

Creation Care and Godly Dominion:

Reclaiming the Blessings of
Genesis 1:27-28 in the Search for
Genuinely Biblical Earth Stewardship

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Who said this, and where does he live?

Population growth is the key causative of climate change and its negative impacts. Unless we [adopt a] multi-faith approach to sensitizing our people on the dangers of careless population growth, we [will lose] the climate change fight. We must tell our people to control human procreation

Genesis 1:28

"God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

Biblical Environmental Stewardship

... looks like people made in the image of God, reflecting God's own creativity, working together to enhance the fruitfulness, beauty, and safety of the Earth, for the glory of God and the good of our neighbors, thus tying together the two Great Commandments to love God and love our neighbor.



Who are we? A coalition of theologians, pastors, scientists, economists, and policy experts committed to promoting environmental stewardship and economic development built on Biblical principles.

What is our mission? We seek to magnify

- the glory of God in creation,
- the wisdom of His truth in environmental stewardship,
- the kindness of His mercy in lifting the needy out of poverty,
- and the wonders of His grace in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What's Wrong with Calling Ourselves *Environmentalists*?

- Historically: from conservationism through preservationism to environmentalism.
- Etymologically: *environment* = *surroundings* = *everything*; the inherent totalitarian tendency of environmentalism.
- Biblically: preferring Biblical terms for Biblical doctrines and activities.
- Why not *Biblical Earth stewardship* or *godly dominion*?

From Darwinism to Environmentalism:

Attacking the Dignity of Man
in Two Stages

Genesis 1:27: The Essence of Man

"God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Man is

- the image of God;
- male and female.

Genesis 1:28: The Mission of Man

"God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"
God's mission for man, male and female, is twofold:

- to multiply and fill the Earth; and, filling it,
- to subdue and rule it.

Environmentalism's Attack on Genesis 1:28

Human multiplication and human rule over the Earth are the nemeses of environmentalism.

Environmentalism's Undermining of Genesis 1:28

The undermining happens in two stages:

- Wrongly interpreting Genesis 2:15
- Wrongly interpreting Genesis 1:28 in light of the mistaken interpretation of Genesis 2:15.

1798—Thomas Robert Malthus

An Essay on the Principle of Population incited fear of overpopulation and depletion of resources, portraying man only as consumer, not producer.

1859—Charles Darwin

On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of the Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life, undermined belief in the sanctity of human life as bearing the image of God and offering “scientific” justification for racism.

1883—Francis Galton

Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development launched the eugenics movement as a means for higher races (the “fit”) to weed out lower ones (the “unfit”) through population control imposed on colonies.

1920—Margaret Sanger

1890s–1930s, Progressives like Margaret Sanger (founder of Planned Parenthood), launching the sexual revolution of the 1910s–1920s, advocated contraception and abortion to limit population growth among the racially “unfit.” Their efforts led to government “family planning” programs, including incentivized or coerced sterilization and abortion and refusal to alleviate famines.

1933—John Dewey

1920s—1950s, Secular Humanists, led by John Dewey, took over America’s colleges of education and then the public schools, undermining belief that human beings are the image of God with a God-given right to life, liberty, and property.

1953—Hugh Hefner

1950s–1970s: The Progressives’ sexual revolution, delayed by the Great Depression and World War II, revives and, aided by new contraceptive technologies promising pleasure without consequences, became dominant, with destructive effects on marriage, family, and broader society.

1962—Rachel Carson

Darwinist naturalist Rachel Carson publishes *Silent Spring*, popularizing pseudo-scientific ecological fears that come to dominate the environmental movement. One consequence: the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency bans DDT though EPA’s own scientific tests showed it safe, and the U.S. requires countries receiving foreign aid to ban it as well, leading to about 2 million malaria deaths every year in poor countries.

1972—Maurice Strong

1970s—2010s: The environmental movement grows to world prominence, especially with the U.N.’s Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992) the Earth Charter, the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, Agenda 21, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiative (ICLEI), and the Kyoto Protocol; the growth of the animal

rights, plant rights, and ecosystem rights movements; and demands for global governance to overcome alleged environmental crises, especially global warming.

