

#5

BEACHCOMBING

There's a psalm - an old song - in the Bible:

Let's sing for joy to the Lord...

Let's come before him with thanksgiving... music and song.

The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

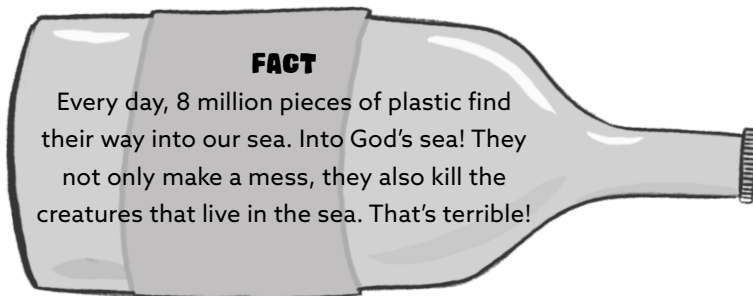
(Our take on Psalm 95)

If God made the sea, and if his hands formed the dry land, then he'll want us to look after those places, right? If I made something, I wouldn't want it covered in things that are not meant to be there.

So, find the right day - it doesn't have to be the nicest weather, just a day when the family's free - and **GET TO THE BEACH!** All right, if the beach is a long way away, is there a lake or river nearby instead?

It's not a sunbathing day, though. Oh no. It's something much more satisfying. **A BIG CLEAN!**

Where the land meets the sea, all sorts of things wash up on the beach.



Plastic bottles, plastic bags... They might have been washed out to sea and washed in again. How much can you collect? Pick up what you can (be safe if there are sharp bits!) and take it all to a recycling bin or centre. Then know that you've helped clean what God's made, what he's formed with his hands.



What did you find on the beach? Where do you think it started life? Where do you think it will end up now?

I found...	Maybe it started life... (use your imagination!)	It'll end up...
A plastic bottle	In a beachfront café in Spain?	In my local recycling centre. It might become another bottle!
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FISH FINGERS FOR TEA!



Yum! Or should I say...Yum?

Now look, we're not here to ruin your fish finger fun, but next time you chomp down on one, think about where that fish has come from. Can you look at the packet?

If it has a nice logo on it - the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) logo - it is a sign that the manufacturer is working to look after the fish stocks in the ocean when it catches fish for your fish fingers...

If you buy farmed fish, check it's RSPCA Freedom Food or organic. Try going to <www.mcsuk.org/goodfishguide/app> and download the Good Fish Guide from the Marine Conservation Society - it will help you to buy sustainable fish.

Why does this matter?

Well, our seas and oceans are important for life: the water cycle sustains life on the land; ocean currents send warmth around the world and they are a vital part of controlling how much CO₂ is in the atmosphere.

In our oceans, there are vast numbers of different marvellous God-breathed species, which he's put us in charge of! Humans need the oceans too - over 3 billion people rely on the seas and the coast for their jobs or as a source of food.

So it's important that we look after the seas and oceans - for people and the other creatures that depend on them. What do you think happens if we take **TOO MANY** fish and sea creatures out of the sea?

Why should we not take too many fish from the sea? Is it because the sea level would go down a bit, like when I take toys out of the bath?



No! It's that if we take too many, there won't be enough fish left.

The way we're taking them out is also causing massive damage. Bottom trawling is when huge nets are weighted down (sometimes with metal beams) and dragged across the sea floor. This type of fishing scoops up everything! Then the fish that are wanted (mostly cod and prawns) are taken and those not wanted are tossed back into the sea - except now they're no longer living. Imagine someone in the sky above your house dropping a huge net on your town and dragging it along till everything is destroyed. Bottom trawling is not nice for the sea floor.

The World Wildlife Fund says that more than 300,000 small whales, dolphins and porpoises die from entanglement in fishing nets each year. Does that sound as though humans are looking after the sea creatures like God asked us to?

Write your two-letter answer here.....

