

## It's Not Easy Being Green

### ● WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT A BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BE A STEWARD OF PLANET EARTH

- Truth #1: The earth belongs to the Lord.

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; <sup>2</sup>for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.*

Psalm 24:1-2 (New International Version)

*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.* 1 Chronicles 29:11 (NIV)

*Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me.* Job 41:11 (NIV)

- Question: Is everything that belongs to God of equal value?

“Yes” = A biocentric approach = assigns no special status to human beings

“No” = A biblical approach = God Himself assigns a special status to human beings

*So God created man in his own image . . .* Genesis 1:27a (NIV)

- A Christ-follower's reason for caring for the planet? It belongs to God.
- Truth #2: Believers are responsible to be stewards of God's creation.

Steward = someone entrusted with another's wealth or property and charged with the responsibility of managing it in the owner's best interest.

Jesus: *“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.”* Matthew 25:14 (NIV)

*. . . what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? <sup>5</sup>You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. <sup>6</sup>You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you*

*put everything under his feet: <sup>7</sup>all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, <sup>8</sup>the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.*

Psalm 8:4-8 (NIV)

See also Genesis 1:26-28.

“To rule” often carries with it the requirement of being compassionate in that rule and not to exploit that which you are ruling over. (See Leviticus 25:43, 46, 53)

*The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.* Genesis 2:15 (NIV)

“Take care of it” = Hebrew = *shamar* = to guard, to keep, to preserve (See Exodus 23:10-12a)

- Truth # 3: God Himself exhibits ongoing care of planet earth.

*The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.* Hebrews 1:3a (NIV)

*. . . and in him, all things hold together.* Colossians 1:17b (NIV)

*For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. <sup>23</sup>Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in this hope we were saved.* Romans 8:20-24a (NIV)

### ● PRACTICAL DECISIONS CHRISTIAN MAKE THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH OUR STEWARDSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Individual Practices
- Get informed and influence ecological policy.

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Genesis 1:26-28 (NIV)*

*"For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops,<sup>11</sup> but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what they leave. Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove.<sup>12</sup> "Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest . . ." Exodus 23:10-12a (NIV)*