

#### Bible Passages

- Romans 8:1–25

#### Example of Consequences Activity

- My choosing to live far from my workplace
- Motorised transport
- Carbon dioxide emissions
- Climate Change
- Sea-level rise
- Some pacific islands disappearing
- People losing their homeland and livelihoods

#### Dear Creation

Exploring New Testament Letters

#### Paul's letter to the Romans

A typical newspaper letters page will include correspondence with a variety of topics and styles. There may be letters dealing with issues over which there are sharp differences of opinion, letters of encouragement, letters asking questions and letters stating a viewpoint. The letter of Paul to the Church at Rome contains some of these approaches and styles. It opens with a greeting, then deals with his understanding of the way that God offers to redeem people through belief in Jesus Christ in supportive and challenging ways. **Read Paul's letter to the Romans 8: 1–25.**

#### Causes and Consequences

*"For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain, like the pain of childbirth."*

— Romans 8:22

In the style of the 'Consequences' party game, invite each person to write in the centre of a piece of paper an environmental issue that might cause creation to 'groan.' Next, invite each person to consider a cause of the environmental problem identified, then to identify one cause of the cause. These are to be written above the issue. Then, invite each person to write down one possible consequence of the environmental issue and then a consequence of the consequence stated. Write the consequences below the issue. Share your analysis

#### For Discussion

- Have you identified any common or similar causes of the various environmental problems identified?
- How do the potential consequences of the issue heighten the need to make changes?

#### Hope for the future

Christian hope is based on transformation rather than escapism and is symbolised in baptism, by dying to an old way of life and rising to a new way. Such hope is invaluable because it frees people from fatalism and despair in the face of difficulty.

**Read Romans 8: 19–21.** This passage affirms that God was present in the past, is with us in the present and goes before us into the future.

#### For Discussion

- What sorts of measures tackle the causes, consequences and environmental issues that you identified earlier?

#### Challenge – Dear Creation...

Write a letter to a person, organisation or publication of your choice and suggest one positive step that could be taken to bring a little more hope to our environmental concerns.