

The Shade of God's Green

INTRODUCTION

God made man, in part, to steward His creation. We are not to worship creation (the planet), we are to worship Jesus. Many well meaning people have confused love for creation with love for God. Many other people have confused love for God with a disregard for the things God has created. We must be a people who love and worship God and steward correctly the things that He has created.

DISCUSSION

What are the positives and negatives of the current environmental movement?

EXPLANATION

How do you think people are connected to the rest of creation?

How are people to steward God's creation without worshipping it?

How can creation help us to better know God?

APPLICATION

Read Psalm 8.

How does the Psalm writer talk about human beings verses the rest of creation?

How can we, as God's people, glorify Him more by understanding our place in creation?

MISSION

If you are an environmentalist, what is your attitude and feelings toward those who are not?

If you are not an environmentalist, what is your attitude and feelings toward those who are?

How can these two sides understand each other better and have a dialog about Jesus?

How can these two sides come together for the greater glory of God?

Week 4

FAMILY & GROUP DISCUSSION



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Genesis 1:28

Psalm 24:1

Psalm 50:10-11

Colossians 1:15-16

Genesis 1:31

Psalm 104:24-26

Genesis 9:9-10

Psalm 19:1-2

Romans 1:19-20

Genesis 2:15

Psalm 8:4-8

Matthew 6:26

Exodus 23:12, 10-11

Deuteronomy 25:4

Romans 8:19, 21

Isaiah 55:12-13

Revelation 22:2-3

Week 4

NOTES & SCRIPTURE

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Genesis 1:28 "And 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 made man, in part, to steward His creation. We are not to worship creation (the planet), we are to worship Jesus. Many well meaning people have confused love for creation with love for God. Many other people have confused love for God with a disregard for the things God has created. We must be a people who love and worship God and steward correctly the things that He has created.

When reading Genesis 1, most people get confused. Genesis 1:28 *"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion."* Many think dominion means "to rule," but it doesn't. Dominion is the word *radah*. Subdue it is the word *kabash*. You could even translate these words as "responsibility and stewardship."

When Christianity is rightly understood it should give the best perspective from which to view and care for the earth available to the human race. It is important for us to know and understand this so we can be faithful and biblical as we follow Jesus. It is important because, in the Bible there is a vision about creation and how creation is a part of the glory of God. This vision (rightly understood) will take our breath away, and help us to love God more. This vision needs to be heard by our world; and God's church has to articulate it.

In the Old Testament, there is no word for *nature*, there is just the word *creation*...

- The word *creation* carries a certain theological significance to it: if there is a creation, then there is a Creator.
- There is also the word *creature*, which are beings that are given the gift of life by their Creator in order to reflect and participate in something glorious.

Abraham Kuyper, *"There is not one square inch in all creation over which Jesus Christ does not cry out, 'This is Mine.'"*

You cannot go into creation without seeing the expression of the Creator. It is Jesus' handiwork. It is God's refrigerator on which He hangs art. That is why people can't help but be moved by it. The medieval church said there are two great books of God.

- There is the Book of the Scripture.
- And then the Book of Creation.

Psalms 19, *"The heavens declare the glory of God..."*

Genesis 2:15 *"The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it."*

- The word work can be translated, "to serve."
- The phrase "keep it" means to "take care of."

Numbers 6:24 *"The Lord bless you and keep you"* - This is the same word: KEEP IT. What God is going to do for us in this great blessing, we are to do for God's creation. Adam's job was not to exploit the garden or destroy the garden; it was to make the garden flourish.

We must understand the proper place of God as creator, us as a creation...and the critters around us. In the ecological movement, many call for *"biological egalitarianism"*: no species, including the human species, is worth any more than any other species, and the life of no creature, including a human being, is worth more than the life of any other creature.

BUT Scripture clearly teaches that human beings have a unique worth because they are made in God's image. Matt 6:26 *"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"*

Christianity also teaches what no one else does: creation is under a curse. Creation still seems good at times, but it's not the way it is supposed to be. Francis Schaeffer wrote, *"If you say that there is no God at all, nature is all there is, or if you make nature God and worship it; there is a problem. And the problem is, there is beauty in nature, but there are horrible things in nature. There is death and suffering in nature."*

The redemption Jesus brings to us, He intends for us to bring in our stewardship of creation.

Good Friday: Seder Meal

Friday, April 6th

<http://www.ourelement.org/events/seder-meal>

