



LESS PLASTIC,  
MORE LIFE:  
A SEVEN DAY GUIDE

tearfund

**God calls us to pursue abundant life,  
not an abundance of things.**

Yet today, Australians are consuming an overabundance of plastic – hundreds of thousands of tonnes of it every year.

While plastic is not all bad, the rate at which we consume and discard it simply cannot be sustained. We're facing an enormous plastic pollution problem that is inflicting harm on people and our planet in unprecedented ways.

**As Christians, we are stewards of all God has blessed us with and we have a responsibility to respond to this challenge we collectively face.**

We also have a reason to hope.

**As we dig a little deeper into our problem with plastic, what we ultimately discover is God calling us to consume less and connect more.**





## A SEVEN DAY GUIDE TO LESS PLASTIC AND MORE LIFE

Australians create hundreds of thousands of tonnes of plastic waste every year. Recycling helps a little, but not enough. Most plastic ends up in landfill. And if not properly disposed of, it ends up polluting our air, contaminating our food system, getting into waterways or making its way to the ocean where, based on current trends, it will outweigh the volume of fish by 2050.

Plastic is not all bad. In countless ways, the invention of plastic has opened up a world of possibilities and transformed our lives for the better: from food safety improvements and transport energy savings to making technology more affordable and life-saving medical equipment more accessible.

However, plastic has also created an enormous pollution problem that is inflicting unprecedented harm on people, animals, oceans and landscapes all over God's precious earth. The main source of the problem is our out-of-control consumption of disposable, single-use plastic. It has made our lives faster, cheaper and more convenient but at an extraordinary cost.

God calls us to pursue abundant life, not an abundance of things. God satisfies our heart's deepest longing not with convenience but with connection. Connection with God, with one another and with our place in the world. As we dig a little deeper into our problem with plastic, what we ultimately discover is God calling us to consume less and connect more.

Making changes to the way we do things isn't always easy or straightforward but there are steps we can take that move us towards a life that is less plastic and more of the abundance God intends.

Tearfund has created this Guide to help you, in a prayerful and practical way, take those steps. It's not a quick, easy fix but it's a place to start. And wherever it is you start, we pray and trust God will meet you there.

## DAY 1: REFLECT

The Bible says that, since the creation of the world, God has revealed himself through what he has made. All of creation – from the smallest, most humble creature to the majesty of the night sky – speaks of who God is.

**Take this moment,  
to pause and reflect  
on the glory of God you see in creation.**

What place in nature do you most love to be?  
What intricate detail delights you?  
What stunning view leaves you in awe and  
worshipful wonder?

Be curious ... where might you discover  
something of God in creation today?





## DAY 2: RENEW

As Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, we are to take our everyday, ordinary life – our sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life – and place it before God as an offering (Romans 12:1). Don't conform to the pattern of this world, he writes, but instead be transformed by the renewing of your mind. The pattern of a busy and privileged modern world is profoundly shaped by the ease and accessibility of consumption – much of it plastic and much of it plastic we only use for a few seconds.

**Take this moment,  
to – once again – place every part of your everyday life  
before God as an offering.**

Consider what and how you consume.  
How have you conformed?  
What needs to be transformed?

Be daring ... how might God be leading you to do things differently today?

## DAY 3: RELATE

When Jesus was asked to name the greatest commandment, he replied with two: to love God with all our heart, soul and mind and to love our neighbours as ourselves (Matthew 22:36-40). Our lives are not just about us. They are interwoven and interdependent with our neighbours near and far. We need to allow our love for God and for people to shape the choices we make about how we live, what we consume, the food we eat and what we throw away.

**Take this moment,  
to ask God to fill your heart with more  
love for your neighbour.**

All that we take from the shelf takes energy, emissions, people's time, skills and resources to get there. How do your choices impact the earth and all who share it with you?

Be generous ... how will you share the great love God has lavished on you today?





## DAY 4: RESOLVE

The love of God is not simply a feeling or a passive, static state: it is a powerful force that finds its best expression in purposeful, selfless action. There are lots of ways to put love into action by reducing your own plastic consumption. Change is a process but the journey needs to start somewhere. Resolve today to permanently give up one form of single use plastic. What you choose is up to you. It could be takeaway coffee cups, disposable water bottles, straws, shopping bags, plastic wrap or something else entirely.

**Take this moment,  
to make a commitment  
to one small act of love.**

This is about more than just good intentions.  
How will you make it practical?

Be resolute ... what will you say no to from today?

## DAY 5: RE-EVALUATE

It's inevitable that as you start to reduce your consumption of plastic, you'll have to do a few things differently. There's a bit more planning ahead, a bit more doing it yourself and a bit more taking the time. You're changing the way you live and the quickest, cheapest solution is no longer your prize. In slowing things down you're also creating more space – for God, for yourself and for others. So take 10 minutes to sit down and savour a coffee instead of taking away; meet the people who grow your food at the local produce markets; enjoy a Sunday afternoon with friends learning how to make your own soap. And in all these things, be mindful of the deeper relationships God is creating in your life.

**Take this moment,  
to give thanks to God  
for his many and precious gifts.**

What might God say is the most important thing about you? About your life?  
How are you making space for those things?





## DAY 6: REIMAGINE

Amidst all the brokenness – our own and the world's – we know that God is at work restoring all things to the flourishing abundance he intends for his creation. It can be a challenge, as our eyes are opened to the scale of the plastic problem, to see things not only as they are but as they could be. We cannot do it without the creative joy of our imaginings: allowing us to envision new ways of doing things – new ways of living, sharing, working and cooperating together – that are grounded in connection with God, with one another and with the natural world around us.

**Take this moment,  
to invite God's awakening in you  
to all that is possible in him.**

Through faith  
we can be sure of what we hope for  
and certain of what we do not see.

Be visionary ... what new ways of living will God inspire  
in you today?

## DAY 7: RESTORE

Jesus taught us to pray, “your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Sometimes ushering in the “kingdom come” means turning over tables and speaking up against an unjust status quo.

During 2023 and 2024, nearly 200 governments are meeting to develop the first-ever international agreement on plastic pollution. This agreement could help end the world's rubbish problem. But it's not a done deal. We need you to add your voice to thousands of others from across the world who are coming together to demand an end to plastic pollution and its impacts on people living in poverty.

**Take this moment,  
to use your voice  
and speak truth to power.**

They may ask who we are  
and claim we cannot speak.  
But God says I am with you  
and will give you words to say.

Be bold ... will you turn some tables over today?

**[www.tearfund.org.au/rubbish](http://www.tearfund.org.au/rubbish)**



## Tearfund Australia

We are Tearfund. We're working in partnership to end poverty, challenge inequality and build sustainable communities. Following Jesus, we go where the need is greatest, acting with courage to tackle injustice so that all may experience fullness of life.

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