

YOUTH RESOURCES

11-14



BUILDINGS

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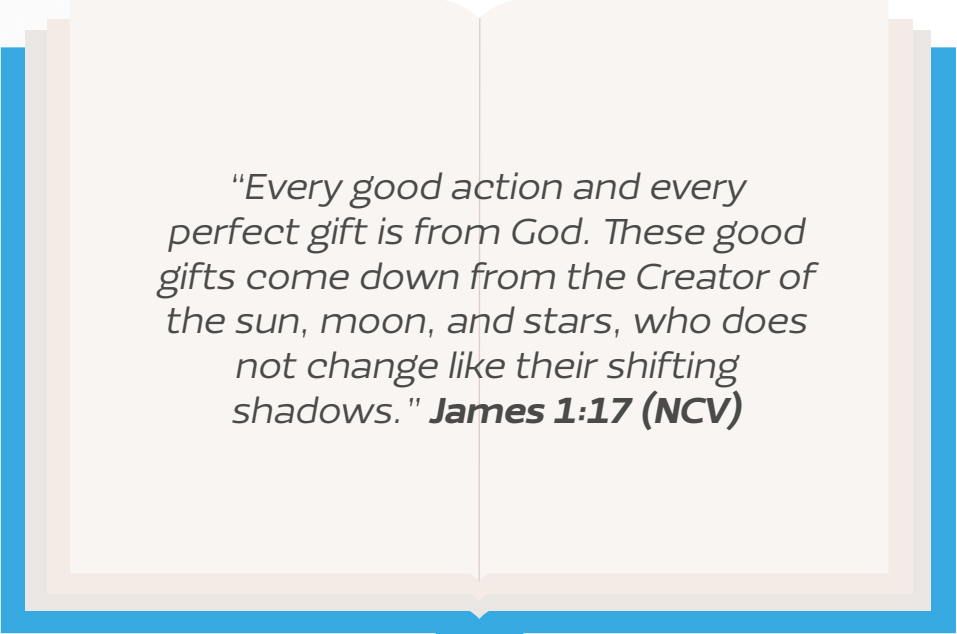
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BUILDINGS

Youth leader note: this session can be done indoors or outdoors.



*"Every good action and every perfect gift is from God. These good gifts come down from the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars, who does not change like their shifting shadows." **James 1:17 (NCV)***



INTRO

In this session we're focussing on buildings or shelters! We go in and out of buildings all the time and don't give them much thought. They are so useful for keeping us warm, dry and giving us a safe place to gather and do all kinds of activities day in day out. What we do with our buildings can also have a huge impact on the earth and other people – which we'll look at later on.

In the Old Testament the people of God had a whole week every year which was a festival worshipping God called 'The Feast of Shelters'. We're going to look at this together now.

Optional: First let's make our own shelters to sit in!

Youth leader note: if it's easier or you are short for time, you could put these shelters up yourself before the session.



GAME

Materials:

- Scrap paper or cardboard
- Recyclable paper, sellotape
- Books

Instructions:

- Get into pairs or teams each with scrap materials and sellotape
- Team that builds the most sturdy building using these materials in 3-5* minutes wins! (depending how long you think the group needs)
- Test sturdiness tested by how many books balance on it before it collapses
- Recycle all materials after! 😊



ACTIVITY

Shelter Building:

Build shelters together and sit in them for the rest of the session.

Materials if doing this outdoors: (this is a list of ideas and not prescriptive! Just use what you can find easily)

- Sticks/logs
- Tarpaulin
- Boxes
- Tents
- Fairy lights
- Bunting – or materials to make your own
- Camping lamps
- Blankets for floor

Materials if doing this indoors:

- Bed sheets
- Parachute
- Blankets
- Cushions
- Fairy lights
- Bunting – or materials to make your own
- Camping or indoor lamps



BIBLE

Read Leviticus 23:34 then 39–43 together

All of the feasts and festivals that God told his people to celebrate through Moses were reminders of their story: of where they had come from and of everything God had done for them. They were reminders of how God had rescued his people from slavery and had given them everything they have as a gift. Other festivals were reminders of how He is powerful and loving and that they were called to worship him and share him with everyone around them.

