

## **Gift of Faith book 10: Nature Exploration**

**Received by: CQ**

- 1. Clouds**
- 2. Rays of sunshine**
- 3. Wind**
- 4. Waterfall**
- 5. A Butterfly**
- 6. Flowers**
- 7. Plants**
- 8. Trees**
- 9. Water**
- 10. Waves**
- 11. Birds**
- 12. Leaves**
- 13. Mountains**
- 14. Islands**
- 15. Moon**
- 16. Lightning**
- 17. Sun**
- 18. Colours**
- 19. Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter**
- 20. Animals**
- 21. Forest**
- 22. Snow**
- 23. River**
- 24. Lake**
- 25. Bees**
- 26. Ocean**

### **Clouds**

Fluffy white clouds are so pretty-looking, and the bright, coloured clouds at sunrise or sunset are beautiful to look at. But did you know that even the nicest cloud might get muddy sometimes? Yes, it's true! As raindrops fall and the cloud descends in showers on the ground it can make muddy puddles!

Do you think it would be so nice to stay up above in the sky like the clouds, never having to be dirty, or to have the problems that you face

in your life on Earth? Well, even clouds don't stay up there always, but come down to help us on Earth, bringing the water we need.

We can be like the refreshing rain and do deeds of kindness to cheer others who are feeling grumpy. Or we can tell people about God's love and Word, and that will help to clean and refresh their thoughts and hearts. And when you want to rise up, just like the water evaporates and turns into clouds all nice and clean again, you can do that when you take the time to sing and praise, pray and listen to Jesus. He can make your heart feel light and happy!

## **Rays of sunshine**

Have you ever seen the light shining through a forest tree? Or seen how the sunlight shines out in paths of light from behind a cloud? Or have you seen a magnificent sunrise, or vibrant sunset? If you were in a hot desert and really needed some rain, the sunshine wouldn't look so beautiful to you. It would just feel too hot and dry during the day.

However, in the right setting, the light shines so beautifully, and is a wonder to look at. Getting to see light, colour, and the bright, cheery rays coming from the sun can bring a feeling of joy just looking at it, or feeling its warmth.

Words can be like sunshine, bringing rays of light into people's lives. It can bring a kind of light that even a blind person can be cheered by. Words spoken at the right time and in the right way, with lips filled with kindness and thoughtfulness, can bring a ray of happiness to someone's heart on even the dullest and most gloomy days.

Too many words, and especially those that aren't well thought-out can be like rays coming down on a desert—not very welcome. Too much talking or words said too forcefully or in the heat of anger, can just dry up people's joy.

Be like the sun's rays that are welcomed and happily received by using words that are beautiful, well-spoken, at the right time and in the most loving ways.

## **Wind**

Like a gentle touch, it brushes over you, invisibly. You look to see what touched you, but see no one. That is wind, a gentle and soothing wind. Wind can blow gently, making a refreshing breeze. Wind can blow wildly, making trees sway from one side to the other. Wind can also make waves choppy creating a rather bumpy boat ride!

Wind can bring movement, speed to ships, and make machines function—like windmills. It can help to create electricity and energy

through windmills too. Wind can carry seeds causing them to be planted elsewhere. Wind can make it possible for some games and sports—like kite-flying and hang gliding. Wind can help birds to fly high. Wind can also be rough causing damage and difficulty from sand storms and hurricanes and such.

Wind is invisible—you can only see the effect that it has on the area around it. Good winds can cause rejoicing and be a welcome relief and help. Harsh winds can cause great troubles, and no one wants it around.

Your spirit is invisible too. But the effect of your spirit on all that surrounds you can be seen, and can show what kind of a person you are, inside. Will you blow gentle, refreshing winds on those who need encouragement? Will you blow helpful strong-enough winds for those who need to get somewhere and are having a hard time doing it on their own? Will your spirit be like a wind that blows people in the right direction, lifting them up in positive ways?

