”—[George Handley](#)

Overview:

The Lord blessed us with a beautiful and life-sustaining earth. He “prepared all things” such that there would be “enough and to spare” for everyone, but then He gave us the agency to act for ourselves (D&C 104:16-18). It’s up to us to care for the earth and its resources so that *all* of His children can be supported.

Unfortunately, this is easier said than done. For various reasons, resources aren’t distributed evenly. Additionally, we live in a complex world that makes it hard to know how our actions and choices are impacting the lives of others. Despite the difficulty, it is important to practice considering the effects of our choices on the earth that others rely on.

Because we share the earth and its resources, efforts to cultivate the health of the natural world can also bless the lives of our brothers and sisters. As a family, discuss Sister Eubank's question (above) and think of ways you can reduce your waste and improve conditions for your neighbors in your community and around the world.

Activity Ideas

For young children:

Give the children a bowl of bite-sized crackers. (Make it enough for each child to have three, but don't tell them.) Ask the group to find a way to share the snack fairly. Afterwards, have the children explain their solution.

For older children:

Do a family room swap. Set a period of time (one day, one week, etc.) and have family members take care of someone else's space. How do you feel about someone taking care of your things? How careful are you with the other person's belongings? How can we apply this to our stewardship over the earth?

For all:

Play a water relay game like [Cup to Cup](#). Sit two teams in straight lines and pass water in a cup over your heads from one bucket to another. The first team to fill their bucket wins. Explain that being careful passing the water will help each person receive a larger amount and fill the bucket faster.

Treat Ideas

Make french toast for dinner (or dessert)! In French, it is called *Pain Perdu*, which means "lost bread." Rather than throwing away leftover bread, they turn day-old bread into something delicious.

If you don't already have a favorite recipe, try [this one](#) or [this one](#).

Additional Resources

Watch President (then Elder) Russell M. Nelson talk about [The Golden Rule](#). We should treat the earth as we would want others to treat the earth—for us today and for our posterity.

The Golden Rule is a universal truth and common to every religion. Look at the many formulations [here](#).

Think about how the use of pesticides affect others as you watch [this video](#) about Rachel Carson's campaign against them.

Use this article to understand that [what happens upstream will affect downstream](#). Our choices affect our drinking water as well as wildlife and outdoor recreation.