

The **Earth**
is the **Lord's**



EDITED BY
Vicki Hesterman

Environment/Nature/Inspiration



The Earth is the Lord's

HANDLE WITH CARE

Environmental Awareness and Good Stewardship

Environmental activity and evangelical Christianity are not mutually exclusive. In fact, Christians should be working at the forefront of the environmental movement –and some are. Some, such as Wesley, Calvin, Luther, Francis of Assisi, and others expressed gratefulness to God for his creation centuries ago. Many of our great traditional and contemporary hymns also celebrate creation and the Creator.

In this inspiring, practical handbook, believers from all backgrounds and denominations—a minister, a scientist, a young mother, a teacher, a farmer, an editor and others tell why they are concerned about the Lord's earth and how they try to meet their own environmental responsibilities while encouraging others to be good stewards.

Also included are an illustrated adaptation of the creation story, relevant Bible verses, practical suggestions for environmental action, a "Just for Kids" section for and by children, recommended additional readings and a resources list. Bible studies and Sunday School classes use it; families use it for devotionals.

The Earth is the Lord's, Handle with Care, first published in the 1989, is becoming known as a classic in environmental inspirational literature, well ahead of its time. This new edition highlights the fact that while some progress has been made in the past several decades, much is still to be done.

You will be inspired and encouraged by this book, and amazed once again at the awesome creativity of our God.

Editor Vicki Hesterman, a writer, photographer, editor, researcher and teacher learned about good stewardship of the environment from her parents. She grew up in Ohio, earned her Ph.D. in communication, and now lives in San Diego.

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The Earth is the Lord's: Handle with Care

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The Earth is the Lord's: Handle with Care

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The Earth is the Lord's, Handle with Care

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From an Early Christian Environmental Activist

Several years before the first Earth Day in 1970, Christian theologian and cultural activist Dr. Francis Schaeffer began a series of lectures on a Christian response to environmental issues, which became an early book on the subject, *Pollution and the Death of Man: A Christian View of Ecology*. Here are several excerpts:

“The man who believes things are there only by chance cannot give things a real intrinsic value. But for the Christian, there is an intrinsic value. The value of a thing is not in itself autonomously, but because God made it.”

“On the basis of the fact that there is going to be total redemption in the future, not only of man but of all creation, the Christian who believes the Bible should be the man who-with God’s help and in the power of the Holy Spirit-is treating nature now in the direction of the way nature will be then. It will not now be perfect, but it must be substantial, or we have missed our calling. God’s calling to the Christian now, and to the Christian community, in the area of nature—just as it is in the area of personal Christian living in true spirituality—is that we should exhibit a substantial healing here and now, between man and nature and nature and itself, as far as Christians can bring it to pass.”

From *Pollution and the Death of Man: A Christian View of Ecology*
by Dr. Francis Schaeffer, Tyndale House, 1970

A psalm of David

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;

for he founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the waters.

Psalm 24:1-2



An Observation from the Moon

As a member of the Apollo 15 crew, I was honored with the rare privilege of walking the surface of the moon. That experience left me with a number of permanent impressions: First, I came to realize how great God is and how small man is. I also developed a new understanding of the significance of our wonderful planet, Earth, and how privileged man is to inhabit such a realm touched in a special way by the living hand of our Creator.

I was also impressed by the fact that God has entrusted us with the care and keeping of the earth and its resources—and how in many ways we have failed in this responsibility. We have not been good stewards, and our planet is showing it.

Col. James Irwin

Used by permission of the CNF Perspectives, 1990

A Word About This Book

(Foreword for 1990 edition)

Our amazing planet is showing serious signs of wear and tear. We have taken our earthly home for granted for too long, and now it's time to give it more attention. It's not too late, though, to stop the slide towards self-destruction.

By thinking and acting positively in small ways, it is possible to make a big difference. Buying recycled goods, keeping our cars well-tuned, using real plates and cups, and conserving water when we shower are just a few things we can do.

The Earth is the Lord's: Handle with Care is an inspiring and practical guide to good stewardship of the earth and its resources. Editor Vicki Hesterman has included essays by Christians of various backgrounds and denominations who have this in common: their love for the Lord and their concern for his handiwork.

We do not have to choose between eternal salvation and earthly responsibilities; it is possible to be an environmentally active and aware evangelical Christians. In fact, taking good care of God's green earth is a beautiful way to show love and respect for our Creator.



Foreword

This book was ahead of its time in calling for all Christians—whether they consider themselves liberal, conservative or moderate—to respect the earth, actively provide education on contemporary ecological and environmental issues, and always honor God in Jesus Christ as Creator and Redeemer. But some of the environmental hot-button issues are involved and complicated. As a long-time evangelical Christian creation-care ethicist, I’ve found that far too many churches, pastors, and parishioners still tiptoe around these issues because they’re not easy to address, or they fear identification with “strange bedfellows,” or, more significantly, they have not studied the biblical theology of nature (as suggested by Francis Schaeffer more than forty years ago).

As a result, there is still very little funding available for Christian groups and organizations that do seek to teach in schools and churches on contemporary creation-care issues and motivate followers of Christ to carry out their responsibilities as stewards of God’s good earth. Hence most Christians actively involved in creation care do their work as labors of love—and serve often as “targets” for those—even fellow Christians—who see environmental concern as either a low-priority or a no-priority issue—or worse: as a stumbling block in the way of dealing with “more important issues.”

The essays and suggestions in this little book, written more than 20 years ago are still relevant today, which means we need to keep actively and lovingly spreading the message of stewardship, responsibility, and hope—while at the same time continue to find joy in celebrating the awesome wonders of creation.

Dean Ohlman
Writer and host, RBC “Wonder of Creation”

*To Mom and Dad,
who have long modeled Christian creation-care,
evangelical conviction, and good stewardship
as a way of life.*

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Introduction

It is hard to believe that more than two decades have passed since the last edition of this book was published. Christians for Earthcare, a volunteer group started in the 1980s, brainstormed and created the very first version of this book in 1989 and published an expanded edition in 1990. In this 2010 edition, and also on our website (ChristiansForEarthcare.org) we continue our original mission: to encourage everyone, and especially Christians, to remember that the earth IS the Lord's, and being good stewards means we must handle it with the care and respect due its creator. At the same time, we believe that a human life is created in the image of God, and more valuable than anything else on earth, so on that premise, when hard decisions must be made, our opinion may differ from some secular groups.

Most of the book appears as it did in the last edition in 1990—with updates of author bios and recommended organizations. The fact that this material is still timely says that things are still too much the same as they were more than 20 years ago. There is more awareness, but still far too much waste and apathy. One big problem is that the issue has become politicized, and while it should not be a matter of liberal or conservative, left or right, it too often is perceived that way and thus many churches and pastors generally avoid being associated with environmental causes beyond basic recycling and tree-planting.

Several years ago, one San Diego television station said this book was ahead of its time, a pioneer in the Christian environmental movement. We may have been one of the first in the baby boomer generation (and there were other Christian writers and naturalists also actively teaching this concept in the 80s and 90s), but the real pioneers in this movement were actually those who, centuries ago taught that “the earth is the Lord's” and to live accordingly. David and his beautiful Psalms, Luther, Francis of Assisi, Calvin, Wesley, and other early spiritual leaders and hymn writers are quoted in this book, celebrating creation and the Creator. They were our mentors and examples.

Don't give up or feel overwhelmed if you can't do it all; do the best you can, as often as you can. If you do sometimes use plastic bags for

your groceries—re-use and then recycle them. If you get take-out in paper or plastic, recycle it. Look into solar and wind power. If everyone tries to recycle more things, waste fewer resources, and teach good environmental stewardship to others, it will help immensely.

Things are improving; many more Christian books and websites are now available on the subject, and most schools and many churches teach about environmental awareness. But there is much yet to do, and as an expression of love and appreciation to our Creator, let's practice, preach and teach good stewardship of the marvelous resources entrusted to our care.

Vicki Hesterman, March 2010

Introduction from 1990 edition

(Note that not much has changed.)

Earth Day events have spawned colorful t-shirts, environmental lectures and dire predictions that the end is near. Although we cannot waste any more time before we literally clean up our act, things are not beyond hope. This is a call to action for all believers to actively work to heal the earth.

Thousands of Christians have long been quietly environmentally aware and responsible—many of them long before that first Earth Day back in 1970. Stewardship of the earth's resources is part of their Christian value system; keeping the landscape clean is as natural as breathing.

Many believers have traditionally kept a distance from the secular environmental movement, though, preferring not to be aligned with groups that worship nature or espouse abortion as a means of population control. Not only New Agers and old hippies should show concern about the health of the planet. Salvation and conservation are not mutually exclusive. We can simultaneously conserve water and grow spiritually. We don't have to align ourselves with groups whose philosophies are incompatible with ours. We don't have to choose between faith and environmental activism. We do, however, have a moral obligation to future generations to care for our earthly heritage.

It takes time, energy and commitment to be environmentally responsible. We have been living in a fast-food, quick-trip, one-stop-shop society for far too long. It's easiest to use disposable diapers and

paper plates than to wash them. It's faster to dump discards at the landfills than to sort them for recycling. Time will test the commitment of the new environmental activists and separate the truly dedicated from the terminally trendy.

This is not a simple issue; there are trade-offs. Saving northern California forests and owls put hundred of people out of work. Most recycled paper, biodegradable detergents, and organic foods are still slightly more expensive than less earth-friendly products. Collecting and sorting bottles, newspapers and magazines take precious time.

Working on this project has changed some of my own habits. I'm still far from perfect, but I've accepted the wisdom of precycling. I recycle glass, aluminum, and paper; I walk more and drive less. I never did wash my car much, but now I have a good excuse—I'm conserving water and energy.

Those who contributed to this book come from various professions and philosophical persuasions. Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, Nazarenes, Presbyterians and non-denominational believers have joined in this appeal for awareness and action.

Part One is a dedication to the Creator of the earth and all life—the great Designer. In it relevant Scriptures, a synopsis of the Genesis creation account, and songs celebrate creation. Part Two is a synopsis of helpful hints gleaned from pamphlets, articles, books, lectures and interviews. A special illustrated “Just for Kids” section is designed for youngsters. In Part Three, believers from various backgrounds write about their experiences and opinions on creation and environmental responsibility. Part Four lists books, magazines, websites and environmental action groups, but is not intended to be an exhaustive list of resources. More literature on the subject is available in bookstores, libraries, churches, and other stores.

If this book sparks a desire in the reader to start a recycle bin at the office, church, school, post office or coffee shop, to organize a Sunday School tree-planting, or to pray for the continued healing of the earth and wisdom of our leaders, then this labor of love will be worth the many hours it required.

Christians today cannot ignore the call to be at the forefront of the environmental movement.

Some have heard that call and are already there.

Vicki Hesterman, San Diego 1990

Part One



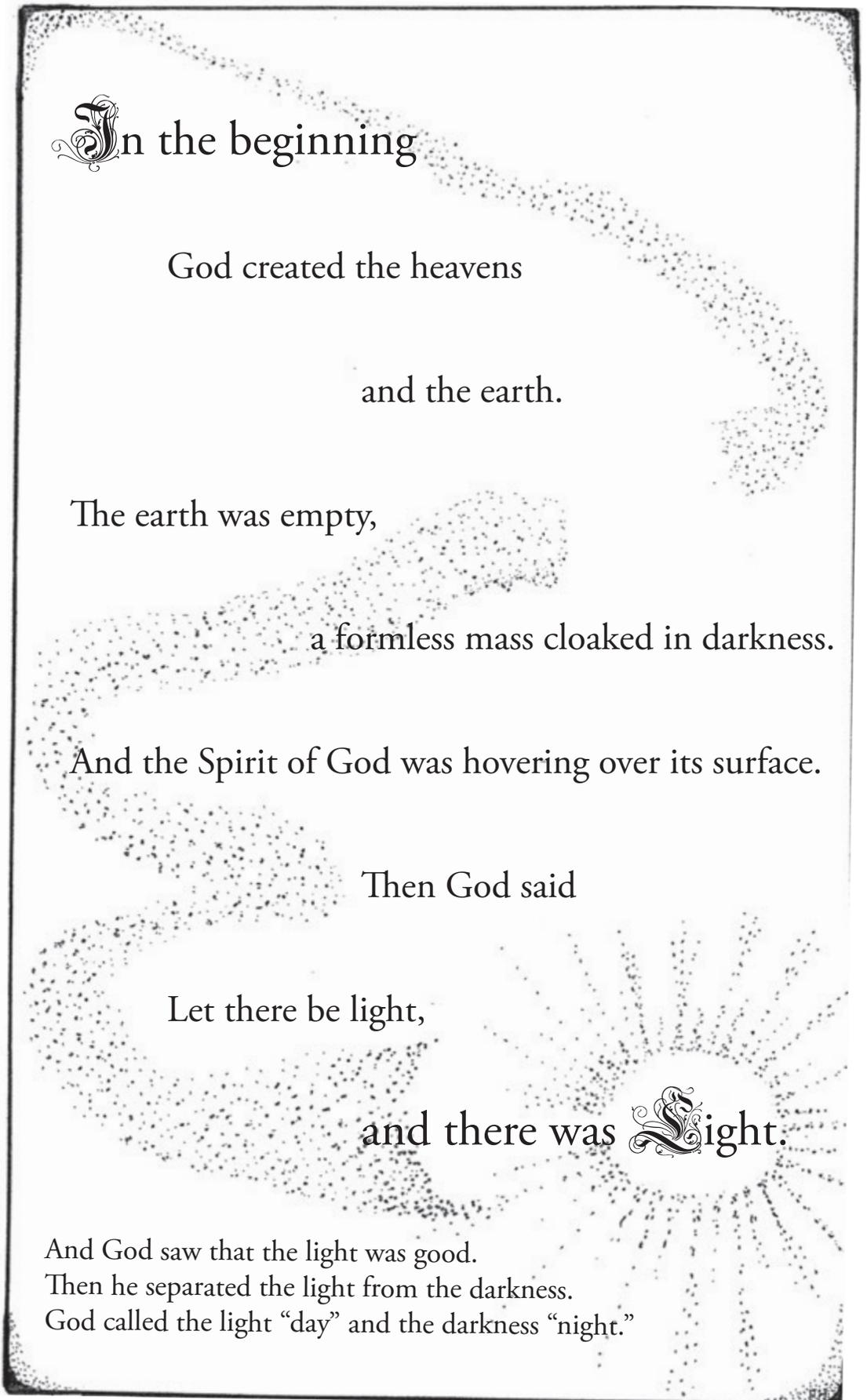
Why We Should Take Care of the Earth

Lord, you have been our dwelling place
throughout all generations.

Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Psalm 90:1-2

*The following illustrated creation account
is taken from Genesis 1 and 2.
(Please read the entire account for yourself,
as this is just a brief excerpt.)*



In the beginning

God created the heavens

and the earth.

The earth was empty,

a formless mass cloaked in darkness.

And the Spirit of God was hovering over its surface.

Then God said

Let there be light,

and there was Light.

And God saw that the light was good.

Then he separated the light from the darkness.

God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.”

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work on his hand.

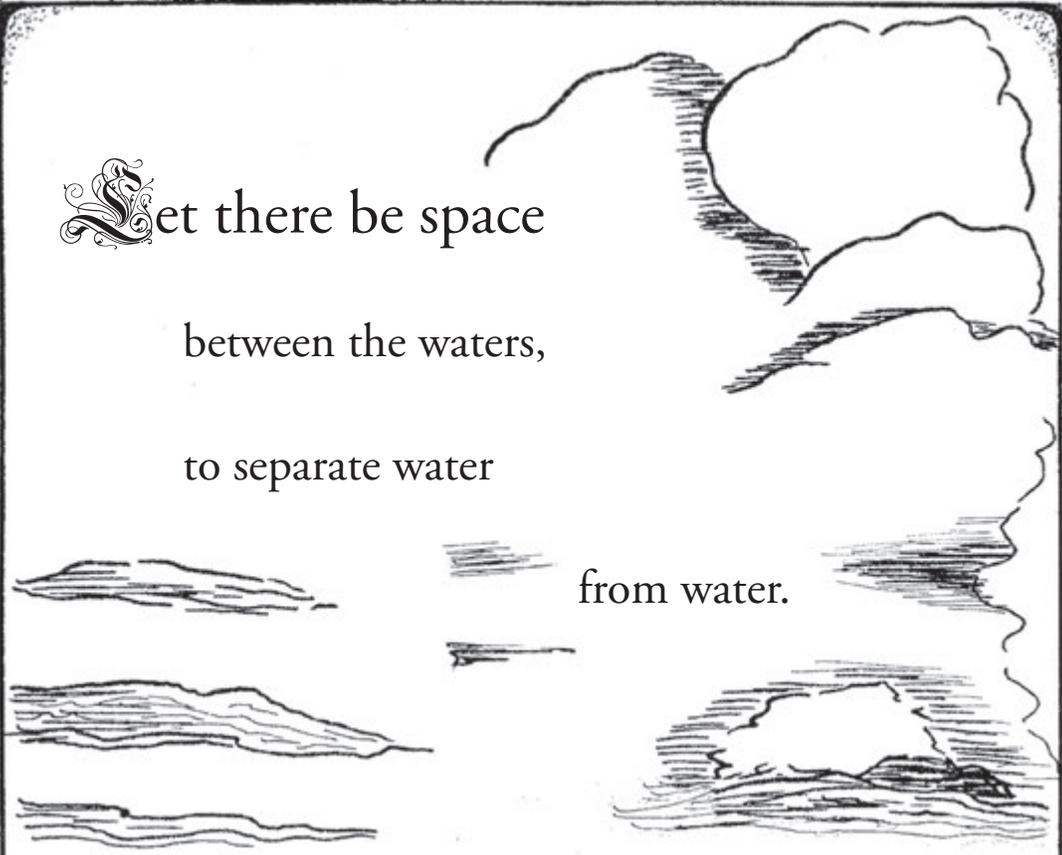
PSALM 19:1

Praise the Lord.
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.

