

# Cleaning God's Creation

By Susan Vogt



According to Genesis God created the solar system, water, plants, animals, birds, and humans. “And indeed it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). We humans are now entrusted with caring for this creation. It’s a daunting responsibility and one that we will never finish – but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t begin.

## For

Adult / Couple

## Season

Summer

## Needed

At least two bags per person. You might also want gloves to protect your hands.

## Prepare in Advance

- Decide whether you want to do this as a family, as a couple, or solo.
- Choose a public place that needs some tender, loving care. It could be a city park, an empty lot, or just a city street.
- Find out what items are recyclable in your community and where to take them. See “Helpful Links” below.

## Activity Plan

1. Start with calling to mind the story of creation in prayer.

*God of past, present, and future, you call us to “have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28). We marvel at the creation around us. We humans have taken the raw materials of water, trees, animals, minerals, chemicals, earth, air, and knowledge and formed them into tools, paper, plastic, clothing, homes, and computers. May we be good stewards of your creation.*

2. Go to the public place that needs a little cleaning up. (You get extra points if you can walk or bike there but maybe your own neighborhood is already sparkling clean. ☺)
  - Walk around.
  - Enjoy the natural surroundings.
  - Watch the people. You can even talk with them if you like.
  - As you do this, keep an eye out for litter—plastic, cans, paper, whatever.



- Pick up any litter you find. (You can also count this as aerobic exercise if you like.) If the litter is recyclable, put it in one bag. If it's just trash, put it in a separate bag.
  - As you leave the public place put the trash in a garbage can if one is available. If none is available, that might be why there is so much trash. This might lead you to do some advocacy with local government. Why aren't garbage cans available? Ask to have this done.
3. Return home. Recycle what you can. See "Helpful Links" below.
  4. Reward yourself with a nutritious drink (not from a can or plastic bottle of course). Gaze at whatever nature is around you and thank God for it – even if it is a whole lot of buildings. (The wood, bricks, concrete, etc. all originally came from some natural source.)
  5. Age Variation: If doing this with young children you can make a game out of it. See who can load up their bag the quickest, get the most paper, etc.

### **Helpful Links**

[Find a Recycling Center](#). Just put in your zip code and find a place near you.

[Commonly Recycled Materials](#)

[What Kind of Stuff do Recycling Centers Recycle?](#)

[Products that Cannot Be Recycled](#)