Next time you see the wind blowing through the trees, think about the effect that you have had on others today. How did you talk to others? What ideas did you inspire in them? Were you like a very still day without any wind at all, with jobs that depended on your help were left undone?

God's Spirit is like the wind too, in a way. You can't see it, but you can feel it and see the effect that His Spirit has on you and on others. If you let God's Spirit blow you in the right direction you'll have a great ride! Be a fan for God! Let His wind blow through you to refresh others.

## **Waterfall**

The water rushing over a waterfall can be an amazing and powerful show to watch! Have you ever gotten to see a big waterfall up close? Even a small one can be very beautiful. Water just pours down, gushes down, beautifully cascades while splashing downwards, completely unhindered.

If you placed a cup under the waterfall's flow it would immediately fill, then overflow while you would have to hold on ever so tightly to keep the powerful force of the waterfall from knocking the cup from your hand! However, it would probably splash the cup out of your hand, sending it from your hand to float in the pool of water below. Rather than water just filling the cup, the cup would then be surrounded and soaking in more water than it's ever held before!

Huge lakes, long streams and rivers can be filled from the waterfall's flow. It can seem like it's a tap that is turned on full blast and can't be

turned off! Wow! The sound of the rushing water is rather loud too, when you are up close.

Jesus' love can be compared to a waterfall, I think. It's so abundant and never ending. We can use the example of the cup to get an idea of how much love He has for us. We are like a cup that is empty and is in need of Jesus' loving care. We often wonder how much He loves us, but you know, He doesn't just have enough love to fill our cup, but more than enough so that it keeps flowing, flowing, flowing, to overflowing filling our cup again and again! It's so much that we can just float and swim and travel in His love, because there's so much of it! He doesn't just love us with "half-a-cup full of love" or even a pitcher full, but in gushing amounts and endlessly—more than can be measured in a lifetime!

## **A Butterfly**

Such delicate wings clothe the fluttering butterfly. They are not strong like an elephant, and don't live nearly as long. But with their wings they can see things that even the strongest creatures on Earth can't, and can go where those who have even the fastest running legs can never go.

Up it can fly and flutter, and sit on the smallest flower, or fly to a tree top. A butterfly can land on a child's hand, or sit peacefully on a pebble at the stream's edge.

No matter how hard an elephant waves his big ears, it will never fly. No matter how fast a cheetah might run, it can never make it up to the top of a waterfall's flow, or out to a nearby island over the waters' surface. Being small and light and delicate is what makes the butterfly able to do and see things that tougher, bigger, faster creatures can't.

Each one on Earth has abilities and qualities that others could only dream of having. If the tender butterfly stayed on the ground, looking at the enormous giraffe, and moaned about how very tiny it was in comparison, and said, "I'm too small—I could never reach the tree's blossoms," it never would. If, however, it stopped trying to be like the giraffe, and realised that it had different abilities, and in its own way, it too, could reach its goal, its wings would take it to the blossom.

The butterfly couldn't do this if it was trying to imitate some other creature that seemed far more magnificent than itself. But it could, in its own God-given way, soar even higher than the tallest of the creatures.

If you focus on the way God made you, and you find His way to reach your goals, you can go much further, and do much more than you ever thought possible, instead of trying to do things the way that it seems

others who are considered “great” are doing. God may give you a new way, unthought-of by others. You’ll be glad you did what He created you to do, and for the special way He made you.

## **Flowers**

Taking time to look at a pretty flower up close can cheer you. When someone gives you a flower it can be a way of saying, “I love you and I care about you.” Flowers were made to be used as gifts of love. You can grow a lovely flower garden, which can show that you are happy for the wonderful gift of sight that God has given you. It’s like a big thank-you, to display flowers in a pretty way.

Flowers can be a way to show people that you care about them. They can also be given to someone who needs healing. Flowers make such a wonderful decoration for all kinds of parties and festivities. They are God’s decorations, to be used for special occasions. They can be made into bouquets, or placed in a vase, or even dried to make cards and pictures to give to others.