PSALM 150:1-2

Those who are wise will shine
like the brightness of the heavens,
and those who lead many to righteousness
like the stars
for ever and ever.

DANIEL 12:3



Let there be space

between the waters,

to separate water

from water.

And God called

the space

sky



So neither he who plants
nor he who waters is anything,
but only God, who makes things grow.

I CORINTHIANS 3:7

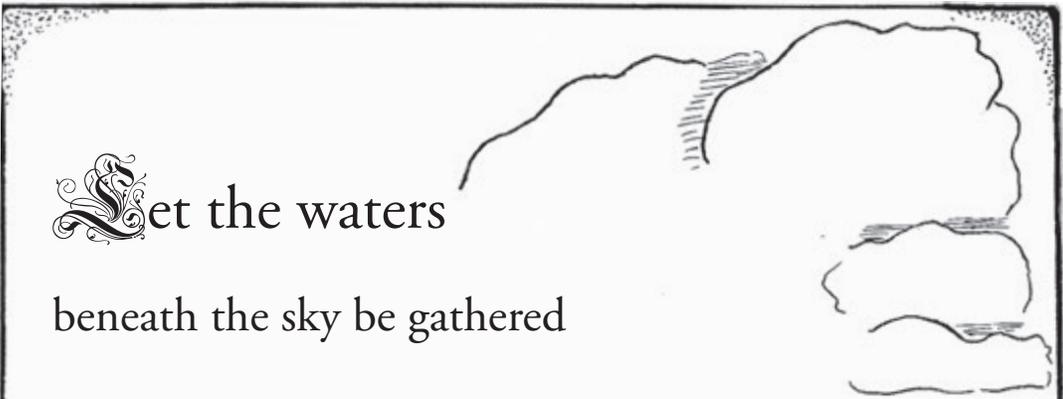
The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof,
the word, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas,
and established it upon the floods.

PSALM 24:1-2

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle
and the vegetation for the service of man,
that he may bring forth food out of the earth.

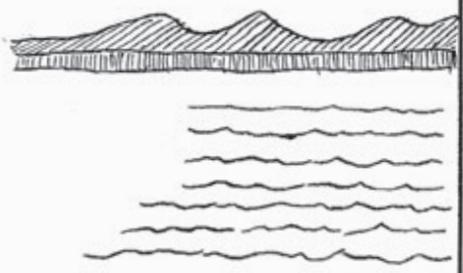
PSALM 104:14



Let the waters

beneath the sky be gathered
into one place so dry ground may appear.

And God named the dry ground Land
and the water Seas.



Then God said,

Let the land burst forth
with every sort of grass and seed-bearing plant.

And let there be trees that grow seed-bearing fruit.



There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

Every good and perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights,
who does not change like shifting shadows.

JAMES 1:17

The day is yours, and yours also the night;
you established the sun and moon.

It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth;
you made both summer and winter.

PSALM 74:16-17

Praise the LORD.

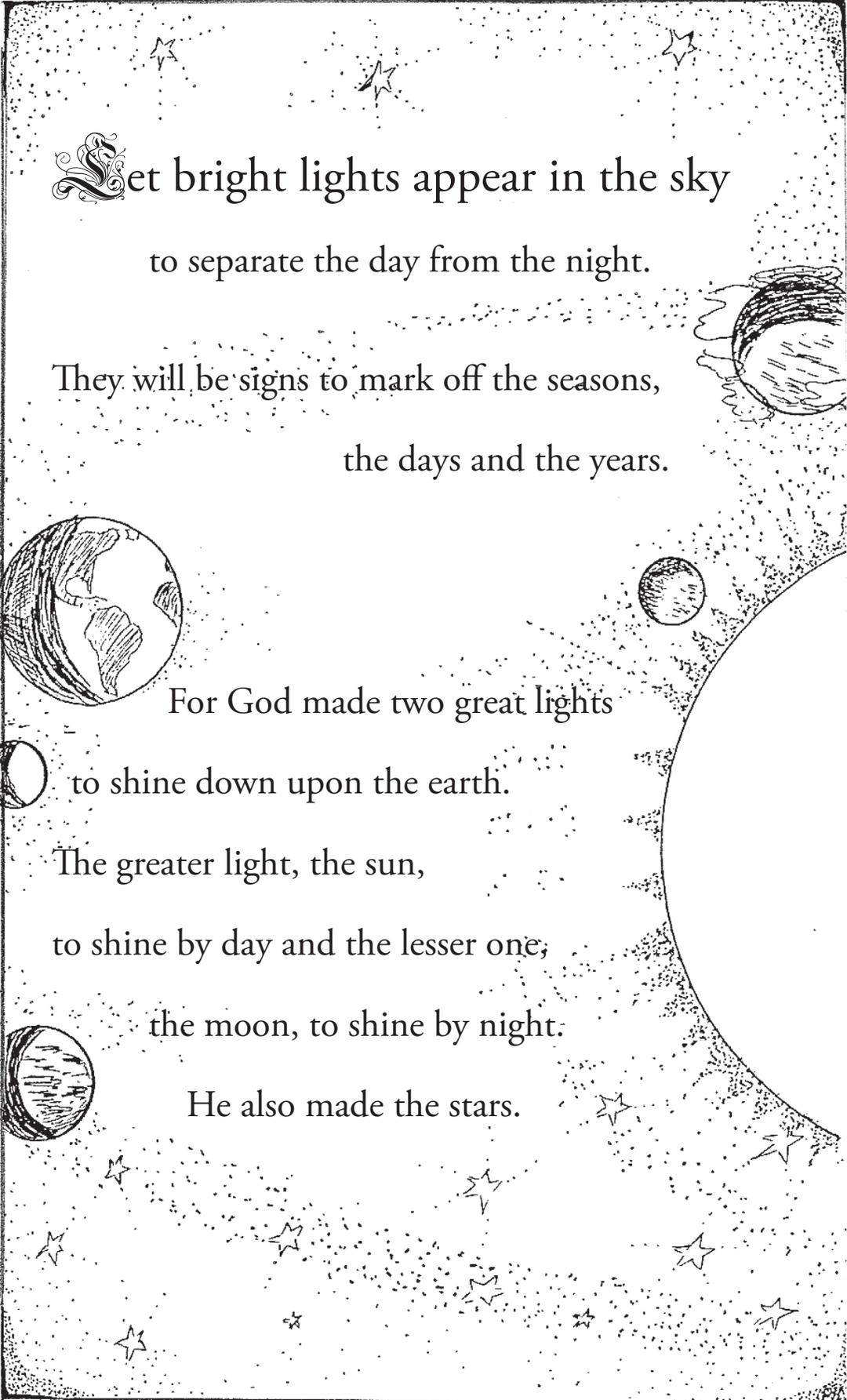
Praise the LORD from the heavens,
praise him in the heights above.

Praise him, all his angels,
praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise him, you highest heavens
and you waters above the skies.
Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for he commanded and they were created.

PSALM 148:1-5



Let bright lights appear in the sky

to separate the day from the night.

They will be signs to mark off the seasons,

the days and the years.

For God made two great lights

to shine down upon the earth.

The greater light, the sun,

to shine by day and the lesser one,

the moon, to shine by night.

He also made the stars.

How many are your works, O LORD!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

There is the sea, vast and spacious,
teeming with creatures beyond number—
living things both large and small.

PSALM 104:24-25

Look at the birds of the air;
they do not sow or reap or store away in barns,
and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
Are you not much more valuable than they?

MATTHEW 6:26

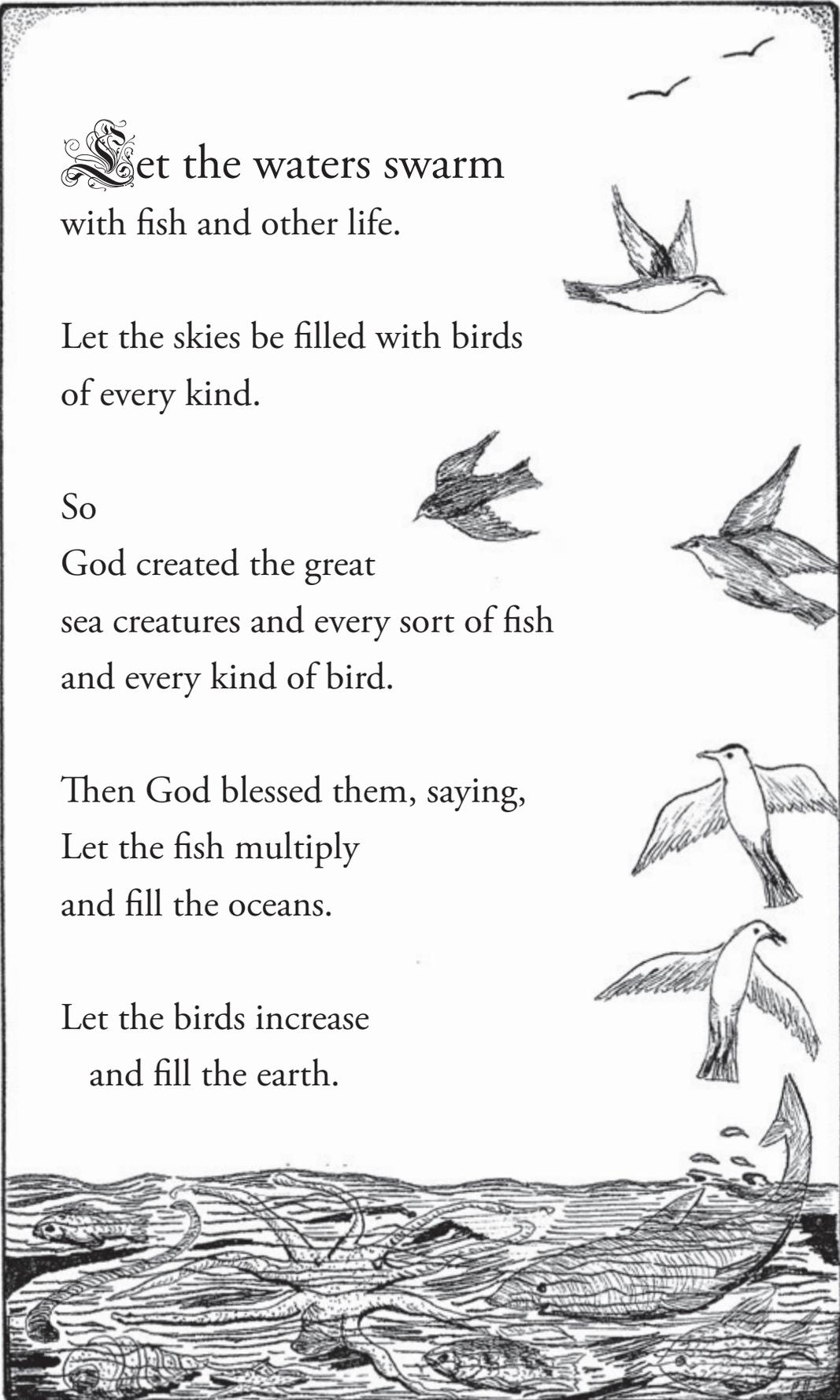
Let the waters swarm
with fish and other life.

Let the skies be filled with birds
of every kind.

So
God created the great
sea creatures and every sort of fish
and every kind of bird.

Then God blessed them, saying,
Let the fish multiply
and fill the oceans.

Let the birds increase
and fill the earth.



What is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

You made him ruler over the works of your hands;
you put everything under his feet.

PSALM 8:4-6

He chose to give us birth through the word of truth,
that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

JAMES 1:18

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.
Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him
to whom we must give account.

HEBREWS 4:13

Let the earth bring forth every kind
of living creature—
cattle and creeping things
and beasts of the earth.

Then God said

Let us make mankind
in our own image, after our likeness:

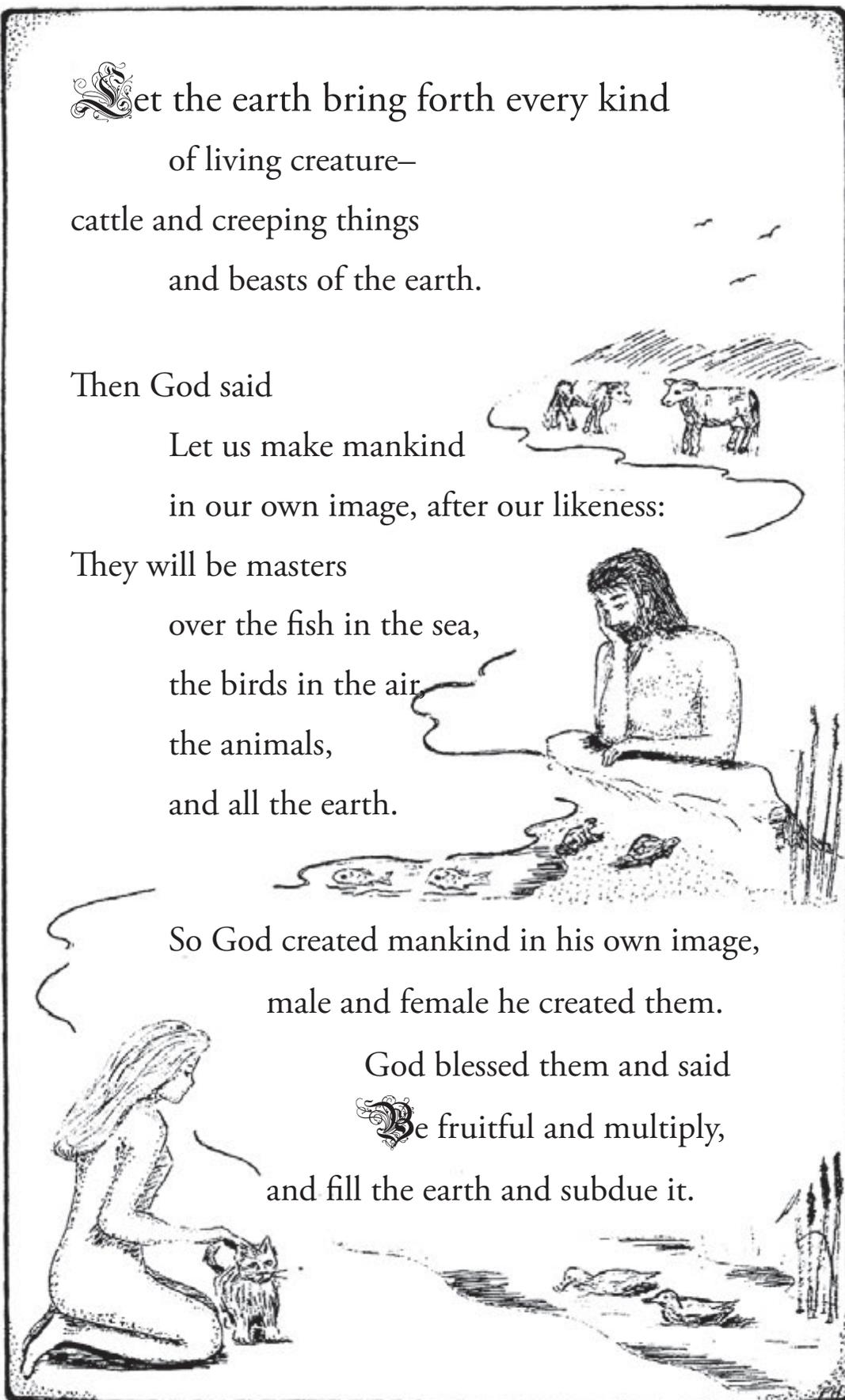
They will be masters

over the fish in the sea,
the birds in the air,
the animals,
and all the earth.

So God created mankind in his own image,
male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said

Be fruitful and multiply,
and fill the earth and subdue it.



