



DEVOTIONAL

We are including this free optional devotional add on as a guide to help you dive into scripture topics related to the unit study as a family. Each devotional will include a passage of scripture to read together, ideas of what other scripture to focus on, a memory verse, and a hymn to learn over the course of the unit. All scripture will be in the ESV version.



ADD THE
WONDER

NATURE
CURRICULUM



Sunflowers are one of the most beautiful and happy flowers that God made! We talked about what sunflowers symbolize—peace, hope, love. In the Bible, flowers also symbolize faith. Do you know what faith means? Faith is having the confidence that what God says is true and that his promises are forever even when we cannot see him!

Luke 12:27-28 says: Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!

Jesus is saying that we can fully trust him to take care of us! The lilies of the field never worry, they never fret and God creates them to be one of the most beautiful things in all creation. God provides for his creation and He provides for us because he loves us! Look up the following verses about faith as you are learning about sunflowers. We can trust our heavenly Father! Hebrews 1:1; Hebrews 11:6; Mark 9:23; Matthew 15:28; Matthew 17:20; 2 Corinthians 5:7.

Memory verse: Luke 12:27: Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Hymn Study: It Is Well by Horatio Spafford

Listen to this beautiful hymn while you read the lyrics. Horatio Spafford lived from 1828-1888 in Chicago, Illinois. He was married to Anna. In 1871, his 4 year old son died of a disease called Scarlet Fever. Shortly after, the great Chicago fire destroyed most of their property. It didn't end there for the Spafford family because in 1873, the family set sail for Europe with Horatio staying behind for work. During this voyage, the ship struck another ship and sank, killing their 4 daughters. Only Anna survived. She sent a message to Horatio with the words "Saved alone." He left to be with Anna and as he passed the place where his 4 daughters died, he was inspired to write the lyrics for the hymn. He focused his thoughts on the faith and hope he had in Jesus Christ rather than on what he lost. Horatio knew that even in terrible loss and pain, Jesus is there, walking alongside us. Horatio wrote the lyrics for this hymn, but Philip Bliss wrote the music. It was published in 1876 and the lyrics and music have remained the same since then.





We have been learning about how animals migrate in spring and fall. Did you know that God created them this way? God gave animals instinct which gives them the ability to know how to build homes, care for their young, and when to move to a different place on Earth to find food or have babies. The animals obey God because he created them. We can obey God, too, because He created us and He loves us! There was a man named Abraham who obeyed God in a big way. Let's read about him.

Read Genesis 12:1-9

Abraham was comfortable in his hometown. He had roots and a family and a lot of livestock. How would you feel if God told your family to leave your house and just go. It would be hard! Have you ever moved? Would you like to move? Abraham trusted God and was rewarded richly—even with much hardship. Abraham became the father of a great nation and if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are a part of that great nation—God's people. Abram was his original name, but God gave him a new name—Abraham—which means father of multitudes.

Memory Verse: Genesis 12:1: Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you."

Hymn Study: The God of Abraham Praise by Daniel ben Judah and later paraphrased by Thomas Olivers

Listen to this hymn while you read the lyrics. Thomas Olivers lived from 1725-1799. Thomas was an orphan and a big troublemaker as a child. He became a shoemaker but was still doing bad things—until he heard a preacher one day and the Lord got a hold of him. He became a Christian! One day he was in church and heard an old Hebrew song that spoke to him. Oliver rewrote parts of the song to make it more Christian and the hymn was born! It is said that a Jewish girl became saved and her family left her because of her faith. She went to Olivers and sang the hymn to him and told him that she would always choose Jesus over every other thing—including her home and family.





We are learning about so many ways that we can track animals through the study of their scat and tracks and other clues animals leave us. I always sit in wonder as I think about God being so creative when creating animals. He didn't have to make them so unique and interesting but he did because he is a CREATOR and he loves us!

Take some time to read through Isaiah 11:6-9. Isaiah is telling us about a prophetic vision he had about the Kingdom that will come at the return of Jesus! In the Garden of Eden, animals and humans lived peaceably together. After sin came into the world, some animals changed and started to hunt and became dangerous for us. It will not be that way when Jesus returns and brings the "New Heavens and the New Earth!" We will once again live together side by side with the animals. Which animals are you most excited about playing with? I would love to snuggle up with a big lion. Think about all the animals God made as you go through the Scat and Tracks unit. Can you find any other verses in the Bible about animals? There are many!

Memory Verse: Isaiah 11:6: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together, and a little child shall lead them

Hymn Study: All Things Bright and Beautiful by Cecil Francis Alexander

Listen to this hymn while you look at the lyrics. This is one of my favorite hymns because it talks about God and His wonderful creation. Cecil Francis Alexander lived from 1818 until 1895. When she was a young girl, Cecil lived in Ireland and loved to write poetry in her school's journal. She loved to write about God's creation and in 1848, she wrote this hymn. She married Rev. William Alexander in 1850 and he later became the Bishop of Ireland. Cecil loved people very much and spent her life caring for the sick, poor, and hungry. She would travel many, many miles to care for these people. Later, Cecil and her sister founded a school for the deaf. Her life was a life of service, just like Jesus. As you listen to this hymn, think of God's wonderful creation and also think of ways that you can serve people around you like Jesus did.