God likes pretty things—like flowers, colourful sunsets, and lovely smiles. We can be like beautiful flowers to Him, as well, when we are loving, give our time to help others, when we speak gentle and kind words, this is like growing pretty flowers in our life. When Jesus looks at us, it will make Him smile and enjoy what He sees—just like when we look at a colourful and nice-smelling flower garden, or a special, bright and fragrant bouquet of flowers.

## **Plants**

Plants grow as they absorb the sunlight and drink in water and nourishment from the Earth. They have to get just the right amount of each thing they need in order to thrive. If a plant were to only get sunshine, and never any water or rain, it would dry up and wither. Or if it only received water, but was in a place where there wasn’t any light, it also couldn’t produce what it needed in order to keep it growing and looking healthy. If instead of being planted where it could receive nutrients the roots were in something else, like cement or play dough, it wouldn’t be able to grow either.

We can look at the plants and learn something from them. Plants don’t get up and move just because it seems another plant gets to be in a prettier, sunnier or shadier spot. They stay where they are planted and do the job they were made to do.

We also can patiently do what Jesus created us for, and draw nutrients for our spirit from Him and His Word. We should also remember that not every day can be a sunny day, or a day that is only filled with fun and laughter, but there are times to learn other things, and have new experiences. There are times when we might cry, get sick, have a hard time, or not always get just what we wanted and have to wait a while for what we'd like. These times help us to be wiser, more caring, and help us to grow in spirit which strengthens us. Jesus can use everything we experience to make us more beautiful which He can then use to help us be a benefit in the lives many others.

## **Trees**

The strength of the tree depends a lot on how strong its roots are, and how deeply its roots grow. The deeper the roots spread down into the nourishing good soil, the taller it can grow, and the wider and more lustrous its branches can be. The strength is not in the thickness of its bark, or the width of the trunk. That comes with time and age. The secret lies in what is unseen, hidden, and in how far the roots grow to soak up the nourishment it needs.

Even the wind helps to prod the tree to grow yet deeper roots in order to keep the tree's balance. As the roots grow more deeply, so can the branches also spread in width, and the trunk can grow in height.

It's not what is seen about a person, what is easily noticeable about their outward appearance, but rather what is going on inside that determines their strength and ability to withstand the windy, stormy times of life.

If you feel the things you are experiencing are a bit too hard for you to manage, then be like a tree, and spend some secret time, some time where you and Jesus together can meet. Talk to Him in the secret language of your heart, with the whispers of your soul. Let Him nourish you and strengthen your heart and fortify your faith.

When someone is faithful to take time daily to be alone in the stillness and solitude of their special time communicating with Jesus –letting His thoughts and words give peace and direct their spirit, then they can be truly strong, no matter what comes their way. As Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled. Neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) And the Bible also says, "Their strength is to sit still." (Isaiah 30:7)

## **Water**

The sounds that trickling water makes can be rather musical. Water can sound powerful like a full orchestra playing the crescendo of a song, as the water gushes and pours down the face of a waterfall, or in a full and flowing river after plenty of rain has fallen.

A single droplet of water falling where it can echo may have a melodic and high note. A soft falling rain can sound soothing as you curl up under your warm blankets and hear it sing you to sleep with its lullaby. The splashing sounds of a pool filled with playful children can sound so lively and stir you into action. The sound of a pitcher of water filling a glass is a very welcome sound when you are thirsty.

Water means so much to people on Earth, for without good, clean, fresh water, people on Earth could not enjoy this life. It is one of the main keys to survival, and it can bring so much enjoyment as well. A refreshing shower leaves you feeling clean and comfortable. A swim with friends in a crystal-clear lake is a delightful way to spend your time on summer day. A big, hot bubble bath can calm you and relax you, and help you to sleep well that night. Frozen water can make a nice cold drink as you add ice cubes to it. Warm water can help make a nourishing soup or warm drink.