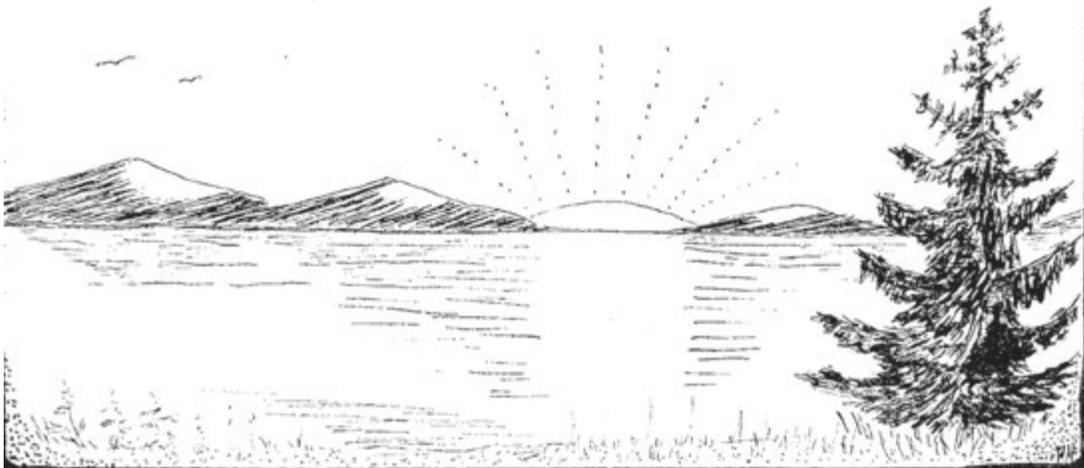
This is what the LORD says:
“Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
Where is the house you will build for me?
Where will my resting place be?
ISAIAH 66:1

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.
MATTHEW 11:28

So the creations of the heaven
and the earth
and everything in them
was completed.

On the seventh day,
having finished his task,
...God rested from all his work.

And God blessed the seventh day
and declared it holy,
because it was the day when he rested
from his work of creation.



Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.

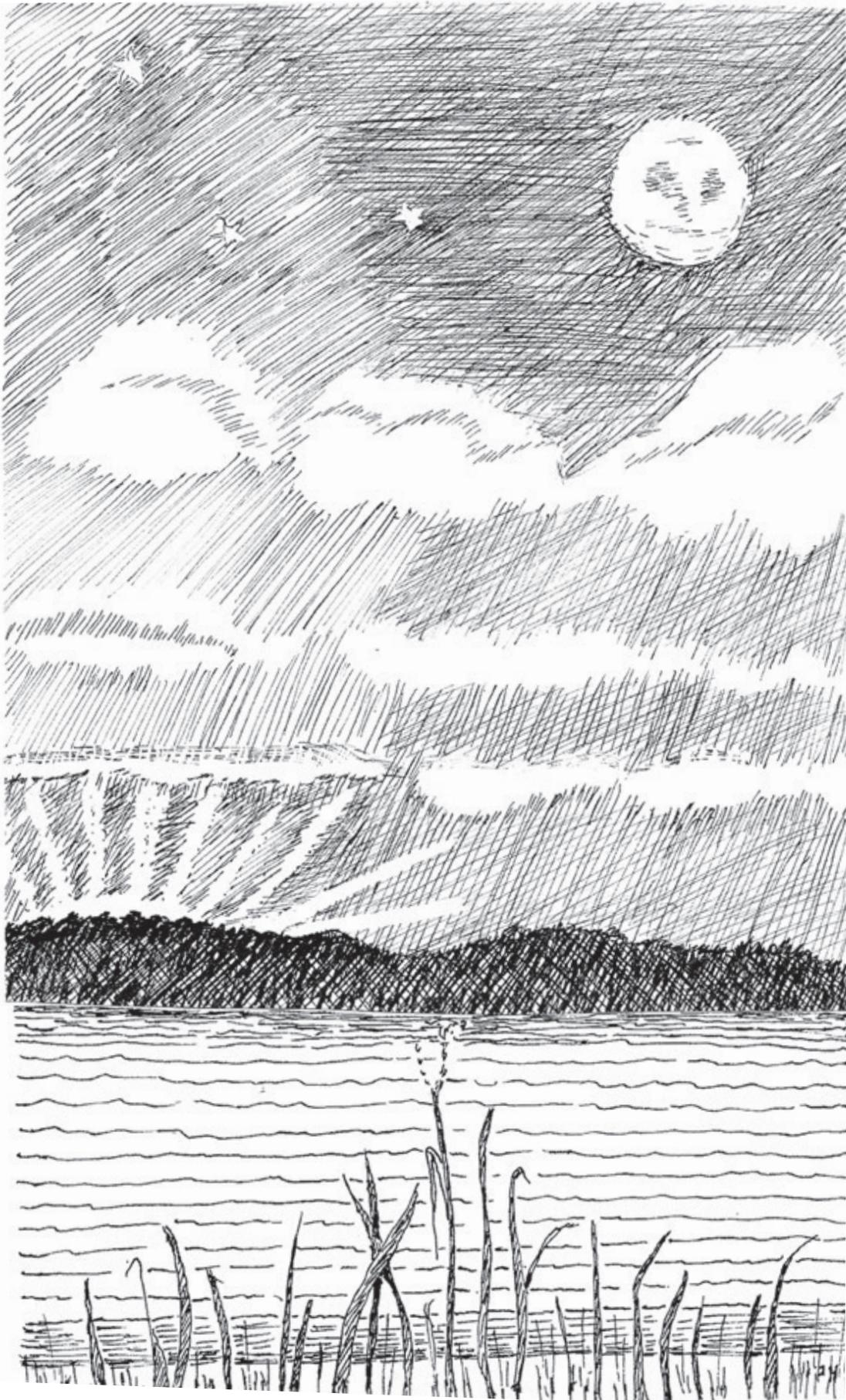
Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

PSALM 100:1-3

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
Psalm 46:1-2





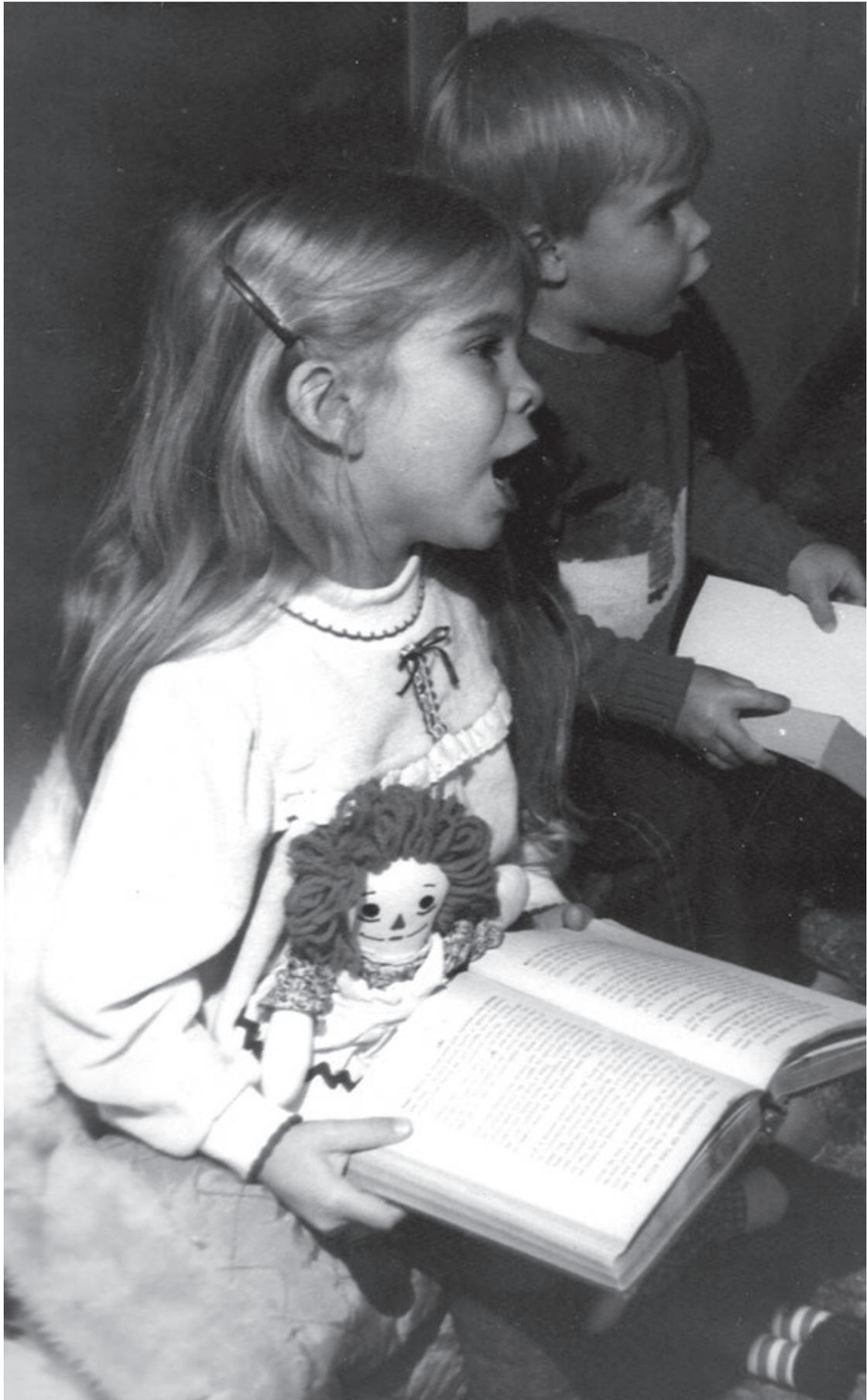
Great Are the Works of the Lord

The sun and moon
must shine for us day and night;
the sky
must give us rain, clouds, shade, and dew;
the earth
must give us all kinds of growing things and animals;
the waters
must give us fish and countless necessities;
the air
must supply birds as well as our breath;
fire
must warm us and give us countless benefits.

And who can enumerate everything?
It cannot be otherwise or better expressed
than in those short words:
“Great are the works of the Lord.”

And it cannot be sufficiently proclaimed to all eternity
even though the leaves and grass were all tongues.

By Dr. Martin Luther
1483-1546



All Creatures of Our God and King

All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voices, with us sing:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

You burning sun with golden beam,
You silver moon with softer gleam!

O praise Him! O praise Him!

You rushing wind that is so strong
You clouds that sail in Heaven along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!

You rising moon, in praise rejoice
You lights of evening, find a voice!

You flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for your Lord to hear,

O praise Him! Alleluia!

You fire so masterful and bright,
That gives man both warmth and light.

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfolds blessings on our way

O praise Him! Alleluia!

The flowers and fruits that in you grow,
Let them His glory also show.

Let all things their Creator bless,

And worship Him in humbleness,

Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,

And praise the Spirit, Three in One.

All creatures of our God and King

Lift up your voices, with us sing!

By Francis of Assisi

1225



New Songs Celebrating The Creator

Praise songs became popular in the 80s and 90s, many are now as beloved as traditional hymns. Many celebrate the beauty of the earth and thank God for designing an ordered and awesome universe. These lyrics, written in the past 20 years, show how many of the words and images are inspired from Psalms and other Bible verses glorifying God for his creation. (Be sure to listen to the inspiring full songs.)

Other songs in this genre include "Shout to the Lord" by Darlene Zscheck and "Above All" by Paul Baloche and Lenny LeBlanc

God of Wonders

Lord of all creation
Of water, earth, and sky
The heavens are Your tabernacle
Glory to the Lord on High

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares Your majesty
You are holy, holy

Early in the morning
I will celebrate the light
And as I stumble through the darkness
I will call Your name by night
Hallelujah to the Lord
of heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord
of heaven and earth

God of wonders beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares your majesty
You are holy, holy

Lord of heaven and earth
Lord of heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord
of heaven and earth.

(God of Wonders by Marc Byrd/Steve Hindalong)

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For the Beauty of the Earth

For the beauty of the earth
For the glory of the skies
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night
Hill and vale and tree and flower
Sun and moon and stars of light

For the joy of ear and eye
For the heart and mind's delight
For the mystic harmony
Linking sense to sound and sight

For thyself, best gift divine
To the world so freely given
For that great, great love of thine
Peace on earth and joy in heaven

Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.

By Folliot S. Pierpoint
1864

Part Two



How We Can Take Care
of the Earth

Trees, Please

10 simple things you can do to make a difference

1. Recycle newspapers, most magazines, phone books, and junk mail at home, at school and at work. Call your city or county offices for the nearest recycling centers. Don't wait for someone else to set up a collection bin. Some estimates say that more than a third of the waste in landfills is paper. More than 95 million trees a year are consumed for newsprint, and more than 20 million trees are used for book production. Recycling this paper saves trees.

2. Save sheets of good used paper from letters, photocopies, old tests, office forms, etc. Cut them into smaller pieces and use for notepaper by your phone or for grocery lists. Kids can draw on the clean sides. And after using both sides, recycle.

3. Contact your favorite magazines or local publications and ask them to print on recycled and recyclable paper. The quality of recycled paper has been greatly improved in recent years. (This book paper is 100% recycled.)

4. Plant trees whenever possible—on the office grounds, the school grounds, or your own property. Organize and help fund a tree-planting activity, i.e. “adopt a tree.” Check with a local nursery to choose hardy, native plants. Trees cool and clean the air, as they filter out carbon dioxide. When grown, an average-sized tree absorbs 12-15 pounds of carbon dioxide a year! Trees are especially needed in cities, where they can help reduce air conditioner use 10-50% by cooling the air. Remember to plan for watering and trimming the trees, as well.

5. Use canvas, cloth or net bags when shopping. They are now widely available and inexpensive. A bonus to using “real” bags—they won't tear and

let your eggs fall out to break on the ground! When you do take store-provided bags, re-use them. If you buy just a few items, don't even use a bag. Just get your receipt and carry them out.

6. Support companies that make recycled paper products. So many good-quality recycled products are available now—paper plates, paper towels, bathroom tissue, greeting cards, books, magazines, containers and other items. Prices have come down and quality up in recent years because more consumers are demanding and using the products. Keep it up!

7. The Sunday comics and old calendar pictures make great wrapping paper for gifts. Children especially love the funny pages—they can read them later!

8. Re-use greeting cards, envelopes and wrapping paper. My dad and my aunt often send the same funny birthday card back and forth, writing a new note and the date each time. They get a kick out of it and it saves paper, too! And gift wrapping paper is usually good for at least two occasions!

9. Precycle when you buy products. Avoid those which are over-packaged. And protest to manufacturers when the packaging is excessive and environmentally unsound. (like the huge plastic packaging around tiny camera memory cards!) Avoid those, or if you must buy something in them—send the packaging back to the head of the manufacturer with a letter of complaint and a request for packaging that is more environmentally responsible.

10. Give a tree as a gift. Don't buy your grandmother another bottle of bath oil; give her a small tree or a note promising to plant one in the spot of her choice. Hardwoods and evergreens work on bigger lots; potted trees are terrific on patios or inside by a window.

Addicted to Oil?

- 1. Strive for at least one car-less day each week.** Arrange to carpool to work, church, athletic events, or a party. Allow time to walk to the post office, or take the bus. Give your car a rest (like in the old days, when people rested their hard-working horses.) Walking more also is one of the best things you can do for your own physical fitness.
- 2. Keep your car well tuned, and change the oil and air filters when needed.** It will run more efficiently and pollute the air less.
- 3. Buy a car that is as fuel-efficient as possible without giving up the safety features you want for yourself and your family.** Read reviews and talk to other car owners. For example, a car that gets 30 miles per gallon, if driven an average of 250 miles a week, will consumer about 220 fewer gallons a year than a car that gets only 20 miles to the gallon. This not only save natural resources, it saves a lot of money, too.
- 4. Request an energy audit of your home from your utility company.** This can give you individualized suggestions for saving energy, and it's free. They can also check the safety of your heating system at the same time.
- 5. For small yards, use clippers, lawn mowers, rakes, and other tools that are muscle-powered, not gasoline-powered.** Sweep the sidewalk rather than use a leaf-blower. It's also good exercise.
- 6. Recycle your motor oil.** Many service stations will handle your used oil, which is then reprocessed into fuel for such things as furnace heat

or in power plants. You can also buy recycled oil for that is re-refined at most automotive suppliers, for use in your car.

7. Break the habit of starting your car before everyone is ready to go, or letting it run while you wait for someone or fasten your seatbelt.

Most cars these days need only a few seconds to “warm up.” The longer your car runs, the more pollution is created.

8. Slow down and save fuel (and maybe even a life). Driving too fast saves very little time, but does use a lot more gas. For example, if you are late for a meeting 30 miles away and you drive 70 miles an hour instead of 60, you will save less than 5 minutes. Besides increasing your chances of an accident or ticket, high speeds dramatically decrease fuel efficiency.

9. Support solar energy research and look into using renewable fuels such as ethanol. Write letters to vehicle manufacturers and oil companies to continue research and design into affordable fuel-efficient vehicles.

10. Discover the joys of life sans windshield. Walk or bicycle through your neighborhood. If it is hard to walk alone for reasons of age or disability, try getting outside and around by walker, wheelchair, tricycle, and/or take your child out in a stroller. You may be amazed at the fascinating people and places you whiz right by when in a car.

Water, Water Everywhere, but...

1. Brush your teeth, wash your face and clean the tub without wasting gallons of water by running the water unnecessarily. Turn off the tap whenever you can.

2. Take short showers. Turn off the flow while you condition your hair. Bathe several small children at the same time. Shower with your spouse.

3. A leaky faucet costs a lot. One drop per second wastes more than 200 gallons a month. Fix it. (And until you do, put a container under it and use it to water plants!)

4. Place a water-filled bottle in your toilet tank (or a special bag available through your utility company.) If your toilet flushes with the bottle in the upper tank, leave it in place. Depending on the type, a toilet uses 3-7 gallons per flush. One bottle will save half a gallon to a gallon each time. Don't use a brick, which can disintegrate and clog your system. This displacement method will save up to a gallon of water each time the toilet is flushed, which can add up to hundreds of gallons of water savings per month for even a small household.