- Why is it good to remember what has happened and what God has done for us?
- Can you remember a good thing God has done for you or you are thankful for in your past? It can be recent or a while ago. Be brave and share this with the group, it's encouraging for others to be reminded how kind God is!

Read v 43 again

This is the reason God tells them to do "The Feast of Shelters". God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt and they lived in temporary shelters for a long time. This meant they had to rely on God for their food and for where to live, and had to follow him closely. It can be easy when we have food and shelter to forget to rely on God and to thank him –

- What could you rely on God for right now? Share with the group or write down on paper something you'd like to ask God for.
- What could you thank God for right now? Share with the group or write down on paper something you want to thank God for.
- Take some time to pray about this together out loud or in your heads and hearts



WORSHIP

Praise God for who he is and all he's done!

Either – play some worship music in the background as do your prayer activity from the end of the Bible section above. You can then take time to thank God together. You could centre it around James 1:17 (*Every good and perfect gift is from above*)

Or – sing together! Sing a song you know well together to thank and praise God. A good song suggestion for this time is 'Counting Every Blessing' by Rend Collective – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ehg8MZvYiaM>



PRAY

Most of the buildings we use are permanent structures, but there are many people across the world who do not have permanent or reliable buildings for homes for lots of reasons. One of those reasons is climate change.

An estimated 20 million people per year have to leave their homes because of worsening weather. Weather has become more unpredictable with abnormally heavy rain, long droughts, desertification, cyclones and more. The weather impacts or even destroys their homes, food and water sources.

We need to pray about this! God calls us to come to him with every need, he listens and moves powerfully. Pray together in small groups or as one big group.

If it's helpful, use all or some of this prayer together:

Father God,

We **thank you** for this beautiful world you have given us,
and we are **sorry** for how we have not cared for it as we should.

We know **you heard** the cry of your people when they were in slavery in Egypt and you rescued them, and we know **you hear our prayers** now.

We pray that you would **please** hear the cries of the people most affected by climate change – those who have lost their homes and struggle to find food and clean water. Please would you give them **comfort, strength** and provide them with **safe places** to live and flourish.

Please would you inspire governments and organisations around the world to make **creative solutions** to help those who are most in need.

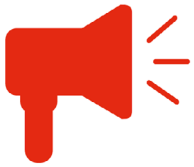
Most of all, Almighty God, we pray that you would **stop climate change** in its tracks: – that **world leaders** would make wise and good decisions, and **we** would be part of the solution.

Restore our world, loving God,

In Jesus' name, Amen.



*"In my trouble I called to the Lord. I cried out
to my God for help. From his temple he heard
my voice; my call for help reached his ears."
Psalm 18:6 (NCV)*



ACTION

How can we use our buildings on a daily basis to be part of the solution?

We can make small and big changes in our buildings to make less impact on the earth and care more for those most impacted by climate change. For example we can use less energy, save water, recycle more, or cut down our waste.

Take Action:

Here are some ideas for different buildings you use in the week. Spend some time now deciding on a goal you could set yourself to achieve in the next week and commit to it from here on – use one of the suggested goals below or make up your own.

Make sure your goal is a challenge (not something you already do!) but is also realistic so you can achieve it and stick to it for good. Share how this has gone at the beginning of your next session together!