And as much as you need and enjoy water, and as beautiful as it can be displayed in ocean sunsets, on snow capped mountain peaks, in helping to form a rainbow, in the sun's beams making wavy light patterns through clear stream waters, so are you to Jesus.

Jesus loves to be refreshed with the light of your smile. It's like taking a cool fresh drink when you offer words of praise and song to the One that made you and loves you more than you'll ever understand. You are beautiful to Him, and He wants your loving friendship with Him, as much as you need water daily.

## **Waves**

Splashing, crashing, rolling, smashing,

Against the shore, once more,

And again retreating and repeating.

Waves are constantly in motion, never dull, never still. Sometimes the waves are gently rolling along the water's surface. Other times they are huge, gigantic—so big that you could surf through the tunnels that the crashing waves form! They are moving, always moving. The crashing and force of the waves helps to change the coast around it. The

persistent water's splash can even eventually break some rocks down into sand.

Waves help to keep the sea life stirred up as sea nutrients are moved around as well. This causes them to not just settle on the bottom making it difficult for the fish to find food. It also prevents them from just resting on the water's surface which would make the water lose its freshness. The salty sea spray that perfumes the coastline's air is invigorating and cleansing as you breathe it deeply in.

Maybe you wish things in your life would settle down, and be a bit more tranquil; that there would be less change, or at least less change that is unsettling which somewhat disturbs the serene way you wish things could always be. But if things are causing you to move, to try new things, to experience varied emotions and feelings, and are helping you learn things that you would never be able to learn if all remained the same, always, each day, then the changes and stirrings in your life are a good thing. Flow with it, ride it, rise above the waves as if you are a surfer using the wave for a bit of good fun. Anything that's good can be fun, if you see it in the right way and find out how it can be a benefit to you.

## **Birds**

It seems so easy for the birds, when you are standing on the ground and unable to fly. It seems all they need to do is flap their wings a bit and off they go, away from whatever is going on down below. But you know, for them it's no less of a challenge to be a bird in the sky, than it is for you who can walk.

You can do so many other things that birds cannot. You can walk or run somewhere much more quickly than their little legs can take them on land. You can use your hands to hold onto your food while standing easily on both your legs.

You can talk and express yourself in words, describing what you feel and what you need. You can think up new inventions and create things that others have never made before. A bird might seem to have it easy and be the happiest creature in the world, able to soar high above the ground. But as it looks down on you, and sees all the many things that God made people have the ability to do, it could seem to a bird like you are the one that has all the good things!

When you are having a problem, and you are just wishing you could float above it all through the fluffy clouds and not have a care in the world, maybe you can't do that in body right now, but you can do it in spirit and in mind. You can say a prayer and it will be like you have



flown up to Heaven and are talking to Jesus, right then. You can say a few words of praise or thankfulness and talk about the good things that you have to be thankful for, and it will bring a fresh breeze of joy your way. Just like the bird sees the things down on Earth as small when it is flying up so high, that can be the same for you—the problems that seem so big to you will be smaller when you start thinking of all the many other good things that Jesus does for you.

## **Leaves**

Leaves may look pretty, especially when they are multi-coloured in autumn, or when they are light green growing in the spring—but they are hard workers too? In some ways they are like farmers. They gather up the delicious and needed sunlight that helps the plant grow well, and helps to produce what is needed for its nourishment.

There may be countless leaves on a bush or tree! It would take you much too long to try to count just how many! But did you know that each one serves a purpose? If each leaf just thought, “Oh, there’s so many of us, I don’t really make any difference to this bush,” and it stopped doing its job, pretty soon the plant would be bare and cause quite a lot of problems for the plant.

You may think you are just one person in a world that is filled with many people, and sometimes you can get the wrong idea that one person can’t make much of a difference. But just like the leaves are attached to parts of the plant, each person that you see affects and influences others—their family, friends, neighbours and others.