5. Keep the sink basin full of water in the kitchen or bathroom to rinse out rags while doing household chores. A refrigerated jug of water provides a cold drink without running water. Keep a container in the sink to catch the water when waiting for it to run hot and re-use that clean water for plants or making ice cubes.

6. Don't insist on a spotless car. Washing your car uses a lot of water. When you do wash it, use a bucket and sponge; just hose it down for the final rinse. If you use a car wash, find one that recycles at least some of the water.

7. If you notice water flowing down the street, gushing from a hydrant, or leaking from a broken public restroom tap, take the time to report it. Don't assume someone else will do it. Contact your local city or county government office to a number to call.

8. Don't run your dishwasher or washing machine unless you have a full load. Consider connecting your machines to an extra tank to catch the final rinse water. This "grey water," can be used for watering trees and bushes, or for washing cars.

9. Set up buckets or a barrel in the backyard or under the rain gutters to catch the rain. You can use it for watering plants, or washing cars, bikes, or the dog.

10. Cut shower water use by almost 50% by installing a low-flow showerhead. It conserves water and should pay for itself within a year. Estimates show that these gadgets can save the average household 3,000-4,000 gallons of water per person each year (the equivalent of a 15-year drinking supply for one person). Check at your local hardware store or utility company (some provide them free of charge). You can also install, on faucets, low-flow faucet aerators. These are two extremely effective methods of home water conservation.

Use it Up, Wear it Out, Recycle It or Do Without

1. Most cardboard, including corrugated cardboard (corrugated boxes, egg cartons, cereal cartons, etc.). Corrugated cardboard has two layers of heavy cardboard with a ribbed section in between, and is often used for heavy-duty cartons. Flatten and bundle, or put in your recycle bin.

2. Paper, Telephone books, newspapers and most other paper and magazines. Recycled paper is made into new paper (as in this book), newsprint, insulation, cereal boxes, and many more products. This saves trees.

3. Aluminum (soda pop and other beverage cans, foil, food wrap, TV trays, pie plates. Rinse first. Aluminum for lawn furniture is also recyclable.

4. Glass (beverage bottles, mayonnaise jars, juice bottles, pickle and olive jars, ketchup bottles. Almost all glass can be recycled. Rinse (some areas request it be sorted by color; most don't care.) Recycled glass is used to manufacture new containers. Because lower temperatures are needed to make containers from recycled glass than from new, this saves energy.

5. Steel (tin) cans (food cans, non-aluminum cans). Steel cans, often called tin cans, are usually used for food. They have side seams. To recycle, rinse and remove label, both ends, and flatten. (Many places no longer require them to be flattened; check with your recycler). The market for tin cans is sometimes limited, so check with your local recycler.

6. Plastic (soft drink containers, milk or water containers, etc.)

When this book first came out, plastic recycling technology was new and the market limited. Now, though, hundreds of products use recycled plastics. Check beneath the item for a little triangle with a code number indicating the type of plastic it is.* The following are nearly always recyclable:

- milk and distilled water jugs
- oil and antifreeze containers
- bleach bottles
- detergent, shampoo and other household containers
- plastic shopping bags
(although if you take your own cloth bags you won't need these)
- soft drink bottles

***A nationally recognized** material identification system for plastics, the Plastic Container Code System, offers uniformity to bottle manufacturers and recyclers. The codes are stamped on the bottom of the container. Find out which code numbers are recyclable or returnable in your community.

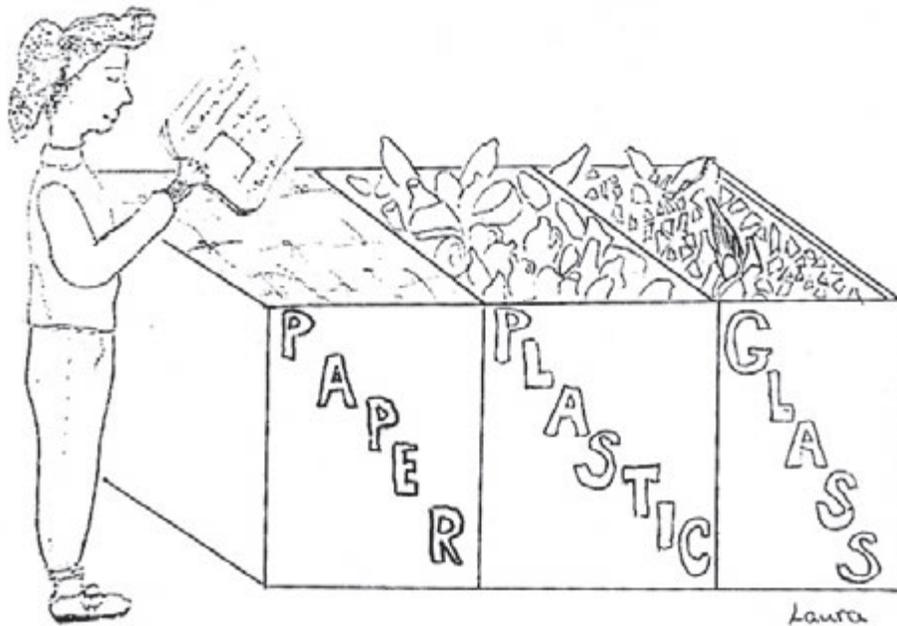
Look for recycling “reverse vending” machines that will give you cash for your bottles and cans. The newest ones can even recognize bar codes. If there are no such machines in your area, phone (or use the Web to find Reverse Vending Machines) to look into bringing one in—or have a civic group or school sponsor such a machine.



Just for Kids

*“For to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”
Matthew 19:13*

No matter how old you are, you can help take care of the earth. Here are 10 things you can do. How many more can you think of?



1. Recycle everything that can be recycled.

Save soda pop cans, plastic containers, newspapers, used photocopy and notebook paper, envelopes, and more. At school, at Sunday School, and at home, help set up separate boxes so other kids can recycle, too. Ask your teacher or your parents to help you find a company to recycle these things for you. Some will even pay you for your help.

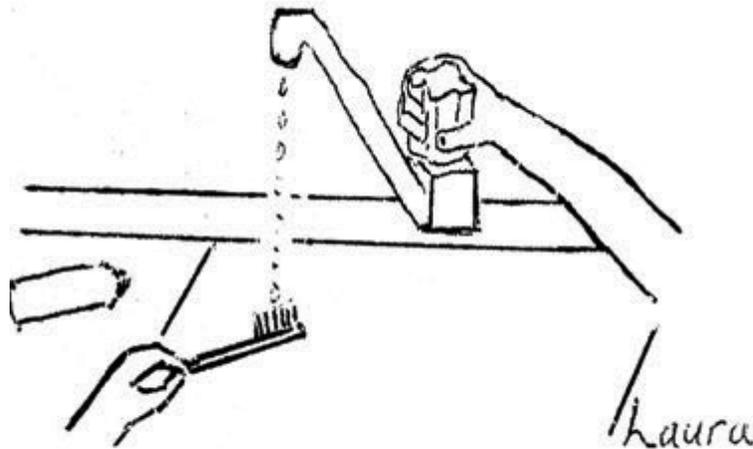
2. Turn off the light when you leave a room—unless, of course, your sister is still sitting in there! Turning out the lights when you don't need them saves electricity and conserves our natural resources.



3. Plant something. God created plants and people for each other. People breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Plants use carbon dioxide to produce fresh, clean oxygen.

If you plant something from a seed or seedling and grow it inside in a pot or outside in your yard, you will be helping to clean the air and make the earth more beautiful. Ask your teachers at school and Sunday School if your class can plant something as a special project.

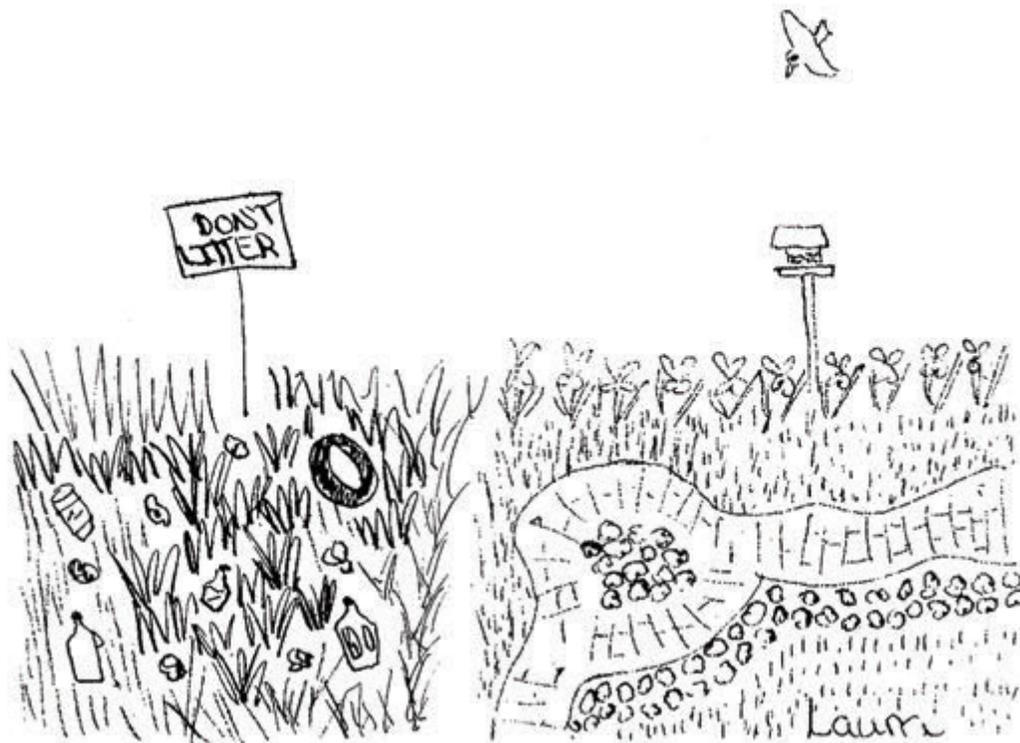
4. Turn off the water as you brush your teeth, wash dishes, or use the sink. And don't take long showers—more than five minutes is too long. When you leave the water running down the drain, you waste LOTS of good water that takes a lot of energy to clean and bring into your home. Just use what you need and then turn the faucet OFF.



5. Be careful about what you use to eat and drink. Most of those white “foam” cups and plates and carry-out containers never break down to become part of the earth. They take up a lot of room in our landfills and big pieces can float out to sea.

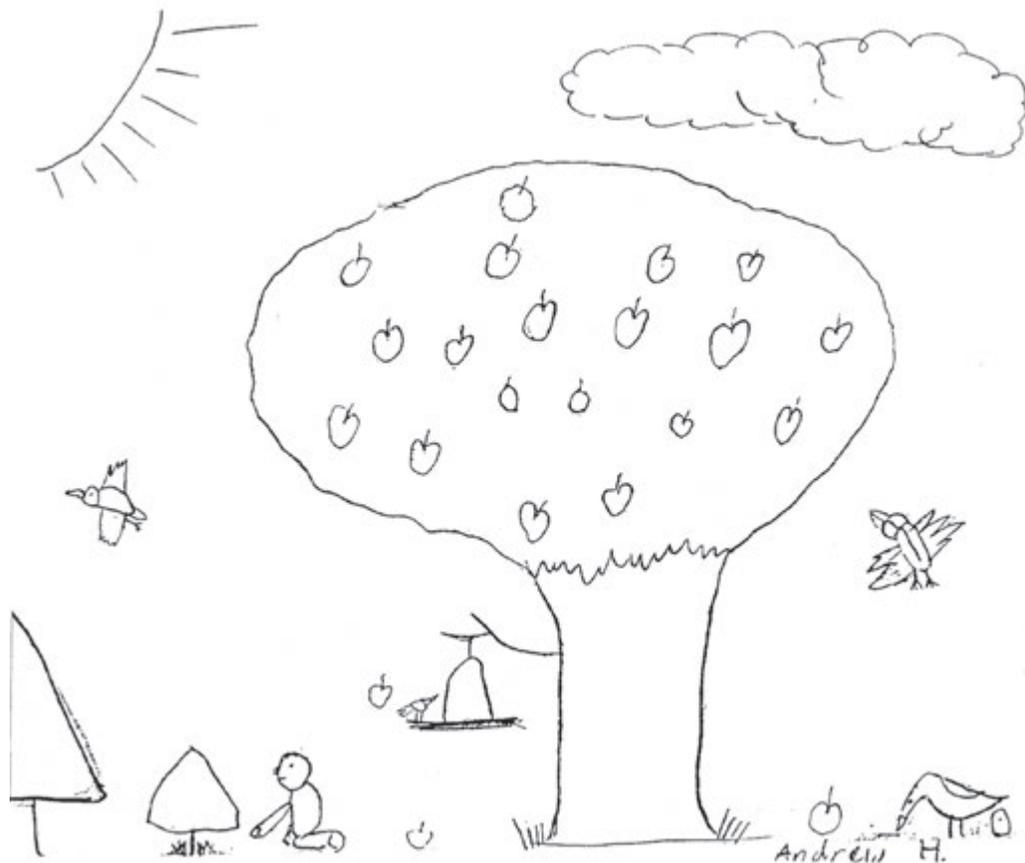
If you go to a picnic or potluck, take your own plates, cups and silverware, or ask your parents to buy paper plates out of recycled and recyclable materials. You could carry them in a basket or bag. And ask your parents to use real mugs for coffee and tea at work and at home. This will help cut down on all the garbage that is littering God's green earth.

6. Stop and Think. Before you buy something or ask your parents to buy you something, think about it carefully. Do you really need it? Will it last a long time or will it be used up, worn out, or broken soon? Try not to add to the garbage problem and don't buy more than you need. Don't buy food or drinks in containers that you can't recycle. Be an example to your friends.



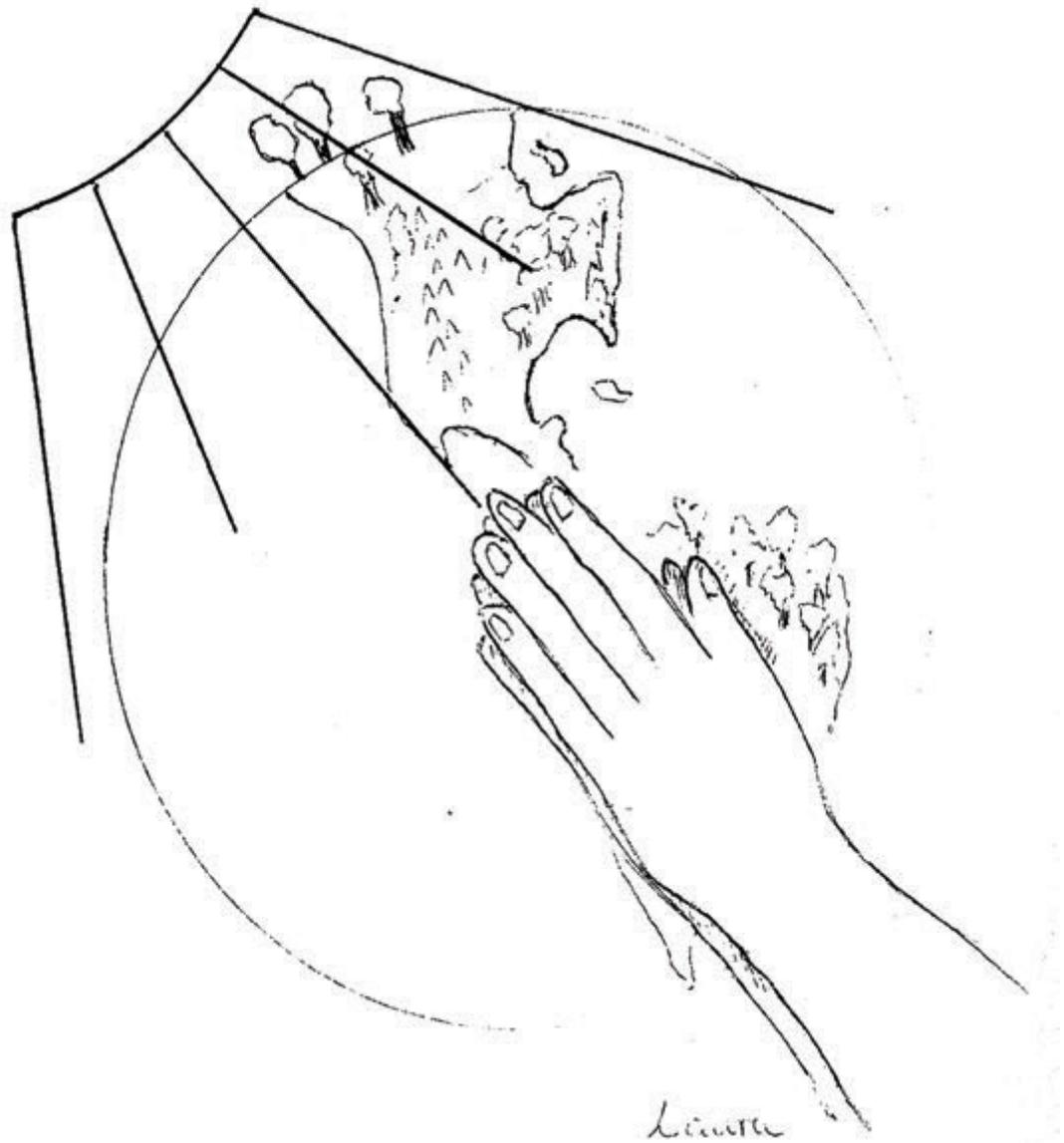
7. Choose a special part of the earth and take care of it. Maybe it's the old creek in front of your house, or a litter-covered lot in your neighborhood, or your own backyard. Pick up trash, plant bushes, flowers or herbs, and help keep your special place clean and healthy.