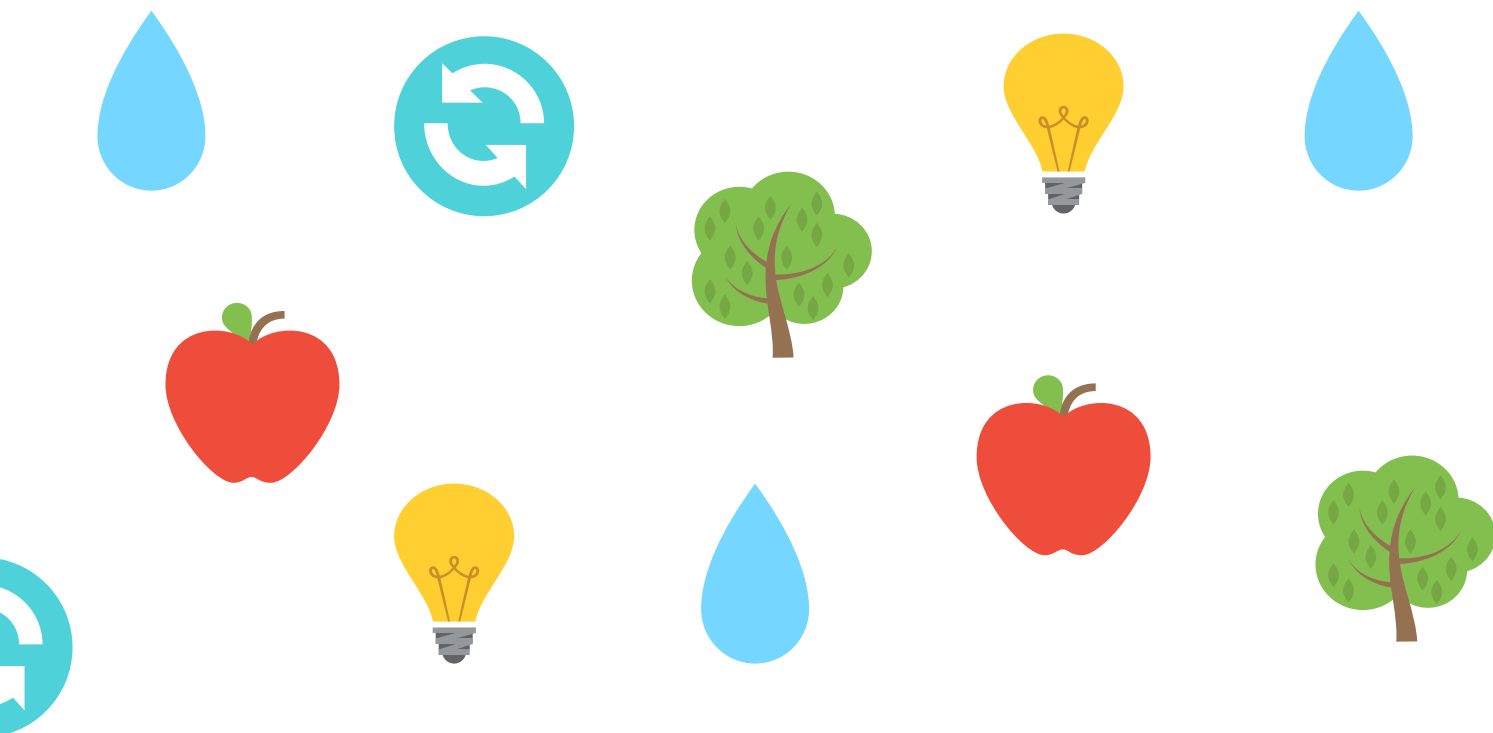
Home:

- Switch off the lights in any rooms you're not using 💡
- Switch off the TV & computer when you're not using them 💡
- Put a jumper on first instead of putting the heating on straight away 💡
- Turn the tap off whilst you are brushing your teeth 💧
- Turn the shower off whilst washing 💧
- Learn what goes in which bin and recycle properly at home ♻️
- Ask your parents for a food waste bin in the house – use either your council's food waste scheme or get your own garden compost bin 🍏
- Ask your parents to switch to only recycled toilet paper 🌿




Youth group/church:

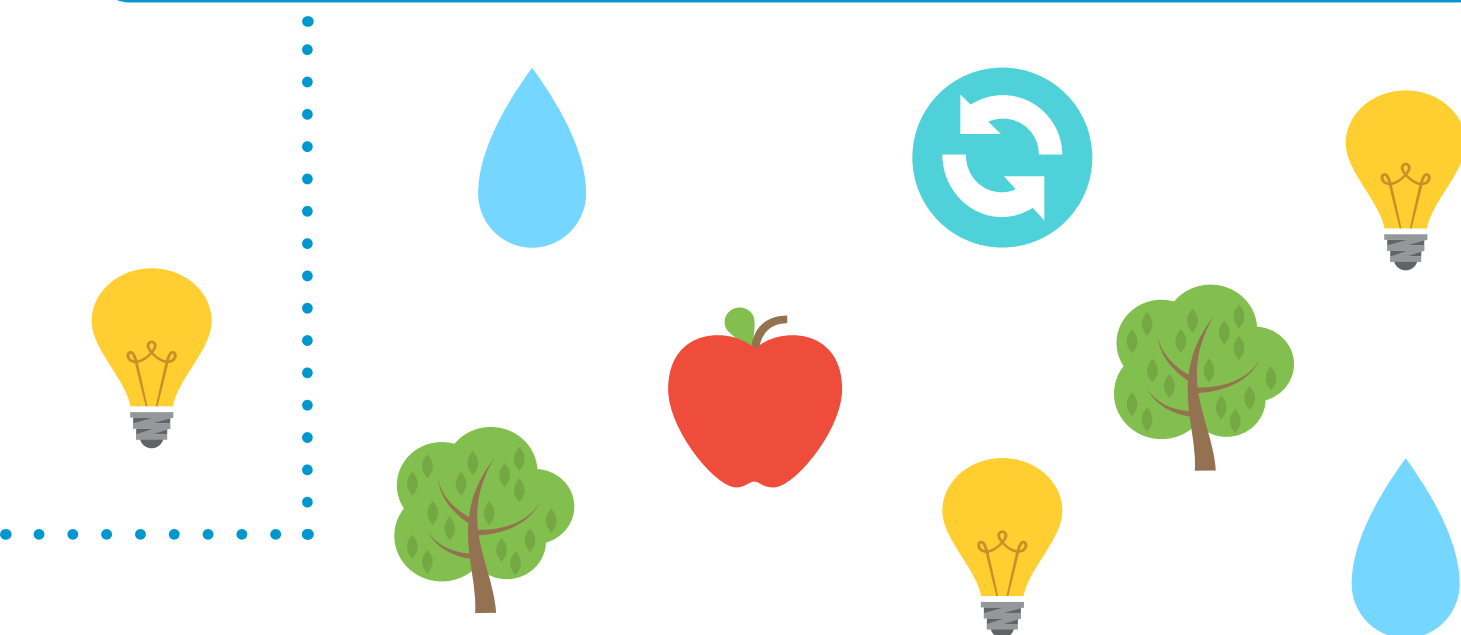
- Put jumpers on first instead of putting the heating on straight away 💡
- Switch off lights, tvs, computers & games consoles when not being used 💡
- Make signs that say what goes in which bin and commit to recycling properly ♻️
- Use mugs instead of takeaway cups 💡 🌿
- Introduce a food waste bin to your youth venue or church & use council or your own composting 🍏
- Switch to only recycled toilet paper 🌿
- Switch to only recycled paper for activities 🌿





Key:

-  **saves water** – reducing water use is good for the environment, well done!
-  **saves energy** – this means a smaller carbon footprint for you, woohoo!
-  **recycles or reduces waste** – less needs to be put in landfill now and fewer products need to be made from scratch saving materials and energy, that's great!
-  **composting is better than landfill** – instead of being buried or burnt which contributes to pollution and CO² emissions, waste food can be made into something useful for plants in the future, you legend!
-  **saves trees** – loads of trees are cut down for lots of commercial uses. This destroys habitats, ecosystems and contributes to global warming – you're helping to stop that, go you!





GOING DEEPER

Here's some further resources you might choose to use.

Youth leader note: this topic can be really emotive and that's not necessarily bad – but be aware of the feelings your group might have.

Short videos:

Your group might find it helpful to see a video showing the link between our CO² emissions, the environment and people around the world. Here are a couple of short simple videos. Although they focus on COP26 in 2021, the main message remains relevant beyond it:

- 2021: A Crucial Year For Climate Change | WE ARE TEARFUND (2.45 minutes): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_LSY0uOFexw
- What happens if the planet warms by 2°C? | WWF (2.25 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzOvpSLXG18>

Longer videos:

Katherine Hayhoe is a Christian who is also a Climate Scientist, and she has a user-friendly Youtube Channel on this topic called 'Global Weirding'. Here are a couple of videos of hers that are a little longer but very accessible linking how our lifestyle impacts the environment and other people:

- What's the big deal with a few degrees anyway? (9.04 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cRCbgTA_78
- I'm just one person, what can I do? (7.31 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q48BvprCFr0>

Apps:

WWF have an app that you can calculate your carbon footprint with that you might want to incorporate into the session or suggest youth do at home: <https://www.wwf.org.uk/myfootprint>