How they are around the people they know will in turn affect the others that they know. Everyone has an effect on the people around them. And if even just one person shares something as simple as a smile with others, it will be passed on like rays of light, from person to person in some way—and eventually the joy may even come back to them one day! Treat people with care, and value each one, because each one is precious and special to Jesus.

## **Mountains**

Mountains seem so big when you are down on the ground looking way up at them. They especially seem high when you start to hike up one. Each step takes effort and energy, and it isn’t always so easy. But if you were to look down below and see them from way up above, they wouldn’t seem high at all—just a bump on the ground.

That’s how it can be with problems and struggles down on Earth. It can seem to take a long time and a lot of effort to work out some solutions to things that are difficult for you there. But one day, when you are

happily flying in Heaven, even the things that seemed the most troublesome here won't bother you anymore. And guess what else? You will be strong in spirit because of the mountains of struggles that you had while on Earth, that you climbed or overcame. You will have learned so many great things.

So when you look up at the majestic mountains, remember that each step in your life, and everything that you are experiencing is bringing you closer to Jesus and teaching you greater faith. And one day you'll fly far higher than the tallest mountain ever climbed.

## **Islands**

Islands can seem so alone, with nothing but water surrounding them. But did you know that they aren't just rocks floating on top of the water, but the land continues on down under the surface of the ocean. You can't always see the rest of the land and underwater mountains that they are part of, but the islands are a part of something much bigger.

If you feel alone, and wonder if you are the only one that feels or thinks a certain way—perhaps there are people around you that don't understand what you are trying to say or explain, or they don't know Jesus as well as you do. Remember, you aren't really alone; you are an essential part of the big mountain of God's family, which is very big and strong.

God's love will keep you safe, even if the opinions of others and the struggles of people around you splash around you like waves around the coast of an island. You won't get washed away. God's got you strongly attached to Him, and you'll stay secure.

## **Moon**

The bright moon on a clear night makes a shining, glowing outdoor nightlight. Each night it's a bit different in its appearance than it was the night before. The shadow from the Earth covers it a bit more each night, and then uncovers it again. This helps us to know how long a week is.

Have you ever seen a ring of light around the moon? Or the moonlight shining down on a lake? Have you ever walked out at night in the silvery moonlight? God knew that light was very important, and we on Earth need it, so He provided not only light for the day, but for the night as well! God loves light, and it can remind us of Him. That was the first thing He said when making the world, "Let there be light!"

Thinking beautiful and peaceful thoughts that Jesus can give us, is like letting the light of His Spirit and the light of Heaven in to our mind and

heart. When we do things that are good, true and lovely, it's like walking in the light.

Even if things aren't going so well around us, or others aren't behaving so well, and if it feels like we are in a dark shadow—if we look to Jesus and do things His way, we will be walking in His light and we will glow. – Just like the moon glows and reflects the light of the sun. We can be just like that—and bring the light of Jesus' words and love to everyone on Earth.

## **Lightning**

Have you ever watched a lightning storm? If you were somewhere safe, and the lightning wasn't too close to where you were living, it was probably quite a show. The lightning flashes in all kinds of ways and patterns. It's filled with energy and electricity. It's powerful and gets everyone's attention.

When we see things that are strong and bright, it can remind us of the amazing power that Jesus has. He's around to help us, and no matter what we need Him to do, it's never too hard for Him. A strong flash of light in the sky accompanied with some thundering sounds is only a tiny thing compared to how much power and energy Jesus has. He also has a lot of love, while using His power to help people, and to make things in the world change for the better! For those that are doing what makes Jesus glad He can do wonderful things that in turn make them very happy as well. He will also use His power to protect and provide for them.

## **Sun**

Everyone on Earth knows about the sun! It makes the day light, and gives the world warmth, colour, and beauty. The sun is a good illustration to show a bit of what Jesus is like. The sun is always there, helping to provide what the Earth needs, and it keeps on shining day or night, whether you see it or not. So is Jesus—He's always near.

