

Ecological Lens Questions

A. Noticing non-human elements

- Name the species or ecosystems mentioned or implied in the text.
- Are we stressing the importance of humans in this text at the expense of the rest of creation?
- What is the spiritual significance of the nonhuman entities in this scripture?

B. Where are we?

- How does our location in time and space affect how we hear the text?
- What might the original writer have seen outdoors? How is our view different?
- How might the text speak in light of current environmental issues?

C. Including creation in our community

- How are humans, land and other living things in this text interconnected?
- If the other-than-human beings in this text could speak, what might they say to us? Can we empathize with a river or a bird?

D. How is God at work through creation?

- How is creation involved in God's redemptive work?
- Can we see God at work in creation's ability to generate life, provide for its inhabitants and heal itself?
- Have we over-emphasized God's redemption in human history at the expense of recognizing God's sustaining presence in nature?

E. Connecting with Christ:

- How is Christ involved in creation?
- In the restoration of creation?

F. Human justice and ecological justice

- Does this passage show a connection between injustice to humans and damage to the Earth?
- Does it offer guidance in caring for the most vulnerable people?

These questions are adapted from *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*, by Norman C. Habel, David Rhoads and H. Paul Santmire, Fortress Press, 2011.

Every Creature Singing

Prayer of Intent

(Use at the beginning of each session)

ALL: Jesus Christ, Creator and Redeemer of all things—we long to meet you.

Voice 1: In the scriptures.

Voice 2: In our communities.

ALL: In creation.

Voice 1: We ask for hearts open to beauty, joy and awe.

Voice 2: We ask for courage to witness the world's pain.

ALL: We invite your Holy Spirit to breathe and move among us. Amen.