

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Aren’t We All Part of God?” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for October 15, 2017. The lesson is found on page 43 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture



Some things are more natural than others. I don’t know about you, but I’ve never heard about a farmer gathering a whole bucket of butter flavor granules from his cow Bessie every morning.

Here’s a shocker—we can’t always trust labels. But here’s another thought—we can’t always trust *nature* either.

People have a tendency to think that things labeled as “natural” are equal to “good” or “healthy.” But it doesn’t take us long to think about things in nature that are not so good and not even safe. Consider poison ivy, or mosquito-borne diseases, or forest fires, or hurricanes. All completely natural, and all capable of causing harm—from minor annoyances to complete human devastation.

So what do we make of this? Why did God create a natural world that is capable of harming us? One thought is that it was not meant to be that way, but that sin led to a breakdown of the order of the world—the whole system of human society and persons as well as the animals and plants and natural forces that we interact with. Another thought is that perhaps God allowed for natural forces to sometimes challenge us, so that we would be dependent on Him. Another idea is that God is not in charge of the natural forces at all—He is not Mother Nature. He simply set the forces in motion and now lets them go on their natural trajectory—which is, as the scientists say, toward increasing entropy, or moving from order to disorder.

Whatever principles we believe about nature, one truth we can find in the Bible is that God is not the same as nature. God is the Creator, not the creation. God is the sculptor, not the clay. And while God is always all-good, everything that comes from nature is not always good.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the article. Then discuss in this way:

What do you think about this article? What do you think when you see a label that says “all-natural”?

How would you explain that God is different or separate from nature?

Why do you think there are things in nature that can hurt us?

The natural world is awesome and beautiful. Let’s look at what we can learn about God’s relationship to the natural world from the Bible.