When you see the miracles that Jesus does, it's almost like you can see Him a bit, or at least you know He's around. But there are also times when you can't see a whole lot of demonstrations of His power, and it's at that time that you just need to have faith to believe that it's not because He's gone away, or is sleeping, but that it's time for you to rest in heart. You can know that at just the right time the light will come again.

Jesus will bring good things your way, just like the bright and cheery sun shines on the land at the right time that it is meant to each day. Jesus is

right with you and will bring wonderful things into your life, as you wait for the right timing. His joy will brighten your day and make you glad.

## **Colours**

If you look around you at nature you will be amazed to see just how many colours there are. Some people like to paint or use other things to create colourful pictures—but where did they get the idea? From the colourful things of nature that God created!

A rainbow is a special treat to see in the sky, and it can only happen at just the right time, as sunlight and water mix, and the light's rays show colour to everyone around. Spring-time flowers can be a feast for your eyes to look at, when they are planted to create a colourful garden. A sunset can amaze you with its beauty. Perhaps the clouds were white or grey, and then all of a sudden it's as if someone painted the sky, and all sorts of colours are displayed in shining and glowing ways—pink, purple, yellow, orange, blue, green, and all sorts of shades and hues of each one!

Even though people on earth aren't painted with wild and bright colours, still Jesus created such wonderful variety of shades and colours of skin, hair and eyes. Some people are very dark brown, so dark that they are called "black", others are so light - coloured that they are called, "white". Some are rather brown, and have skin with varied shades and tones.

There is so much variety, colour, shapes, patterns and styles in nature—in all the things Jesus made, from the tiniest flower, to the tallest person; from the smallest fish, to the sky way up high! See how many colours you can spot today! And did you know that there are even some colours that can't be seen with your natural eyes? Maybe one day in Heaven you'll even see new colours that you never saw before. Jesus loves creating new things!—Even new colours!

## **Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter**

If you live in a part of the world that experiences great differences in the seasons of the year, you learn to appreciate things before time passes and the weather changes.

Spring is a welcome season for most of us. The weather starts to warm up. It may be windy or have showers of rain, and that's to help the plants to grow. The rain waters the land and softens it up, and the wind helps to blow seeds around to be planted and grow in other places.

Flowers and leaves spring to life and fill the land with colour and beauty—a welcome sight after a cold, bare, grey or white winter, where few things grow well.

As the days continue to warm, and the crops grow, it's a time when many like to relax and have fun. And in places where it gets real cold during the winter, the warmer weather makes it easier for people to get around then because the roads aren't covered in ice, and people don't have to wear a lot of clothing and coats.

In some places the weather not only warms up but then gets too hot and there's not enough rain, and things might get rather dry. But a nice splash in a pool or lake brings refreshment. Food that is fully ripe can be harvested and enjoyed, sometimes in abundance, and extra fruit and food can be preserved for later on when the time of harvesting is past.

Then the heat begins to pass, and things start settling down, preparing for the winter that is to come. Not much can grow when it is real cold, so autumn is a time of preparation. It can be a beautiful time too, full of colour in a new way. Rather than new plants that paint the land with all shades and hues, it is the leaves that some trees shed that are very colourful as they lose their solid green colour transforming into many other varied, rich, bright colours. The sight of a deciduous forest can be vibrant at this time of year, before the leaves flutter down to mingle and become one with the soil, providing fresh nutrients for the coming growth after the cold. As the bare branches of trees are seen it makes us appreciate what has been hidden, while fully clothed in foliage. Now we get to see what has been working to make the tree what it is—the strong branches that tirelessly hold up their arms, as if in a constant praise to its Creator.

