



# THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

## Eating Mercifully

The Humane Society of the United States

### Video Discussion Guide for Youth

#### *Notes about sharing video with youth*

A 7-minute clip of *Eating Mercifully* and the full 26-minute version is available to view online at [humanesociety.org/faith](http://humanesociety.org/faith). A full length version can be ordered at [faith@humanesociety.org](mailto:faith@humanesociety.org). We suggest the group leader watch the film prior to the screening. You may also want to let the youth know that there will be some difficult scenes to watch, but that it will not be too graphic.

After showing the video allow some time for silence. Youth will respond in a variety of ways. Some may cry, others may make inappropriate comments, still others may act detached. Note that the inappropriate comments may be a sign of a youth's inability or lack of experience with responding to this type of discussion. Be prepared to show grace to each response.

#### **Prayer**

Holy and mercifully Lord, we recognize You as the Creator of all living things. We ask for your assistance as we reflect on what we just watched. Help us to be open in our responses: open about our own feelings and thoughts, open to our peers' reaction, and open to the movement of Your Holy Spirit. Guide us in our conversation and our continued meditation on Your word for our lives.

#### **Discussion Questions**

After watching this video, what is a word that describes how you are feeling? (If it is feasible, give each student an opportunity to share one word.)

What stood out to you or caught your attention in what we just heard and saw?

What did you like about this video? Why?

What didn't you like about this video? Why?

Prior to watching this video, had you ever thought about where your food comes from? If so, how?

How has watching this video changed how you think about food?

## Scripture

In our study of Scripture we can learn about how God wants us to interact with animals. Let's take a look together.

Read Genesis 1:1, 20-31, 2:1-2.

- What does this passage say?
- What living things are named?
- How are the living things described?
- What do we learn about God from this passage?
- What did God do on the seventh day?
- What do we learn about humans from this passage? How about animals?
- What does this first chapter of Genesis say about food?

In Genesis 1 we are reminded that God created everything and that God saw and declared that everything created was good.

Read Genesis 2:15-22.

- What does God tell the first human in this passage?
- What work does God do in this passage? What does God make?
- What work does Adam do in this passage? What does Adam make?

In this passage, God recognizes that it isn't good for Adam to be left alone. How does God respond to Adam's need for companionship?

In Genesis 2 we are reminded that God cares for human creation by providing food and companionship. This companionship first comes in the form of animal life and then as partnership in the form of human life.

Read Exodus 23:12, Deuteronomy 5:14, Matthew 12:9-14 and Proverbs 12:10

- Who is to rest on the Sabbath?
- What is a purpose of the Sabbath rest?
- How does a righteous person act?

In these passages we are told that the Sabbath day is to be a day of rest for both humans and the animals under their care. We are also reminded of our responsibility to care for God's creation. In Scripture we learn how God gave humans dominion over the animals. What do you think this dominion should look like? How do humans show dominion today? How could this change? How has the combination of our study of Scripture and watching this video changed your perspective?

## Decision

You can celebrate God's creatures and serve your community. Coming in 2010 from The HSUS, The Animal Ministry Guide features a variety of ways faith communities can help animals.

In the guide, meet churches around the country that provide free veterinary care for underserved

communities; include pet food in food drives, designate church grounds as wildlife sanctuaries, host adoption events and promote spay/neuter awareness after worship services, and more. There are opportunities for everyone – Individuals, small groups and congregations – in the Animal Ministry Guide.

Learn more and sign up online for more information about The Animal Ministry Guide at

**[www.humanesociety.org/faith](http://www.humanesociety.org/faith)**

What other ways can you think of to help animals in your community?

#### **People to note in video**

- Robert Martin, Executive Director of Pew Commission
- Dr. Laura Hobgood-Oster, Professor of Animals and Religion, Southwestern University
- Elaine and Dale West, Rooterville Animal Sanctuary
- Pastor Greg Boyd, Woodland Hills Church
- Sister Rosemarie Greco, DW

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For more about The HSUS Faith Outreach program, including additional resources, videos, and our e-newsletter, *The Humane Steward*, visit **[www.humanesociety.org/faith](http://www.humanesociety.org/faith)**.