The Current State of the Church’s War with the World

Today, the Christian church stands with regard to environmentalism where it stood a century ago with regard to Darwinism. At that time, some Christians strove valiantly, some were deceived, some were unaware, and some capitulated to Darwinism’s attack on Genesis 1:27. We largely lost that battle, and the sad consequences are obvious all around us. Our response today to environmentalism must be better. To restore the teaching and reclaim the blessings of Genesis 1:28, we must exercise a wise, courageous, powerful, spiritual warfare, tearing down ideological strongholds, taking “every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:4–5).

“**In His Image 2012**” (www.InHisImage2012.org) is the start of a multi-year effort to help evangelicals fighting on many battlefronts to see the interconnections and begin laboring more strategically and, we pray, effectively to reshape how people think of human beings and our role on Earth—to reassert the sanctity of human life and sexuality, the beauty and centrality of marriage, the goodness of human multiplication, and the dignity of human work and godly dominion over the Earth.

Human Life without Godly Dominion

- Abject poverty was nearly universal.
 - Rampant disease plagued all ages of rich and poor.
 - Nearly half of children died before their fifth birthday.
 - Life expectancy at birth was about 27 or 28 years.
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Human Life with Godly Dominion

- While as recently as 1990 about half of all people lived in extreme poverty, today under one-fifth do.
 - Many deadly diseases have been eradicated, and most others are now readily cured.
 - Fewer than 5 in 100 infants worldwide die before their first birthday; in developed countries, under 4 in 1,000; in developing countries, mostly under 10.
 - Worldwide, life expectancy at birth is over 65 years; in developed countries, near 80; nowhere below 40.
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How the Green Movement Robs Us of the Blessings of Genesis 1:28

- Trapping the poor in poverty

- Robbing people of property rights
- Touting false and exaggerated claims of eco-disaster
- Creating constantly-expanding, oppressive government
- Weakening sovereign states and pushing toward global government

Environmentalism’s Threat to the Gospel and Christian Ethics

The gospel becomes “If you love God, take good care of the Earth,” not “Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again from the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). Imperative replaces indicative. Law replaces gospel.

Asceticism (Colossians 2:20–23) leads to a new Galatianism of justification by works, not by faith.

Colossians 2:20-23:

If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ‘Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch’ (referring to things that all perish as they are used)— according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom

in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are **of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.**

Environmentalism’s Threat to Biblical Authority and Christian Thought

Shall we

- be conformed to this world, or transformed by the renewing of our minds according to the Word of God?
- test all things, or take the unbelieving world’s word for some?
- take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, or let our thoughts be taken captive by the world?

Environmentalism’s Threat to the Pro-Life Movement

Minor, unintentional risk from environmental hazards is equated with intentional death from abortion, obscuring the meaning of “pro-life.”

What Can You Do?

- Know the Word.

- Teach the Word.
- Do the Word.

“Climate Sensitivity”

“Climate sensitivity” = amount average global surface temperature would rise because of doubled CO₂ in the atmosphere (from 270 to 540 parts per million, i.e., 27/1000ths of 1% to 54/1000ths of 1%.

Surface temperature with no greenhouse effect: 0° F; with greenhouse effect but no feedbacks, 140° F; after feedbacks, 59° F.

Feedbacks reduce greenhouse warming 58%.

Basic physics of black-body radiation (Stephan Boltzmann equation): doubled CO₂ would raise global surface temperature about 2.1 F°.

IPCC’s assumption: strongly positive overall feedbacks multiply greenhouse warming by 2.5 or more: 2.1 F° grows to 5.4 F° or more.

Real world: strongly negative overall feedbacks reduce greenhouse warming by 58%: 2.1 F° shrinks to 0.9 F°.

Findings of Roy W. Spencer (UAH) and Richard Lindzen (MIT) show clouds are net negative feedback, not positive. IPCC assumes clouds are net positive feedback. IPCC is wrong. Alarmists are wrong.

“Most institutions demand unqualified faith; but the institution of science makes skepticism a virtue.”
Robert K. Merton,
Philosopher of Science

Some Concrete Actions

- “Adopt a Highway”
- Neighborhood Cleanup
- Neighborhood Gardens
- Insulating Homes and Churches
- Supporting or Volunteering with Ministries that Help the Poor in East Africa; e.g. www.cvtogether.org
- Participating in Sensible Recycling Programs
- Studying and Teaching Biblical Earth Stewardship
- Praying for and supporting the Cornwall Alliance with online donations at www.CornwallAlliance.org