Then icy winds blow, and sparkles of snow that glisten in the sun or moonlight place a blanket of white on the ground in many places. Other times it's just cold and rainy. But there is always beauty in some form. A tree covered in a layer of ice when lit in just the right way can be gorgeous. The scene of stark, dark branches of a leafless tree against the vibrant evening sky is a picture worth painting. This time of cold is a blessing and it is a time of rest for many parts of nature. Some animals sleep the entire winter! The fruit-bearing trees, along with other deciduous trees, can relax from their labours as the sap goes down into the roots of the tree for a time, waiting to be released with new vigour at our Creator's word.

Spring will come again, yes, and the life-giving changes that the Earth's seasons bring will keep going on and on. We can better appreciate each stage of nature as time goes on. When a new season arrives, it has been

nearly a year since we had been able to enjoy that season. We relish it and appreciate it before it passes and the next season greets us, and we embrace it as a friend returning from a journey.

## **Animals**

There are so many types of animals in the world—from the large and tall creatures that run wild through the African plains, to the tiniest ant that you rarely see, as it's busy doing what it was made to do. There are far more animals, fish, birds and bugs of all types than there are people on Earth. Did you know that? And what's more amazing is that God is aware of each and every little living creature that has ever lived on Earth as well as all that are still living.

That can give you peace in your heart, as you think how much more important people are—for they were made in the likeness of God, and are extra special to Him—and God knows where each and every person is right now. Pretty amazing, isn't it? And not only that, but He knows what they are doing, feeling and thinking—and what they should be doing, and what would make them the happiest.

Just like He cares for all the creatures, and provides all that they need to survive, He can and will take care of you. He knows what you need and wants to make you much happier than you have ever been.

So when you see a little bug crawling around in the grass, or see a bird soaring high in the sky, Jesus see and knows about it too—and He's got His eyes on more than just the creatures that help to make the world an interesting and thriving place to live. Jesus is watching you—the person that He made this beautiful, wonderful world, full of animals and plants, for.

Jesus made it all as a home for you to live in and enjoy. And when you realise that everything is going to work out well in the end, because Jesus will take care of all the things that need fixing in the world, and help people to live in love and peace, then you can enjoy His natural creation around you so much more.

The Bible says that one day the animals will all be friends again. The wild ones will be tame. The harmful ones will not hurt. You and all those on Earth will enjoy it far more then, don't you think? So do the best you can to take good care of the world that God made, and trust that one day it'll all be so much better!

## **Forest**

When you look at a forest from far away it looks like a mass of green, and you can't see much else. However, when you are walking in the

forest that is when you feel in awe. Maybe it's a forest where there are real tall trees, and you are amazed at how small the seed is compared to the big tree that grew from it.

Perhaps most of all you are enjoying the display of all types of shapes of leaves and branches in a forest, and the varied patterns on the bark of the trees, or the shades of green. Maybe the way the sunlight shines through the branches and makes them look heavenly is a delight to see. There are so many things you can enjoy when actually being among the trees and walking under the shade they provide, and breathing in the fragrance and the fresh air.

Trees provide so many things that people on earth need and appreciate. Can you list some? And did you know there are some areas where it's too cold for trees to grow? So it's really something to be glad for-- being able to see such beautiful trees.

## **Snow**

Snow is so very cold, and perfectly white. It's one of the whitest things on Earth. It's easy to see if someone has walked through the freshly fallen snow as there are footprints made—like you can see when you walk on a sandy beach.

If you look at snow real closely you will see that it's made of a whole lot of real small snowflakes. It falls silently down from the sky, where the air is so cold that, rather than rain, the water comes down in this powdery, frozen way. The amazing thing is that each and every tiny snowflake is special and looks different than any other snowflake that has ever fallen.

Jesus really likes to create things, and He is very artistic. Every day, in every part of the world, new things are seen. –New snowflakes, new flowers, new kinds of bugs, new designs on the leaves or bark of a tree, new patterns in the sky with clouds. No matter where you are, if you are in nature, you'll see things that many others may have never seen.

You are just as special too—you are a new creation. Never on Earth has there ever been someone just exactly like you! You are beautiful to Jesus! And He can clean our hearts and thoughts and make us all nice inside, just like the fresh, clean white snow.