8. Close the refrigerator and oven doors as quickly as you can after you open them. (Don't accidentally use your refrigerator for an air conditioner or your oven for a furnace!) Get what you need and close the door. This will save electricity or gas, and help preserve the world's resources.



9. Create a mini-wildlife refuge for birds, bees, butterflies, ladybugs, squirrels and other “critters.” Even if you live in the city, you can put plants and feeders on your windowsill or patio to attract some of these gentle creatures.

10. Pray for the healing of the earth, and that all who live here will respect what God has created.



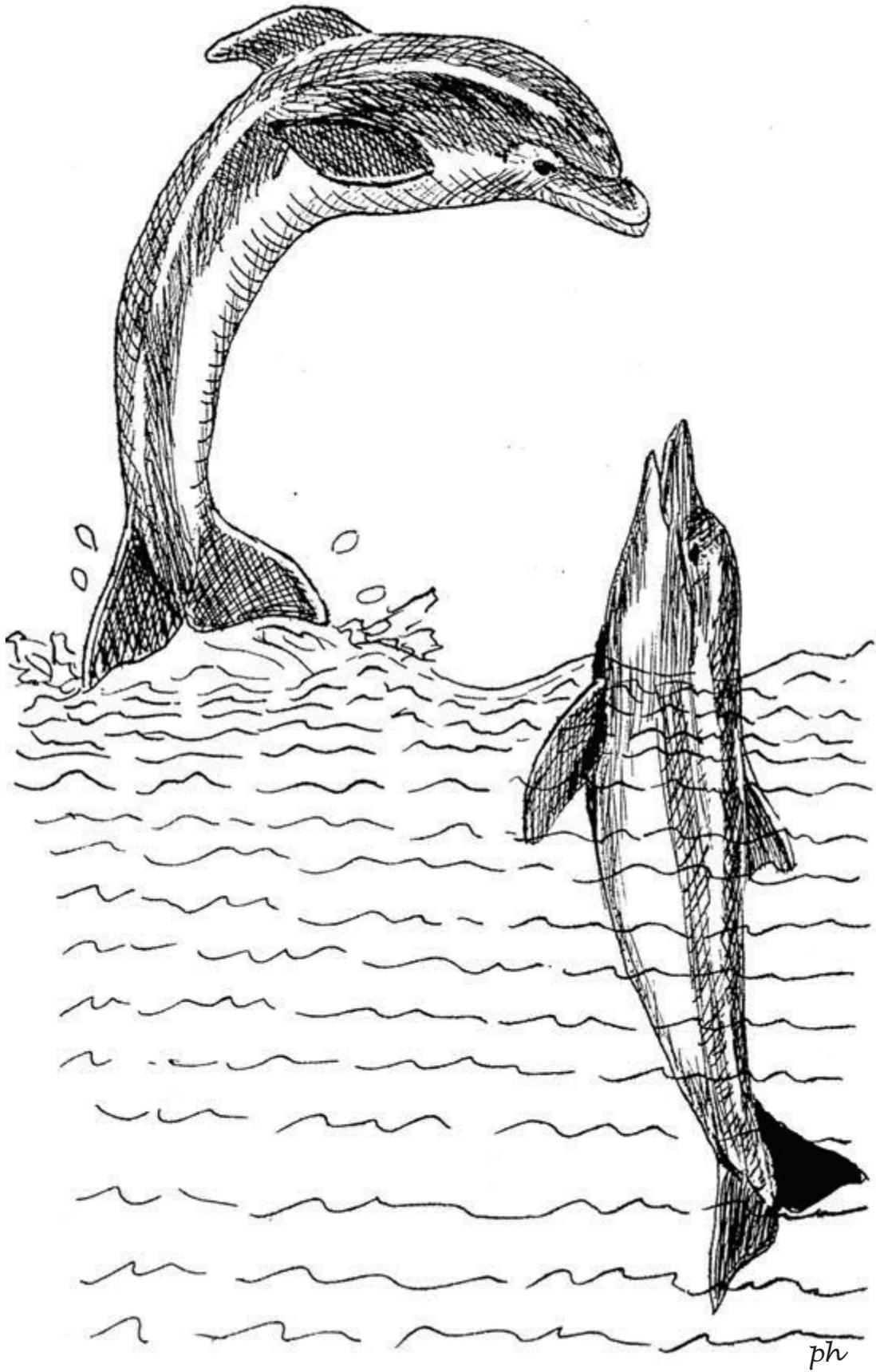
God bless you as you grow up helping to care for and protect the earth and all creation, as you love the Lord and each other.

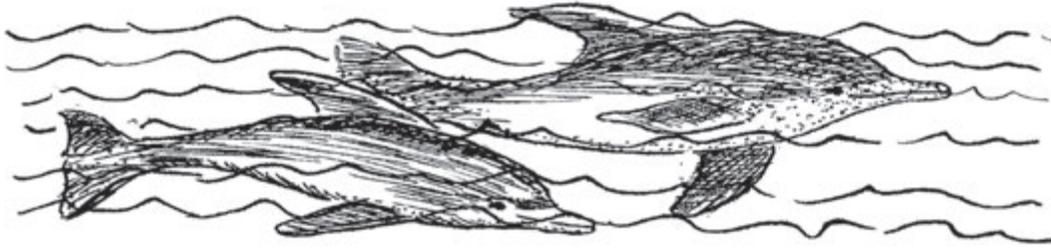


Part Three



Reflections on Creation and Environmental Responsibility





Issues of the Wallet, Issues of the Heart

By Richard S. Greene

Four dollars—in the long run, big deal. But in the short run, spending four extra dollars appeared to be a senseless waste. The more important issue, though, was protecting dolphins. My wife and I had been discussing for some time our aversion to purchasing tuna when it had become clear that dolphins were being caught and killed along with the fish. One Saturday, with my three-year-old daughter along, I finally found cans of tuna with dolphin-safe labels. But it was premium white tuna, and each can cost \$1.04 more than the regular brand. Lynda needed four cans.

I genuinely agonized over whether to spend the extra \$4.00. I wrestled with how deep my conviction was about helping—although in a small way—to preserve our environment by protecting wildlife. I explained quickly to my daughter the dilemma I was facing. I don't think she fully understood the issues, but she didn't hesitate to point to the blue dolphin symbol. I spent the extra money, and felt good about it when my wife later applauded the decision.

When you consider the onslaught waged against the environment worldwide, my action that Saturday was miniscule. What impact did that make? I don't know. But before God, I knew I had to put teeth into my words. I do believe, however, that those tiny individual steps, when multiplied by similar actions and ones on an even broader scale, will be cumulative and can make a tremendous difference.

Two years ago, our Sunday School class studied various pressing social needs and how our Christian faith can effect change in those areas, both locally and nationally. The environment received equal play with abortion, poverty, and pornography. Adding an element of urgency was the Exxon oil spill disaster in Alaska.

I was proud of our class' reaction and how many instituted immediate changes. One couple started using cloth diapers instead of disposable ones. Most abandoned plastic milk containers, opting to buy cardboard cartons instead. Class members actively support our city's curbside recycling program of glass, aluminum cans, and newspapers. When I collect grass clippings, I put them in a compost pile in the back corner of our yard, where Lynda grew several vegetables this summer. Riding the bus is a healthy alternative to driving my car every day.

Transforming our lifestyle is hard; breaking habits of convenience can be costly. One local newspaper recently reported that more than half of the garbage coming to the county's downtown Minneapolis incinerator can potentially be recycled instead of burned.

We can always do more. But why? What should be the motivation behind our behavior? We are obligated to the earth because God created it; it belongs to Him and we are its caretakers. Psalm 104 is a fascinating litany that describes God's magnificent creation. Verse 30 piques my curiosity: "When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth".

I don't completely comprehend what this Scripture entails, but somehow God's Holy Spirit is uniquely involved in the event of creation. He also participates in the restoration process. And I think, as believers under the control of the lordship of Jesus Christ, we can be in partnership with God in the renewal of His wonderful earth.

Therefore, environmentalism and evangelicalism do not clash. We not only have a responsibility to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ but to also live out His Word as agents of compassion and justice in a world at times darkened by tyranny, including the ravaging of the environment.

Denton Lotz, General Secretary for the Baptist World Alliance, wrote in the May 1990 BWA newsletter: In some churches there seems to be a conflict between those who emphasize saving souls and those who

emphasize saving trees. This is a ridiculous conflict. We need saved souls who can live a meaningful life in God's beautiful world of nature, which itself is yearning to be free from pollution...Let's not confuse evangelism with ecology, but let's also show that true evangelists are also true ecologists working for that day when, as the Apostle Paul said, "... the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God". (Romans 8:21)

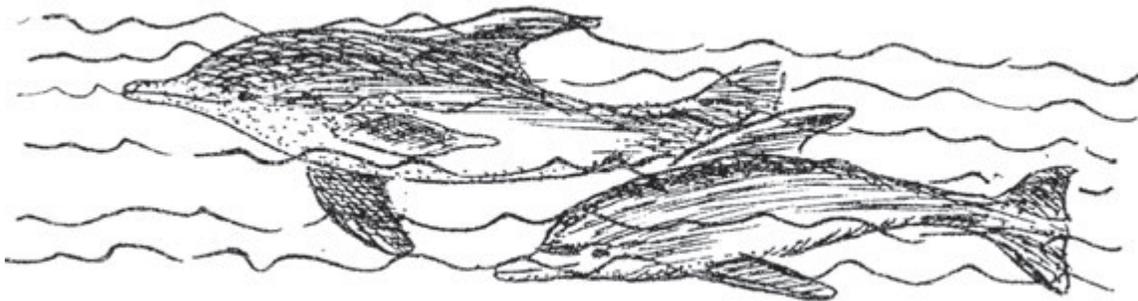
That Biblical balance was absent at a recent program for ecumenical stewardship sponsored by a local interfaith ecology coalition. Concerned people of other faiths and persuasions—including Zen Buddhists, Bahai's, Native American ritualists, and Unitarians—overwhelmingly outnumbered Evangelical Christians. They need my Jesus, but I need their spirit of environmental activism.

Each day I am reminded of my need to examine my attitude when I exit the door from work. A roadside billboard stabs at my conscience:

*"The three biggest killers in America:
cancer, heart disease and apathy."*

I pray I never fall prey to apathy. Saving \$4 will never be the overriding issue. My mandate, and yours, is to conserve, preserve and enhance what God has given to us.

Richard S. Greene, a former newspaper journalist and communications director for the Navigators, is an editor at Decision Magazine, the publication of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.



For Land's Sake!

By Bill Sy

My grandmother had a favorite expression, “For land’s sake!” It made us laugh whenever we heard it. Today those words make more sense than ever. We are starting to recognize the irreplaceable value of our land and other natural resources.

Years ago, 90% or more of the people tilled the soil. Now our lifestyles have so changed that only three to four percent are commercial farmers. Most of us purchase milk, bread and meat from supermarket shelves. We have little awareness of the long journey these foods take from the soil to the store.

It is easy to take for granted the earth’s productivity. We are reminded in Psalm 24:1 that the earth is not ours to abuse or misuse. “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world and those who dwell therein.” It all belongs to God.

This is difficult for us to grasp. We tend to think the earth is ours, or at least this certain parcel of ground is mine. We put down our stakes and proudly claim our rights. Too many people can’t see beyond their limited possessions. They don’t see the long-range view. They don’t see God’s involvement in their life or possessions.

The Christian sees things differently. We know that God owns it all. God has loaned it to us temporarily. We do the best we can caring for what God has entrusted to us.

For the Christian, Jesus Christ is Lord. That means Christ is the owner, the master of our possessions. He owns our material possessions, our families, our lives. God allows us to use all these things for a time. But we are to be willing to let them go. If God sees that any of these things

are hurting us or interfering with His plan for us, then we relinquish our ownership back to Him. All we have and are belongs to God. We are privileged to use these things in a way that pleases God.



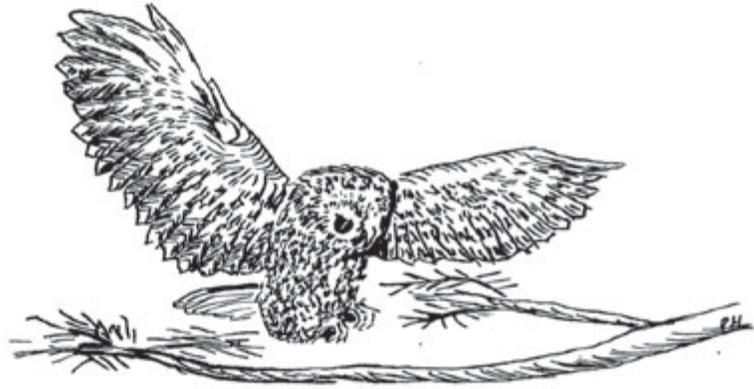
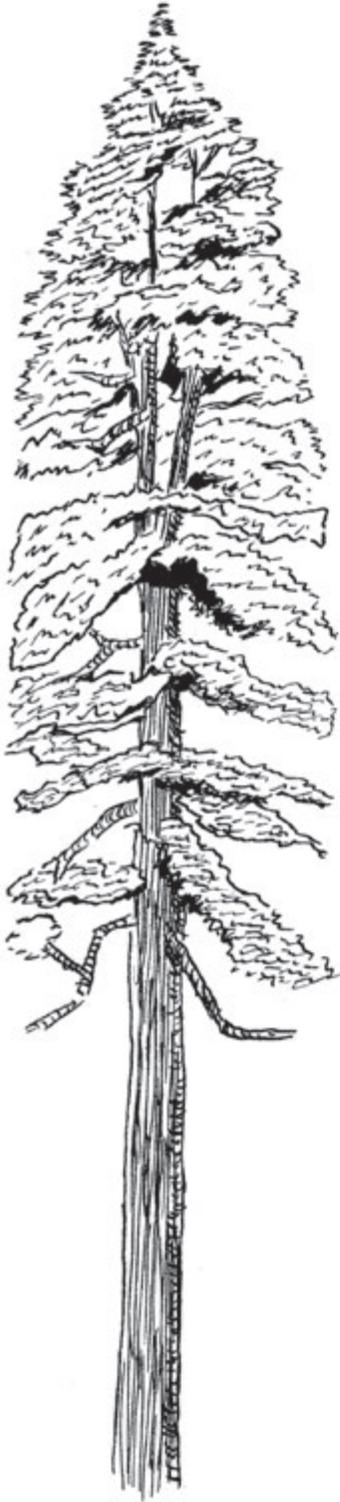
After returning recently from a church camp, I noticed a sign: “Leave this place in better condition than when you came here.” That would be a great motto for Christians. We can view our time here as pilgrims on a journey, determined to leave the earth in better shape than we found it.

We are only guests here on the Lord’s earth. This isn’t our home. We are invited to enjoy the facilities, and expected to keep up the property. If we begin to think we can control the earth without Him, we are no longer guests, we are trying to become lords. But there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ.

We are given a challenge to go into the world and make it a better place in the name of Jesus Christ. Our job as ambassadors for Christ is to make a positive difference in this world that Christ died to reconcile. (II Corinthians 5: 17-20)

God’s creation waits with eager longing for the revealing face of God’s children. (Romans 8:19) The whole world waits to see what a difference Christ makes in us, for we live with the dust of the earth in our shoes and the fire of heaven in our hearts.

Bill Sy is a speaker and a pastor in San Diego, California



Owls, Lumberjacks and God's Plan

By Dean Ohlman

One major episode in the battle between the lumber industry and environmentalists was the placing of the northern spotted owl on the "Threatened Species" list by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This action requires the U. S. government to protect its habitat by reducing or even ending logging in the owl's range.

Although the decision was not a surprise, timber workers had hoped and prayed that it would be postponed. Now that it is official, it is expected that thousands of woodcutters will eventually lose their jobs and hundreds of mills will close.* Environmentalists, by and large, are not sympathetic. They claim that the lumber

**2010 note: many statistics show that most lost jobs in the Pacific Northwest have been due to direct export of logs overseas, industry automation and the rapid increase of logging in the southeast states—and not due to the spotted owl issue. - D.O.*

industry has acted irresponsibly for decades by not replanting enough for future timber requirements, and by caring little about the protection of wildlife habitat. They also decry the sale of forest products to Japan causing more rapid depletion of our nation's forest reserves.

Forestry workers are understandably angry since they feel that the fate of human beings is more important than the fate of a subspecies that may become extinct in spite of this action. As they see it, eventually both logger and owl are destined for extinction. Among these lumber workers and their families, no doubt, are thousands of fellow believers who sincerely wish to know God's will regarding their futures.