We are learning so many interesting things about trees in this unit—things I never realized about trees until I took the time to study them! Imagine how much we can learn about nature by taking time to study. Studying nature reveals so many things about God. Did you know that? What are some things that nature tells us about God? Think about this with your family. I believe that the study of nature shows us what a good planner God is, how creative He is, and how glorious He is! He works all of creation together! Think about the little bee that pollinates the flowers. The flowers couldn't live without pollinators like the bee and the bee couldn't live or do its work without the nectar from the flower because the bee uses the nectar for food and to make honey! It is important to remember that nature is NOT God and that we should never worship nature—we only worship the One who gave us nature. Let's read through the following Bible passages as we go through the Mighty Trees unit.

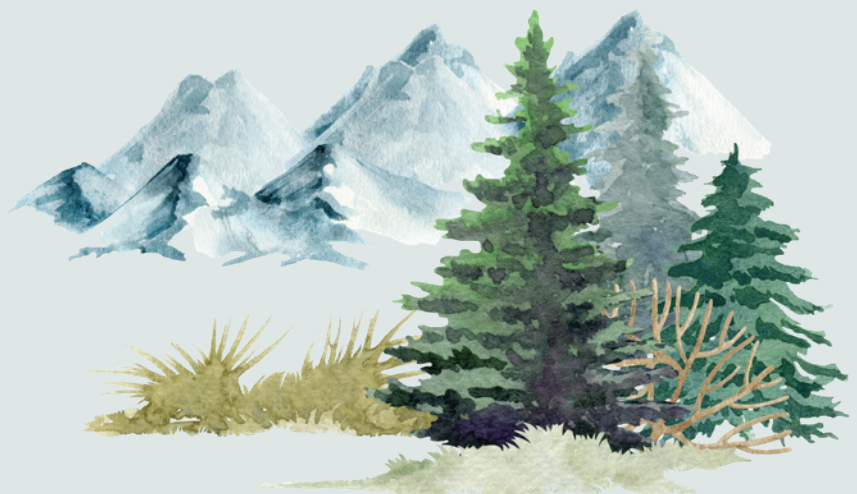
- Romans 1:19-20
- Psalm 19:1-6
- Psalm 104:24

Take time to notice things in nature. Take time to thank God for his gift of nature. Always see the wonder in nature. It is such a gift!

Memory Verse: Psalm 19:1: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Hymn Study: This Is My Father's World by Maltbie Davenport Babcock

Take some time to listen to this hymn while reading the lyrics. Reverend Babcock lived in New York. He loved to take nature walks and would tell his wife that he was “going out to see the Father's world.” Babcock died in 1901. His wife, Katherine, published a book of Babcock's writings called *Thoughts for Every-Day Living* and in this book was his poem called, “My Father's World.” In 1915, this poem was set to music by Babcock's friend, Franklin L. Sheppard, and the hymn was born! Babcock never got to hear this hymn because he had already died. This hymn is sung in churches world wide! *This is my Father's world. The battle is not done. Jesus who died shall be satisfied, and earth and heav'n be one.*





We have been learning about some of the major rivers on Earth along with the creatures that live there. The Bible is full of references to rivers! One of my favorite Psalms is Psalm 1. Read this Psalm with your family. Try to memorize this entire Psalm over the next few weeks. This is a Psalm of David. Do you remember David? He was a shepherd boy, he defeated Goliath in God's strength, and then he became the king. David wrote this Psalm about good and evil—children of God and children of the evil one. Blessings and curses. The people who walk in the way of the wicked, stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of scoffers are people who live according to this world. These people want to be independent of God and live according to their desires. The godly people don't walk with wicked people—they walk with God. They meditate on the laws of the Lord and the goodness of God! This leads to great blessing like a tree watered by the streams of water and bearing good fruit! We want to be the tree planted by streams of water. It is important to take time to meditate, or think about, God and His word. Filling yourself with God will leave no room for the ways of the world.

Memory verse: Memorize all of Psalm 1 together as a family. As you memorize, think about the tree planted by the streams of water. Be the tree!

Hymn Study: Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing by Robert Robinson (1735-1790)

Listen to this hymn while reading the lyrics. Isn't it beautiful? Robert wrote this song when he was 22 years old. Robert was a barber's apprentice in London. While apprenticing, he befriended a group of wicked people who led him in the paths of unrighteousness. A pastor preached the gospel to Robert and he became a Christian in 1755 and then became a pastor himself. In 1758, he wrote this hymn. Robert spent his life "prone to wander" and he struggled with doubt all through his life and sometimes questioned if he was saved at all. There is a well known story that while Robert was riding in a stagecoach, a lady was humming a beautiful tune. The lady asked Robert if he had ever heard this tune and he replied with, "Madam, I am the poor, unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago. I would give a thousand worlds if I had them, to feel what I did back then." The lady replied, "Sir, the 'streams of mercy' are still flowing." Robert was restored because of his own hymn. God is so good.