## **River**

Listening to the rustling sound of the water flowing in a river can remind you about how time passes by. Did you ever notice that when you are having fun doing something the time passes by quickly, and soon it is time to do something else?

Every day time passes, and each day you get a bit older too. You used to be real small, but now you are bigger. And time will just keep passing, and soon you'll be much older! Just like the river flows along, each of our days move along.

When a person is going along a rushing river in a canoe or boat, they need to steer it well and stay balanced so they can enjoy their trip down the river. Each day is like the next part of our journey of life, and we move through our life one day at a time. We choose where we are going to go, and how fast we will do things, and what we will turn to look at, as we go along our day.

If you want to enjoy your life, you need to be wise, careful and alert, and make good choices while on the journey of your life.

When you get to Heaven, you'll find there's a special river there called, "The River of Life". I think you'll discover it's the most beautiful and refreshing river you ever saw! The water will be just perfect! And best of all, you'll live forever in that beautiful place.

As you sail on the River of Life, and think about the time you spent on Earth, it will probably seem like time went by real fast, and you'll be so glad for the good choices that you made, and the ways you made Jesus happy while still on Earth.

## **Lake**

Have you ever seen the reflection of the sun or moon or the surrounding trees on the surface of a lake? It looks beautiful. If the lake is calm and the water is still, the reflection can look like a mirror reflecting the lovely nature around it. If the wind is blowing and making waves on the surface, or if a fast motorboat is zooming along it, the water can't make a pretty picture on it, reflecting what is above and beside it.

That can be like our hearts and faces too. If we are calm on the inside, and aren't getting troubled and upset about things, then Jesus' Spirit and thoughts can be reflected in our actions and words. People will like to be around us, just like people enjoy relaxing beside a tranquil lake.

## **Bees**

When you hold a delicious piece of fruit in your hands and you are about to take a bite, I bet you don't stop to think about some amazing little creatures that helped that fruit to grow. Did you know if there were no bees around, there wouldn't be many of the yummy fruit that you enjoy, either? Bees don't only make honey—that's just one of the things God made them able to do. Most of all they help to pollinate the plants and flowers, and that helps fruit and food to grow.



There are so many things that God planned in nature. Each animal and bug helps with a job that keep things working well. It's like a big puzzle, with each creature and plant, sun, water, air and so much more helping to keep things growing and working well. Next time you see a bee remember all the other little creatures that help to do all kinds of things to make the world a nice place.

Jesus made you just right too, and put you here for a reason. If you listen to Him as you grow up, you can find out what you can do to make the world a better place, and to bring His love and joy. Maybe you will just help in small ways and do things that not many people even know you do. But Jesus sees you and will be so glad that you did your part to help His world and the people in it.

## **Ocean**

The water in all the wide and deep oceans can't be measured—and that's a bit how big God's love is too. It's immeasurable. You can sail in the ocean; you can dive in and discover some of the secrets below; you can use the tides to help to create energy—like people who make electricity from its movement. You can travel to distant places on the surface of the water. It can house the fish that provide nourishment and health. Salt from the ocean can be gathered and used for a multitude of purposes. Beautiful beaches can be enjoyed. Waves can be surfed on. Gorgeous sunsets can be seen as the sun sets on the horizon of the ocean. But what you can never do is measure just how much water there really is. It will always be too much!

God's love is a bit the same. You can rest on it, in faith, knowing that it will always be enough to support you. There are secrets that He can show you when you take time with Him. He can provide you with what you need to maintain a happy and healthy life as you love Him more than anything else. He can give you fun and enjoyable times as He gives you His blessings. He can give you inspiration and faith to do all kinds of things. You can find the peace and joy in your heart knowing that you are loved so very much by the God who made you. And no matter how much you discover or realise that God loves you, there's always going to be vast amounts of love for you—more than you can ever imagine.