Viewing this controversy from the perspective of Christian stewardship, unfortunately, does not make it any easier. The reason is that both sides of the argument have support from Scripture, and the amount of that support rests on the truth of the "facts" presented by the debaters.

Conservationists can present impressive data to show that both the federal government and the logging industry have been poor stewards of the forests, and that greed and materialism are fueling the demand for more wood. This is the true issue, not the fate of the owl. Environmentalists are using the bird to bring before the entire nation the question of values regarding the natural world. What is the value of man, what is the value of non-human animal species, what is the value of a tree (in some instances sold for less than what is paid for a Big Mac)?

Other questions for Christians arising from this debate are these: Is it good stewardship to fell thousands of trees for huge Sunday newspapers full of material that is never read in entirety by any subscriber—and will end up the following week in landfills that are nearly full? When millions of people around the world are homeless, is it Christian compassion for American believers to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on lumber for ever larger homes? Is it wise use of God's marvelous creation to cut down thousand-year-old trees, destroy the habitat of ever more species, and disrupt fragile ecosystems in order to have neatly packaged individual meals to make our hectic lifestyles easier to maintain? If we are going to adjust our national economy to reflect better stewardship of our natural resources, isn't it inevitable that millions of workers nationwide

will be temporarily unemployed as they make the adjustment from one industry to another?

On the other side of the debate are questions like these: Doesn't Scripture indicate that man is more important than animals? Isn't it biblically accurate to believe that God has given us these natural resources to use for man's benefit? Is it Christian compassion to put people through financial hardship and domestic turmoil to save an animal species that may already be doomed? Doesn't the cultural mandate in Genesis command us to fill the earth—and if that's true, isn't it natural for population growth to increase the demand for forest products?

Obviously all these questions are valid. And the way we answer them will likely have a profound effect upon the lives of all of us. In the process of answering them, however, the Christian must keep these biblical principles in mind:

The earth is the Lord's, not man's. (Ps. 24:1-2; 1 Cor. 10:26)

Man has been given the task of stewardship regarding all of the earth's resources—both animals and forest products. (Gen. 1:26-30; Ps. 8:6-8)

What God created He called good and must not be despised or abused by man. (Gen. 1:25, 31)

Man and nature have been negatively affected by the Fall. One of the many negative effects has been disharmony between human beings, animals, and the land. (Gen. 3:17-19, Gen. 9:1-3, Ex. 23:29)

Through Christ's atoning death, the restoration of both man and nature was made possible. Though total restoration will come only at the physical return of Christ, partial restoration is possible here and now. Christians should be active in this restoration process. (Rom. 8:19-23)

Man, created in God's image, has the ability to reason and make rational choices based on moral values. Animals do not have these attributes and are at the mercy of man. (Isa. 1:18, Josh. 24:15; Deut. 30:19-20)

God, according to Scripture, gives man the right to use animals and plants, dead or alive, and utilize their products for his own benefit. (Gen. 9: 1-3; Acts 10:10-15)

Scripture speaks often of the humane care and keeping of animals and does not support the senseless destruction of life. (Deut. 25:4; Prov. 12:10)

Scripture condemns waste and the careless use of land, and it speaks often of man's suffering loss as a result of greed and plunder. (Isa. 5:8; Ezek. 24:18-19; Hab. 2:17)

The earth will continue to show signs of wear and depletion until the time God brings about a new earth. (Isa. 51:6; 2 Peter. 3:5-13)

Certainly there are other biblical concepts that have some application to this particular issue, but even these few indicate how difficult it is to resolve problems of this nature.

A further consideration here is the use of knowledge. Among the many things science and technology have done for us is to greatly increase the knowledge. And when knowledge increases, the importance of human responsibility increases. Many of our environmental crises have come about because of ignorance regarding the eventual consequences of various human activities. Once we know the results of our actions, however, we become responsible for our actions.

Because the whole cosmos suffers as a result of Adam's sin, we recognize that some human actions really come down to what we call "choosing the lesser of two evils." Nearly all human activities impact the natural world—many in a negative manner. Large-scale human industry in particular has the capacity to drastically alter the natural world. Just the simple growth of the human race and the resulting development required to provide food, clothing and shelter means the displacement or destruction of previously untouched nature. If not in the plan of God, this has long been a part of His sovereign will.

With the increase of knowledge, we now have a far greater understanding of man's impact on nature. Thus we now have a moral obligation to use that knowledge in a responsible manner. Some say that any human action which would result in the extinction of a species (an artificial, man-made distinction) is not acceptable. However, it is apparent that species extinction has always been a part of natural history—much of it not caused by man.

Is it possible that the disharmony brought about by the Fall of man is a major reason for this natural deterioration, and that until the restoration promised by the return of Christ, such negative consequences will be unavoidable? In other words, is the possible extinction of an animal species cause enough for human activity to be greatly altered? Perhaps this is merely one of the unavoidable facts of life in a fallen world.

Yet is it also possible that this knowledge is a gift of God intended to show us that our extravagant living and greed are raping nature and that to continue living in this manner will eventually bring about even greater human suffering and hardship? Perhaps it is time now for many industrial, agricultural, and commercial practices to be curtailed or ended before even greater harm is done to the ecosphere we share with all living things.

It is obvious that we Christians have a great challenge before us as we seek to be faithful to our God and to His Word regarding our stewardship of the earth. It is also obvious when we examine the controversy in the Pacific Northwest that many of these issues will not be easy to resolve. However, that must not deter us from taking on the task of applying biblical principles to all the interrelationships between man and the rest of the natural world.

Writer, photographer and naturalist, Dean Ohlman has been with RBC Ministries since 1996 as an editor, associate producer and script writer for Day of Discovery TV broadcast—and now writing and hosting the RBC website, “The Wonder of Creation.” Dean was founder and director of the early 1990’s evangelical environmental awareness organization, the Christian Nature Federation (CNF). This excerpt from the 1990 “CNF Perspective” is used by his permission.

Ed. note: Although this article was written several decades ago, controversies between environmental and economic concerns still confuse many who want do the right thing in God’s sight. The author’s thoughtful insights are still relevant today.





Growing Up Aware

By Linda Ridley

Igrew up in a home where the word “conservation” was never spoken, but always practiced. When we washed our hands, we half-filled the sink, soaped up and then rinsed under clear water. We learned that to wash under running water was wasteful, and soon it was second nature to close the sink stopper first.

My dad rigged up an extra tub to hold washing machine rinse water, so my mom could re-use the relatively clean water to rinse the next load. When the weather was extra dry, we saved that water still again, and hauled it in buckets to water the trees and bushes surrounding the house.

We rarely took long, leisurely showers. Water was precious, something to conserve.

We lived in a small rural town with no garbage pick-up, and always sorted the trash as we used it. Some went in the glass barrel, others in the metal barrel, and some in the burn barrel. Once or twice a year, Dad hauled these off to a local junkyard for recycling. Milk and pop came in glass bottles, which we washed and returned to the grocery store. Non-returnable glass jars were washed and re-used. Very little came in plastic containers.

We never questioned where to put trash when we weren't at home. We held onto it until we found a trashcan—period! To drop it on the ground was unthinkable. If we saw others litter, we were encouraged to pick it up ourselves.

My husband grew up in a home where cleanliness in the home and yard were also a priority. Trash was never allowed to accumulate and mar the environment.

Now as parents ourselves, my husband and I feel it is important to instill in our children a deep reverence for the earth, which God created for us and gave us charge of. We try to practice as well as preach environmentalism to our children. We practice the obvious forms of environmentalism: the children help us to save and recycle clear glass, aluminum, and newspapers. It is their job to smash pop cans and they share the profit from the recycling center. They know that we want to recycle plastic but can't find a local recycler. Instead, we try not to buy products in plastic.

We save all of our garbage, leaves, clippings and twigs and put them on a compost pile to put nutrients into our garden. The children take turns taking the garbage to the compost pile after every meal.

Our children, too, have learned to respect the land. They were stunned one day when someone in the car in front of us threw a trash-filled fast-food bag out the window. After asking us what had come out of the car window, they asked why the people threw it out. They were unable to fathom someone doing this rather than saving it for a trash can.

The heritage of saving water is being passed on to our children. We save our bath water and laundry rinse water to water our flowers, trees and gardens in the summer. We use organic soaps and cleaners. I hang my clothes on the line whenever I can to give them a sweet outdoor fresh scent rather than using artificially perfumed products.

I believe that the earth is being despoiled because of industrialism and greed. Therefore, along with practicing environmental care in our lives, I preach and try to practice self-sufficiency as much as possible. If we depend on others to produce everything for us, then we can't really control how those products are made, or what the production of these products does to the environment.

Although we live in a small town, we raise almost all of our own food. We made part of our back yard into vegetable and herb gardens in which we use only rotation and other organic controls. We also have raspberries, strawberries and some fruit trees. We never use chemicals, even on these. Picking off bad fruit as we find it, planting herbs with scents that repel

insects, and realizing that we don't need more than we can eat in one year are ways we control pests and get a harvest adequate for ourselves.

We buy chickens from a farmer who raises them in a clean, humane environment and uses untreated feed. We try to buy beef in the same manner. My husband eats red meat, but the children and I prefer whole grains and legumes with lots of fresh vegetables. For what we don't raise ourselves, we use mostly organic foods purchased at a natural food store.

Not long ago, my daughter and her friend were discussing the merits of peanut butter. My little girl felt hers was real, because it was freshly made from whole peanuts with nothing added. Her friend said hers was the real stuff, because it was a name brand (made with sugar, hydrogenated oils, salts and preservatives).

When the children ask why we don't have a new van like some of their friends do, I tell them we will never buy a brand new vehicle if I have my choice. I feel that to constantly buy new things encourages over-production. If we buy a used car, keep it well tuned and in good shape, then we are not causing as many cars to be produced.

I would like to altogether eliminate the need for gasoline-powered cars, for garden tools that use gasoline, and for gas heat and power. I hope that we are raising children who will care enough to support research in the effective, individual use of solar energy.

Recently, a friend's professor showed her class a map of all the buried nuclear and toxic wastes. He asked the students to suggest solutions. When my friend suggested that production of such wastes be stopped, he said that was a totally unrealistic idea, as it would interfere too much with our comfort, with industry and with the structure of society.

I want my children to see reality through God's eyes and not through men's. Reality is not the wasteful industrial society of today, a society that can't seem to understand that producing toxic wastes of any kind is unrealistic. It destroys what is real in the world that God so lovingly, artistically created for us.

Reality is this: that God made the world with certain controls and limitations. If we don't honor these, we suffer. I hope we are raising children—God's children—who will not only practice environmental care in their own lives, but also help fight the waste and greed that can destroy this world.

How to Raise an Environmentalist

- **Be one.** Never preach what you don't practice. Actions always speak louder than words.
- **Ask for God's guidance** to show you how you are damaging His creation, and how to better care for it. (In our lives, He has clearly shown us the need for eating organic foods and the dangers of chemicals of all kinds, so we now never buy chemical products that will be harmful to us or to the earth.)
- **Make it meaningful** to the children. Let them smash the cans, bundle the paper, go along to the recycling center and share in the profits.
- **Discuss landfills** with your children. Go to one on a family field trip.
- **Pray with your children** for God to protect and restore the earth until the day of His return.



Linda Ridley, a former high school home economics teacher, is a homemaker, active in her church, and an avid gardener. She homeschooled her four children, in association with the Northwestern Ohio Christian Homeschooling Organization.



A new look at the old ways:
Good Stewardship of Natural Resources

By Vern Hesterman

Most Christians are aware of our Lord's admonition in Mark and Luke to be good stewards. Do we practice good stewardship when we permit our natural resources to be used so voraciously that future generations—or even our own—may experience real shortages?

All over the developed world, humans expect the luxury of comfortable private auto transportation from home to portal, resulting in countless vehicles carrying one or two passengers. Convoys of monstrous semi-trucks travel the same routes, each with separate engines. Properly designed mass transit would be more efficient, albeit not always as convenient.

We demand more and more gasoline-powered entertainment in our leisure time. We devour our precious oil with war maneuvers and training exercises so that we will be prepared to protect our vital interests (one of which is that very source of oil).

We tear out woodlots and forests, and we drain our wetlands to have more land for farming. Then overproduction causes prices to fall too low. Then some of this farmland becomes building lots and those wetlands and forests are gone forever.

Modern farmers have been encouraged to boost production by the use of chemicals such as herbicides, pesticides, and commercial fertilizers. True, these practices boost production, but more and more evidence is mounting that they adversely affect our health.

How long can our soil remain rich and fertile? Is it being robbed of necessary nutrients by intensive farming practices and artificial additives? Perhaps some incurable illnesses such as cancer are caused because the soil is deficient in certain elements humans need. Soil in the Great Lakes region, for instance, lacks iodine. Before this was discovered and iodine added to the diets, people suffered from goiters.

Look at a cornstalk. We plant a tiny seed, and a miracle happens. A huge stalk with an ear or two comes out of the ground. We harvest it, leaving the ground bare. Surely some vital elements are taken from the soil to produce so much from one little seed.

Unlike in the past, today when hay and straw is harvested, often nothing is returned to the land. Commercial fertilizer is usually applied, but no one knows if it really replenished all the nutrients taken from the soil.

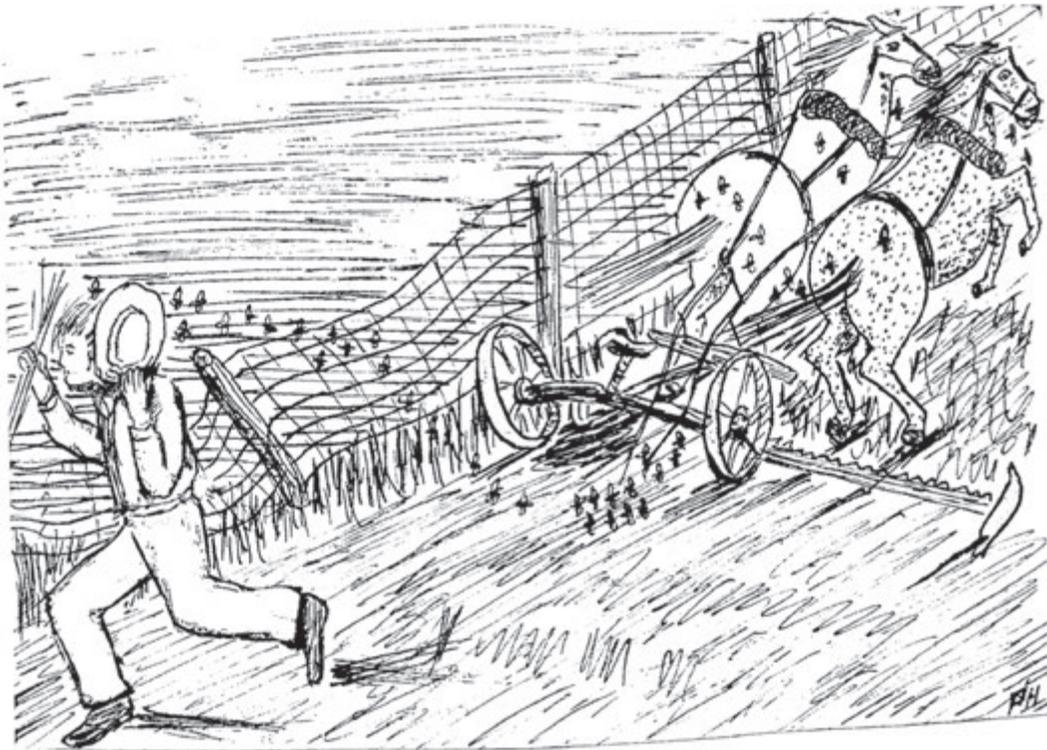
When I was a boy in the 1930s, most people practiced early conservation methods—unknowingly, perhaps, but effectively. Vehicles were only used for necessary transportation. Prepackaging was unheard of, produce was canned or preserved and the containers were recycled in the home. Farmers returned all crops back to the soil by plowing under the residue or the manure produced by the livestock, which ate the crop. One-fourth of every farm was left idle or in pasture every year, because all farmers practiced crop rotation.

I grew up on a farm and can still recall the concern of the local farmers when a neighbor replaced his horses with a tractor and began raising soybeans as a cash crop. “Why he’ll ruin the soil!” they said, shaking their heads. In their love of the land was concern for the well being of future generations.

Farming in pre-tractor days was much more labor-intensive than today, and every member of the family was expected to help, including the women and children. Farm life was, however, by no means dull. Neighbors gathered frequently to visit, and often enthusiastically participated in homemade ice-cream eating contests.

At harvest time, neighbors also helped each other with grain threshing rings. While the adults worked in the fields or prepared the meals, the young children played all day long. After the work was done, everyone feasted on sumptuous, delicious homemade food.

