



What Would Jesus Say?

SERMON NOTES

Week 4 *January 29, 2023*

“...About Our Environment”

*Genesis 1:28, 9:8-10; Psalm 104:16-18; Exodus 23:10-12; Deuteronomy 22:6-7, 25:4; Romans 8:2
Matthew 6:26, 28-29*



I. The Great Divide Over Climate Change

- A. In a recent survey, the number _____ issue for 18-to-25-year-olds was ‘climate change.’
- B. Sandra Richter discusses three reasons why Christians don’t care more about the _____.
 - a. Partisan politics.
 - b. Our privilege.
 - c. Our attitude. (“You can’t take it with you,” “it will burn anyway,” etc.)
- C. About 80% of the scientific community say that global warming is something that is caused by _____ and we can do something about it.

II. A Survey of Biblical Theology and the Bible

- A. A fundamental premise of Biblical Faith is that God created _____ that exists.
- B. What we find in Genesis chapter 1, is that God is saying to human beings: “you are responsible for my _____.”
- C. We can learn three things about environmental _____ from the Nation of Israel:
 - a. Each generation of Israelites is required to maintain the land in such a way that it is as fertile when they pass it on to the next generation as it was when they received it.
 - b. The Israelites were to honor their God by allowing their livestock to rest.
 - c. At the earlier stages of its urbanization, Israel is commanded to live in a sustainable fashion in its engagement with the wild creatures.

III. Moving Forward

- A. If we are abusive to the planet, misuse it, overconsume it, and pollute it, it is a _____.
- B. Part of our task is to make sure that the environmental _____ God created is maintained.
- C. Sandra Richter in her book “Stewards of Eden,” gives us some simple ideas of _____ stewardship.
 - a. Get informed.
 - b. Vote with your finances.
 - c. Live with restraint.
 - d. Recycle responsibly
 - e. Address your own consumption of energy.



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *Jan. 30 – Feb. 4, 2023*

INTRODUCTION

The number one concern of young adults today is climate change. However, their concern about climate change is not on the top of list of concerns for older Christians today. In fact, only 34% of evangelical Christians believe climate change is a serious problem. So should Christians be concerned about our environment? What would Jesus say?

Monday: Genesis 1:1-3, 24-31

If we summarize Genesis 1:31 in modern terms we might use for a building project: “At the end of the week of creation, God is in a position to stand back, survey the six days’ work as a whole, and smile in satisfaction. The project has come out very well. It looks great.” List 3-5 ways in which you still find the original goodness of the Creator’s intention in our world.

Tuesday: Genesis 2:4-9, 15-17

“The Hebrew words for human (adam) and fertile land (adamah) sound alike and emphasize the connection between human beings and their land.”* This connection was natural for Israel’s mostly agricultural people. In what ways has our more industrialized, office-centered, hi-tech setting robbed us of some of that sense of connection? Why does it matter to remember that the land still nourishes our life?

Wednesday: Matthew 6:26-30

How could Jesus tell ordinary peasant people who often faced food insecurity not to worry? “[Jesus] asks them instead to view the world with new eyes... to see all around them evidence of God’s care and provision. Jesus uses a well-known Jewish pattern of speech to persuade his followers: If this, how much more that?”** How can nature’s lasting beauty (despite too many cases of ignorant or indifferent human stewardship) help you to trust God’s care for you?

Thursday: John 20:19-28, 1 Corinthians 15:51-58

Paul boldly proclaimed a divine victory so great that death itself would be “swallowed up,” and would be no more. But he didn’t then say, “So relax and wait for the resurrection.” No—he wrote, “You must stand firm, unshakable, excelling in the work of the Lord as always, because you know that your labor isn’t going to be for nothing in the Lord.” How can you trust that every effort to make the world more like the kingdom of God “isn’t going to be for nothing”?

Friday: Romans 8:19-22

Political factors have made understanding the causes of more intense tropical storms or the disastrous wildfires in the U.S. and Australia controversial. But no matter how you understand causation, it’s hard to deny that these conditions and others fit Paul’s phrase that “the whole creation is groaning together.” How can God’s people be actively involved in relieving the suffering in our world?

MOVING FORWARD

The fundamental premise in scripture is that God created everything that exists. And God’s first command to humanity was to take care of his creation. The nation of Israel gives us some insight into environmental stewardship and we see in scripture God’s concern for all creation. The lesson we learn from scripture is that taking care of our environment is an act of Christian discipleship. What is one simple step you can take to reduce your carbon footprint?

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) one, B) environment, C) humans. IIA) everything, IIB) creation, C) stewardship. IIIA) sin, B) balance, C) environmental.

* Theodore Hiebert, study note on Genesis 2:6 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 7 OT.

** Eugene Eung-Chun Park and Joel B. Green, study note on Matthew 6:25-34 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 17 NT.