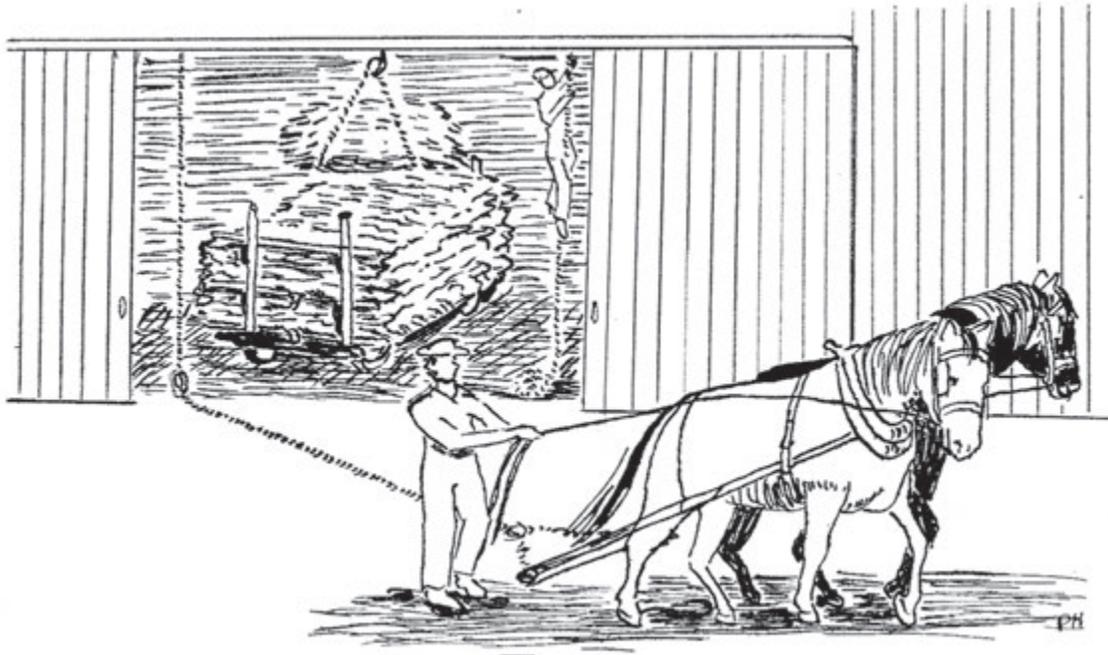
Farm life in those days was not all idyllic, though. People got kicked by horses or cows, chased or bitten by hogs, rams, roosters and ganders. Runaway teams of horses were also a frequent hazard, as I found out firsthand when I was 16.



While mowing hay with a horse and mule team, I somehow disturbed a bumblebee's nest. The bees swarmed all over the team, which suddenly took off on a wild gallop, throwing me off. The bumblebees immediately attacked me and I took off in the opposite direction, flailing away at them with my straw hat. The results of this episode were five broken fence posts, a broken hay mower, a severely stung and sick 16-year-old driver, and an unmowed field of hay.

A few years earlier, I had another close call as I was helping put up hay. We used a team of horses, with ropes and pulleys, to pull a sling full of hay from a loaded wagon up to the ceiling of the barn and over into the haymow. My job was to pull down on the end of the rope at the opposite side of the barn to return the empty slings,

Sometime during the day, I got a bright idea. I thought that if I held on to my end of the rope as the horses pulled the sling up, I would get a free ride up to the top of the barn. I figured that after the hay was deposited in the mow, my weight would bring the empty sling back down again.



However, as the horses began pulling their rope and I headed back towards the barn ceiling, I realized the flaw in my plan—I had misjudged how much rope would be pulled up and I was ascending too fast. From my vantage point, it didn't look like the horses would stop before I reached the pulley high above. I loosened my grip to slide back down, and ended up with severe rope burns on my hands and a sheepish look on my face. That was better, though, than being pulled right on through that pulley at the highest point inside the barn!

There's no question that progress has made farming easier, more efficient and in some ways less dangerous than in the days of runaway horses and high-swinging hay slings. However, the old-fashioned lifestyles of our grandparents and great-grandparents (and many of today's Amish) may have lasting merit even in these modern times. Their careful use of natural resources provides an example of good stewardship for Christians today. Someday, perhaps soon, progress may come to mean re-examining and returning to some of those old ways.

Vern Hesterman, a member of St. Paul's AALC Lutheran Church has been a high school teacher, athletic director, coach and guidance counselor [redacted]. He has also planted hundreds of trees and shrubs, built a pond and wildlife area, and recently planted 20 more pine trees on former farmland near his home. Although officially retired, he still helps write and publish a community newsletter.



Living Sabbatically

By Gerard Reed, Ph.D.

Since God rested on the seventh day of creation, entering into an eternal Sabbath of delight at His work, He told His people to remember the Sabbath, to make it holy.

To live sabbatically means awakening to an acute awareness of God-in-Creation. The Creation account reveals that God rested on the seventh day. He wasn't tired. He didn't need to recover His strength. He rested in order to enjoy what He'd made. Having called into being creatures of great worth, God determined to reflect upon, to interact with, and to appreciate His work. God freely created, which is to say "out of love."

Rightly read, the Old Testament calls for three different kind of Sabbath: one day out of seven, one year out of seven, and a culminating jubilee year to consummate a 50-year cycle. This plan provided for rest and restoration for humans for the land.

The reality of the Sabbath is this: while work is necessary, it is not the one thing necessary. We need to stop the compulsive busyness which characterizes our normal routines. We need to slow our furious quest for money and mansions. We need to just stop and be God's children.

Living sabbatically, resting from labor, resting in the Lord's land, just letting creation be, pursuing simple activities that add nothing to our bank accounts—all illustrate ecological wisdom and surrender to God's will.

Though lots of folks rest once a week in our society, the second sabbatical commanded in Scripture is almost nowhere practiced. God commanded His people to rest every seventh year, and to allow creation itself to rest as well. Were this universally practiced, we'd have had far less

bad news on Earth Day, 1990. Earth's soil is a marvelous organic mix of living creatures. Since farming takes nutrients from the soil, it needs periodic rest and restoration. Good farming rests the soil. Good cultures encourage and support good agriculture.

We can't very easily reinstate the ancient society which received the sabbatical commands. We can, however, apply to our lives today some relevant principles:

1. Recognize God's Lordship/Ownership

When we once recognize that everything is really God's, we're less compulsive about work and ownership. Pausing regularly to celebrate the Lord's Day, in fact, greeting every day as the Lord's Day, is a way of worshipping.

2. Respect and revere God's handiwork

The older I get, the more I agree with Malcom Muggeridge, who discovered in his advanced years, that few pleasures exceed simply watching each day's sunrise...each day's sunset. Certainly it's a great joy to see sunrises and sunsets—if they happened twice a year we'd be overwhelmed by their beauty. Since they're routine, we fail to value them. We need—most of us at least—to learn the simple joy of just enjoying and respecting the world's beauty.

3. Reject consumerism (covetousness)

Though not as obviously destructive as alcoholism, America's commitment to getting and spending—a mix of workaholism and consumerism—may be more deeply injurious to the spirit. We live in a consumer society. To consume means to use up, to devour; earlier generations called tuberculosis “consumption” for it literally sucked life out of a person. And our record is clear: we're devouring the earth. Consumers make waste, and we're wasting our only home. Were we to live sabbatically, we'd scoff at advertisements' lies, for we know that “man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which comes from the mouth of the Lord.” Regularly, routinely, daily, we'd stop the work-harder-spend-more binge of consumerism.

4. Redistribute wealth

The Bible clearly calls for justice—the proper distribution of the earth’s resources. Yet it nowhere insists that everyone should have exactly the same amount. Sabbatical principles indicate how we can rightly distribute earth’s bounty.

For one thing, if we don’t work all the time, there’s work for others to do so they make their own livings. When we give away our surplus (the “gleanings” left on the edges of the fields), we help the needy. When we give tithes and offerings to the Church, we help money circulate in compassionate ways. When we support responsible environmental groups, we redistribute our wealth in healing, environmentally wise ways. Sabbatical living means knowing when enough is enough, and then sharing earth’s dividends with others.

5. Relax and be what we are

“Man does not live by bread alone,” Jesus said. Work must be kept in its rightful place; it should be integrated with, merely a part of, our being the persons we’re called to be.

6. Restore our Lost Perfection

Adam and Eve, before their fall from the Garden of Eden, lived a meaningful life of leisure. They didn’t survive by the sweat of their brows—they simply accepted the riches of paradise. So, in a related sense, the Sabbath gives us a taste of Paradise—the quiet, at-ease condition for which God made us.

I am a Wesleyan, and we believe in Christian “perfection”, becoming the men and women God designed us to be through God’s gracious delivery from sin’s penalty and bondage. We believe that we can cooperate with God in reconstituting and restoring the world He originally designed. And this we do, primarily by learning to live sabbatically, following the pattern of Paradise.

Dr. Paul Brand, a great Christian who spent many years as a missionary doctor in India, fears the very well-spring of life may be perishing. While he had been tending needy lepers, the land had been despoiled. He would give up medicine, he said recently, if he could have some influences on environmental policies. “The world will die from lack of soil and pure

water long before it will die from lack of antibiotics or surgical skill and knowledge,” he warns.

Perhaps, just perhaps, if millions of other believers would catch a vision of what could be done to heal the earth as well as human bodies, the environmental crisis could be eased and ultimately ended.

Dr. Gerard Reed is a scholar, writer and retired Nazarene college chaplain and professor. This excerpt is from his manuscript Holy His Land: Caring for Creation, © 1990 Gerard Reed. Used by permission of author.

“I believe in my heart that faith in Jesus Christ can and will lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for the well-being of the birds in our backyards, the fish in our rivers, and every living creature on the face of the earth.”

John Wesley

For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, 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.

Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household, and the alien as well, may be refreshed.

EXODUS 23:10-12



As We Wait

By Gloria John Splittgerber

*For the creation waits with eager longing
for the revealing of the sons of God.*

Romans 8:19

The oil spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska was another sad example of God's created earth suffering at the hands of God's people. God gave Adam and Eve and their descendants' responsibility to care for the earth. Throughout history, the management has been disastrous, for just as sin damaged our relationship with our Creator, so it damaged our relationship with the creation.

Someday, this negative situation will be reversed. We will be free of the bondage of sin. We will have sinless physical bodies to go along with our redeemed spirits that have been washed clean by the blood of Jesus. Likewise, the world will be free of physical decay. The environment will again enjoy the perfect balance that was destroyed in the Garden of Eden. Until then, we—and nature—wait with eager expectations.

From Christ in Our Home, ©1990, Augsburg Publishing. Used by permission.



“For in the true nature of things,
if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious
than if it were made of gold and silver.”

Martin Luther

On Trees

By Vicki Hesterman

I discovered early that a sturdy tree branch high above my usual world was the perfect place to daydream. And if I didn't feel like climbing, I could relax with a book and an apple in the shaded sanctuary of our big old sycamore. The giant of a tree had known dozens of rough embraces from the neighborhood children who safely reached its home-free trunk during twilight games of Hide and Seek.

When I was growing up in northwestern Ohio, you couldn't walk a country mile without passing thick groves of trees and natural woodlots, which was just fine with me. Those woods were lovely, dark and deep—full of interesting creatures and fascinating adventures.

As long as I live, I will not forget the clear, brisk day when I returned home early from school, and saw to my horror that most of our trees were gone. I ran back to the once tree-lined “crick” a quarter-mile behind our house, and just wept. All were dead—the bog oaks, the magnificent elms, the gnarled old wild cherry, apple and pear trees. There they lay, their branches stretching up towards the sky.

My family was as stunned as I was. These trees were beloved old friends; we would never cut them down like that. We discovered later that a county work crew had passed through the area that morning, cleaning the drainage waterways that flowed through private land, and cutting down any troublesome trees. It turned out to be a bureaucratic mistake, which was little consolation. With no notice, our trees were gone. Today, trees once again grow along that little country creek. Some sprang up wild from the seeds of the original trees; others we carefully

planted with hope. This experience affected us all profoundly; as adults, we all plant trees, as many as possible, wherever we live.

To travel this country is to pass by thousands of acres of woods and forests—trees of all kinds. The lush hardwoods of Michigan thrive, from the shores near Sleeping Bear Dunes to the isolated northern grandeur of Tahquamenon Falls. In Wyoming's stunning Tetons, tall pines line Jenny Lake and shelter the moose and deer that live in the shadows of the mountains.

Maples grow crimson in the Minnesota autumn and attract singing birds all year long. In a photograph now framed on my wall, an orange-breasted robin huddles on a snow-covered branch, resting just outside my bedroom window one frigid Minnesota morning.



Up north, in the unspoiled wilderness of the Boundary Waters, velvety green islands are perfect places to land a canoe, lean back against a rugged pine, and marvel at the serenity and the smell of the air. A bicycle ride through rural Georgia in the springtime can be an unforgettable visual experience, filled with delicate pink and white dogwood blossoms, magnificent creamy magnolia trees in full flower, and rich purple redbuds. Sometimes the kudzu vines grow over entire trees, creating eerie and unearthly shapes.

And in California, the trees—from the awe-provoking redwoods and sequoias of the north to the no-nonsense palms and torrey pines of the south—help filter the air and preserve some natural beauty in a state of ever-growing freeways, congestion and air-pollution alerts. Incredibly, trees thrive on our waste, carbon dioxide, and produce fresh, cool, clean air. We need trees; they need us.

When I first moved to a delightful seaside city bounded by the Pacific Ocean, a big harbor and several lovely bays, I lived a bit inland, on a canyon. As much as I love the sea, I love trees more.

Every morning, when I opened the curtains to look out over the vast

expanse of greenery sheltering hawks and rabbits and coyotes, wildlife thriving in the middle of a big city, I was refreshed and renewed. My reverent response to the simple beauty of the trees was, and is, wordless praise to the Lord of all creation. Their very existence exemplifies the creative, practical nature of our God.

When I see a tree, I see a wondrously intricate organism that, while alive, provides beauty, clean air and a home for wild creatures. I know that later its body and branches may become paper for books and wood for shelter. Some say they need a miracle to really believe that God exists. When I see a tree, I have seen that miracle.

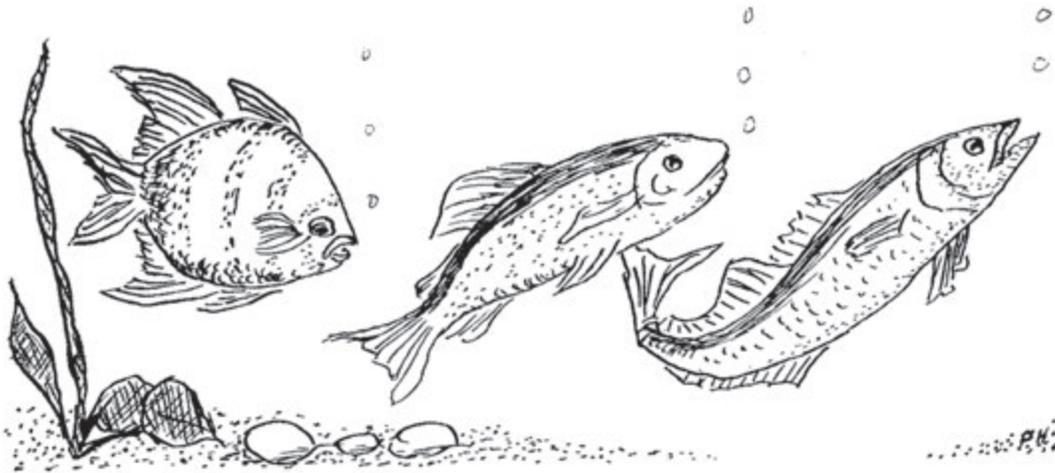
Vicki Hesterman is a writer, teacher, photographer and editor with roots in Ohio, now living in San Diego, California.

“God is entirely and personally present in the wilderness,
in the garden, in the field.”

“Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection,
not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.”

Martin Luther





Are We Responsible for the Earth?

By John Emil Halver, Ph.D.

The environment is the whole system that supports an ecosystem. Fish are one part of it. Water is essential because it's the major solvent for all of our life processes. As the world's population increases and as technology develops, we have more and more effluent materials entering our water systems. These vary from highly eutrophied ponds and oxidation sewage systems to pristine mountain lakes that are being affected by acid rains.

Many of these water bodies have the capability to recover. Lake Washington in the Seattle area was almost lost through eutrophication and effluent contamination. It required serious efforts to change the loading of its water environment. But Lake Washington has recovered and is now productive.

What bothers me is the stewardship of our resources. I am not a person who feels that we can live in a no-risk world. We have logical risks that we accept all the time. But we are having an impact on our natural resources. When we dump wastes into our rivers and they spill into the sea, the water quality changes. The Rhine River in Europe now is not the

Rhine during the days of Charlemagne when the river had salmon runs. This change came about because of the needs of an expanding industrial world.

Parts of our environment are decaying faster than they can be regenerated. Forests in the Middle East and in Africa are being chopped down for fuel, but they are not being replaced fast enough. But they cannot be replaced without an adequate source to be used instead of the forests. Tension will also exist between meeting our industrial needs and preserving our environment.



To subdue (as in God's command in Genesis 1:28 to "subdue the earth") does not mean to abuse. I think the earth's natural resources are here for our wise and judicious use, not for our irrational or selfish use. A balance is needed between the use of fertilizers in agriculture and the increase of phosphates and nitrates and other elements needed for agricultural production.

Many of us do not want to sit down and face the issues in life and the questions in the Bible. We prefer to defer them or to rationalize our complacency. These questions are personal; they are to be settled between us and God. They deal with whether or not we are good stewards of all the talents and resources that God has given to us as a nation and as individuals. When we examine these questions, most of us, including me, have woefully inadequate answers.

We have to study and look behind the sensational or dogmatic statements made by zealots of one program or another. Ask sincere questions, including "How big or severe is the problem?" "Where do I fit in?" and "What can be done?" Couple your questions with concern. Commit yourself, make a pledge: "I will do this and change my way of life a little bit here." Then tell your friends.

Plant a tree. Maintain a garden. Keep your lawn in shape with a minimal use of chemicals.

Don't be careless. For example, our streets and waters are littered with plastic wraps, jugs and containers. Start at home. Plastic can be recycled and reused. Also collect and recycle all your glass containers, aluminum cans and newspapers. It takes a little effort, but if everybody did this, we would see a major change.

To help combat the attack on our ecosystem, my wife and I try to be frugal and to keep our living standards from being exorbitant. We live in Seattle, but also have a 30-acre farm in the Columbia River Gorge area where 10 acres are kept as a woodlot for deer, turkeys and grouse. It is an environment that ensures a quality of natural life. We seed our fields with subterranean clover to maintain the natural nitrogen fixation so that we don't have to use so much inorganic fertilizer. We have some 40 fruit trees and use a lime-sulphur base for winter spray; we do minimal spraying to cut down on insect infestation.

My wife and I try to be reasonable stewards of our property, our lives and our time. We are involved in our church, and we try to be good neighbors and take part in community events.

I believe that God is the author of truth and logic and that science is the precision of this truth. I see no conflict between science and theology, and I believe that science and truth are on a convergent path.

I envision exciting solutions for many things. I am confident that we will have a breakthrough in using solar energy and in generating fusion energy. We rely too much on oil and gas. They are fine for certain applications, but we are not using them effectively. I also think that we will see improvements in the use of fision energy, which is one of the safest power supplies we have. Christians can help shape environmental legislation. I think we can influence government officials; one person can make a difference if he or she draws enough attention to a problem.

We need to stop and think how wonderfully fortunate we are. I believe that the world was created by God and that He has a concern for it. When evil occurred, God came to change it through Jesus Christ.



Those who believe in Christ claim him as their personal Savior. Since I believe that, I have hope.

We do not understand many things about the world, but as we unravel them, we can use this knowledge in a positive manner. If we are thankful for our existence and the environment in which we live, we will be good stewards of the resources. We don't know how long we will have to use them.

John Emil Halver, Ph. D., known by fish scientists throughout the world as "the father of fish nutrition" is a member of the National Academy of Sciences. Professor emeritus of nutrition in the College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle, he has been trying for 40 years to "help people around the world improve their economy and their food availability and protein supplies so that they can grow and develop normally." Dr. Halver, a Methodist, feels that some Christians use the excuse that Christ is coming again, so they don't need to be concerned about using up the earth's resources. He says that "whether He returns now or 1,000 years from now, we had better have a plan of responsible stewardship."

Dr. Halver's article is from an interview with Richard Greene, Decision Magazine, © November 1989 Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Used by permission.





Part Four



Who Can We Call?
What Should We Read?
Where Do We Write?

Resources

The following organizations and institutes offer resources to help and encourage you to become more active in practicing and teaching environmental stewardship. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list—please research local organizations. It gives you a place to start. Check also with your state and federal government websites such as the Department of Natural Resources and National Parks for additional information.

Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies

The mission of Au Sable Institute is the integration of knowledge of the Creation with Biblical principles for the purpose of bringing the Christian community and the general public to a better understanding of the Creator and the stewardship of God's Creation. All of its programs and activities are structured to allow, and are conducted for, promotion of Christian environmental stewardship. The four main programs include Academic, Community, Retreats and Conferences, Outreach and Resources.

Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies provides university-level courses with transferable credits to over 50 colleges and universities, the framework and services for sustainable community-building, environmental education and restoration for school children and adults, facilities for community and environmental organizations, community and regional conferences and retreats, and outreach services. Au Sable does this in the Great Lakes Forest of northern Michigan, Puget Sound in the Pacific Northwest, in South Florida, and South India.

Au Sable also has a Graduate Fellowship program designed to offer an understanding of Christian environmental stewardship commensurate with their work toward the Ph.D. degree in various fields. It also provides internships across the globe.

Au Sable Institute

7526 Sunset Trail NE • Mancelona, MI 49659
(231) 587-8686 • (231) 587-5353 FAX • E-mail: admissions@ausable.org
Web: www.ausable.org

Pacific Rim Campus/Au Sable Institute

180 Parker Road • Coupeville, WA 98239
(360) 678-5586 • E-mail: pacificrim@ausable.org

A Rocha: Christians in Conservation

A Rocha is an international Christian nature conservation organization, whose name comes from the Portuguese for “the Rock.” A Rocha projects are frequently cross-cultural in character, and share a community emphasis, with a focus on science and research, practical conservation and environmental education. The international cross-cultural strength of the Christian community has been making a unique contribution, not least as communities struggle to reconcile the need to protect biodiversity with their hopes for sustainable development.

A Rocha projects have a community emphasis, bringing together people from widely differing backgrounds to work towards common goals.

In the 20 countries where they work, A Rocha is identified by five core commitments and to a practical outworking of each: Christian, conservation, community, cross-cultural and cooperation.

A Rocha USA

PO Box 1338 • Fredericksburg, TX 78624

(830) 992-7940 • Email: usa@arocha.org • Web: www.arocha.org

Care of Creation

Care of Creation is an environmental organization formed in 2005 to bring together two important themes: Love for God’s People, and love for God’s world. Also a missions organization, it teaches that environmental problems are sin problems and that the Church of Jesus Christ is the world’s best hope for dealing with this crisis. “Simply stated, we believe that missions and care for God’s creation belong together.”

Care of Creation USA, Inc. • P.O. Box 44582

Madison, WI 53744 • (608) 233-7048

Email: info@careofcreation.org • Web: www.careofcreation.net

Christians for Earthcare

Christians for Earthcare (formerly Christians for Environmental Awareness) is a volunteer group that speaks to schools, sponsors book giveaways, and speaks on Christian stewardship of the environment

Christians for Earthcare PO Box 333 Napoleon OH 43545

PO Box 6788 • San Diego, CA 92166

Web: www.Christiansforearthcare.org

Email: christianearthcare@me.com • info@christiansforearthcare.org

Floresta PLANT WITH PURPOSE

Floresta (now Plant With Purpose) was founded to bring a holistic approach to the fight against poverty that includes environmental, economic, as well as spiritual transformation. This three-part approach is the key to creating lasting, sustainable change; a variety of techniques such as micro-credit loans, business skills training and community development are used to empower the poor to solve their own problems.

Plant With Purpose (Floresta) began in the Dominican Republic in 1984 and has expanded its program to include more than 187 villages in Haiti, Mexico, Thailand, Burundi, and Tanzania.

Floresta USA

4903 Morena Blvd, Suite 1215 • San Diego, California 92117

(858) 274-3718 • Toll-free: (800) 633-5319

Fax: (858)274-3728 • E-mail: info@floresta.org

Web: www.plantwithpurpose.org • www.floresta.org

Flourish

The mission of Flourish is to inspire and equip churches to better love God by reviving human lives and the landscapes on which they depend. A recent Barna poll indicates that 90 percent of evangelicals in America would like to see Christians do more to care for God’s creation. But most don’t know what to do next to advance responsible stewardship. Thousands of churches in America are looking for teaching on the care for God’s creation that is theologically sound and that can fit into the programs and priorities of the local church. Flourish is committed to that focused mission.

750 Glenwood Ave SE • Atlanta, GA 30316

(404) 414-7906 • E-mail: admin@flourishonline.org

Web: www.flourishonline.org

Evangelical Environmental Network

The Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN) seeks to educate, inspire, and mobilize Christians in their effort to care for God’s creation, to be faithful stewards of God’s provision, and to advocate for actions and policies that honor God and protect the environment. The Evangelical Environmental Network’s approach to “the environment” is that it is actually a part of God’s creation—of which humanity is also a part. Humanity’s relationship to creation needs to be based on a Biblical understanding of God’s relationship

to creation. “Our first task is to understand Christ’s relationship to creation since he is our Lord. Our relationship with all of creation must be in keeping with Christ’s relationship with all of creation.”

EEN’s work is grounded in the Bible’s teaching on the responsibility of God’s people to “tend the garden” and in a desire to be faithful to Jesus Christ and to follow Him. EEN publishes materials to equip and inspire individuals, families, and churches; and seeks to educate and mobilize people to make a difference in their churches and communities, and to speak out on national and international policies that affect our ability to preach the Gospel, protect life, and care for God’s Creation.

EEN publishes *Creation Care*, a Christian environmental quarterly journal, provides educational and inspirational materials and resources to individuals and churches; provides theological and spiritual guidance on Christian responsibility in the light of biblical teaching on the care of creation and the reality of modern environmental degradation; and organizes and participates in public education and advocacy campaigns.

680 I Street SW

Washington, DC 20024

(202) 903-0209 • Web: www.creationcare.org

Email: een@creationcare.org

Habitat for Humanity ReStores

Habitat ReStores are outlets that accept donated goods for resale. While every ReStore is a little different, most focus on home improvement goods—furniture, home accessories, building materials and appliances. These donated goods are sold to the general public at a fraction of the retail price to help local affiliates fund the construction of Habitat homes within their communities.

Habitat for Humanity International

121 Habitat Street, Americus, GA 31709-3498

(800) 422-4828 • Web: www.habitat.org

www.habitat.org/env/restores

Restoring Eden

Restoring Eden is a rapidly growing network of Christians working to become a grassroots movement, dedicated to empowering Christians to

engage in faithful stewardship of the natural world as a biblical, moral, and wise value. A Christian ministry dedicated to serving Christ by working with God's people to be a voice for God's creation and all those who depend on it, Restoring Eden lives out the biblical mandate to "speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves" (Proverbs 31:8) as advocates for natural habitats, wild species and indigenous subsistence cultures.

Restoring Eden's mission is to make hearts bigger, hands dirtier and voices stronger by rediscovering our biblical call to 'speak out for those that cannot speak for themselves' (Proverbs 31:8) as advocates for wild habitats, native species and indigenous culture. We are Bible-believing Christians who strive to walk in justice, mercy, humility and other-mindedness. Our work can best be divided into three categories: nature appreciation, environmental stewardship and public advocacy.

Restoring Eden is growing church support in three major issues.

1. Getting serious on ending human-caused global climate change
2. Strengthening the Endangered Species Act to restore creation to fruitfulness
3. Justice and human rights for subsistence tribal cultures

PO Box 877 • La Center, WA 98629

(360) 574.8230 • Email: info@restoringeden.org

Web: www.restoringeden.org

Wonder of Creation

Wonder of Creation is a blogsite sponsored by Radio Bible College Ministries (Grand Rapids, Michigan) that seeks to explore the majesty of God's creation and celebrate its beauty and wonder. Through creation, God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—are clearly seen and serve as a motivation for our worship and for acknowledging our responsibility to be good stewards of His good creation (Romans 1:20).

Hosted by Dean Ohlman, who has been a writer and photojournalist for mission agencies, Christian universities, and script writer and associate TV producer for the RBC Ministries' Day of Discovery broadcast, the website encourages active participation.

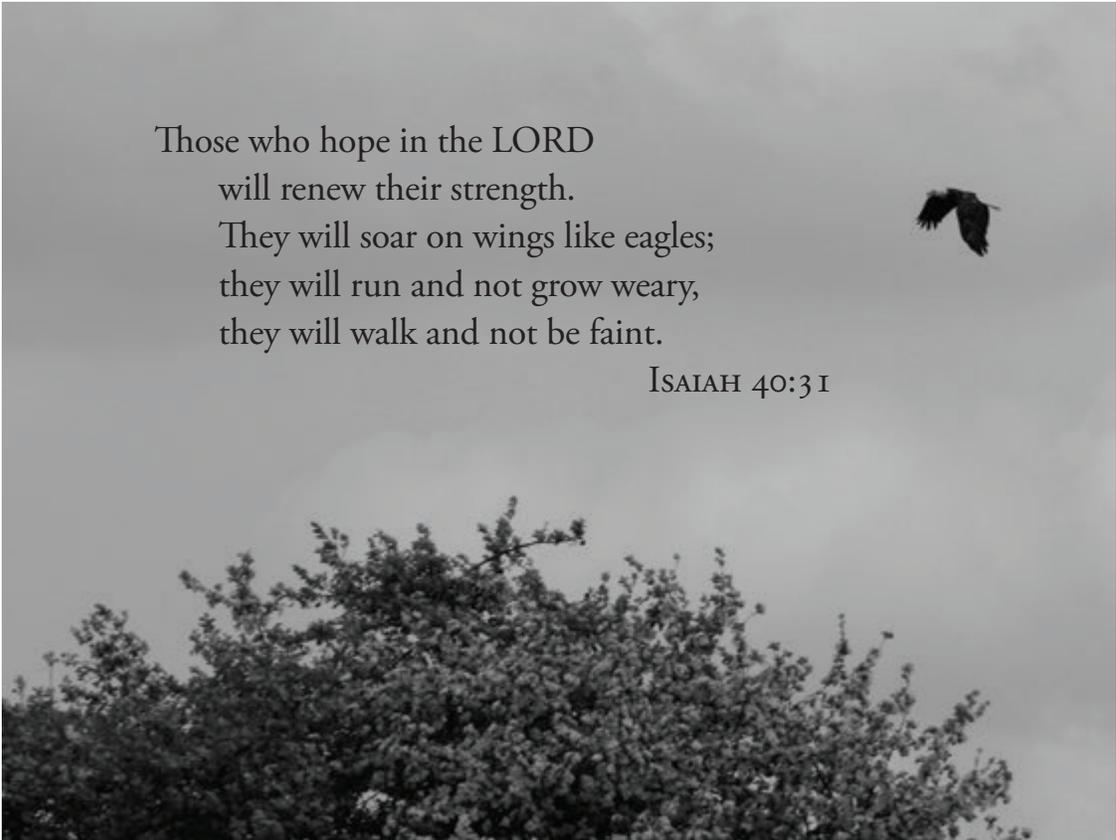
Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours (1Chronicles 29:11).

Web: www.wonderofcreation.org

“We cannot be excused when we have not
at all considered God
in His works. He does not at all leave Himself
without witness here...

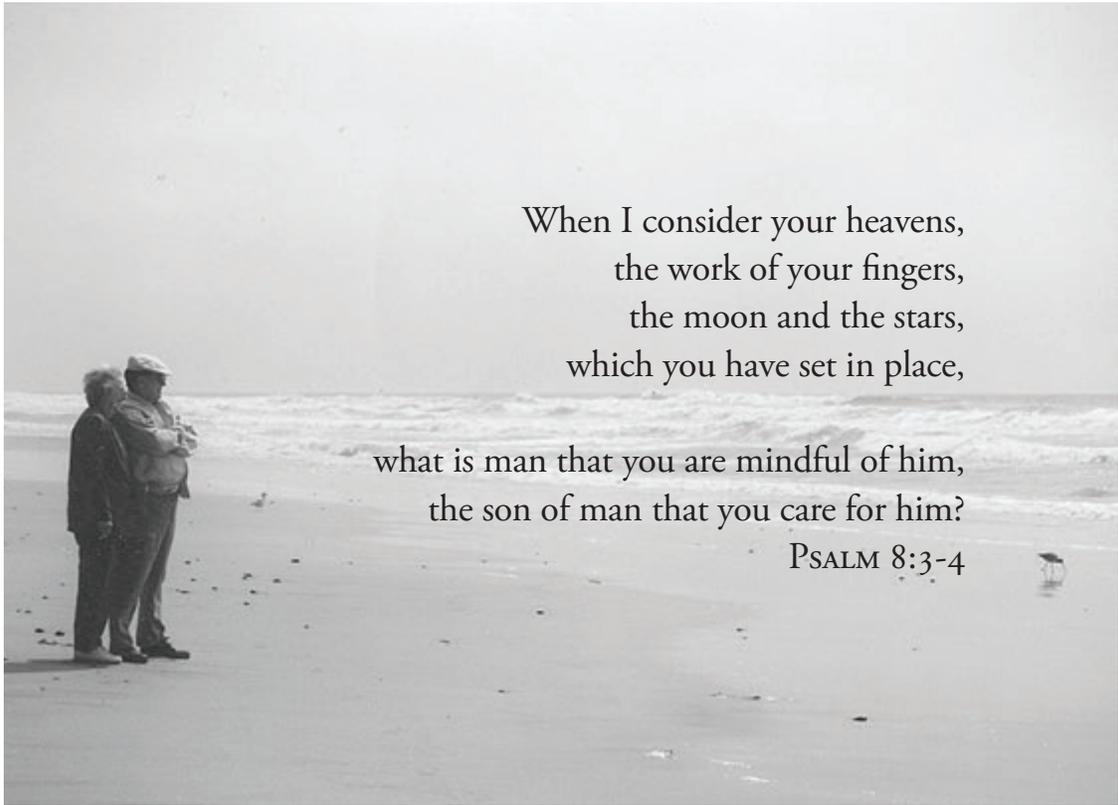
Let us then only open our eyes and
we will have enough arguments for the grandeur of God,
so that we may learn to honor Him as He deserves.”

John Calvin
(1509-1564)



Those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

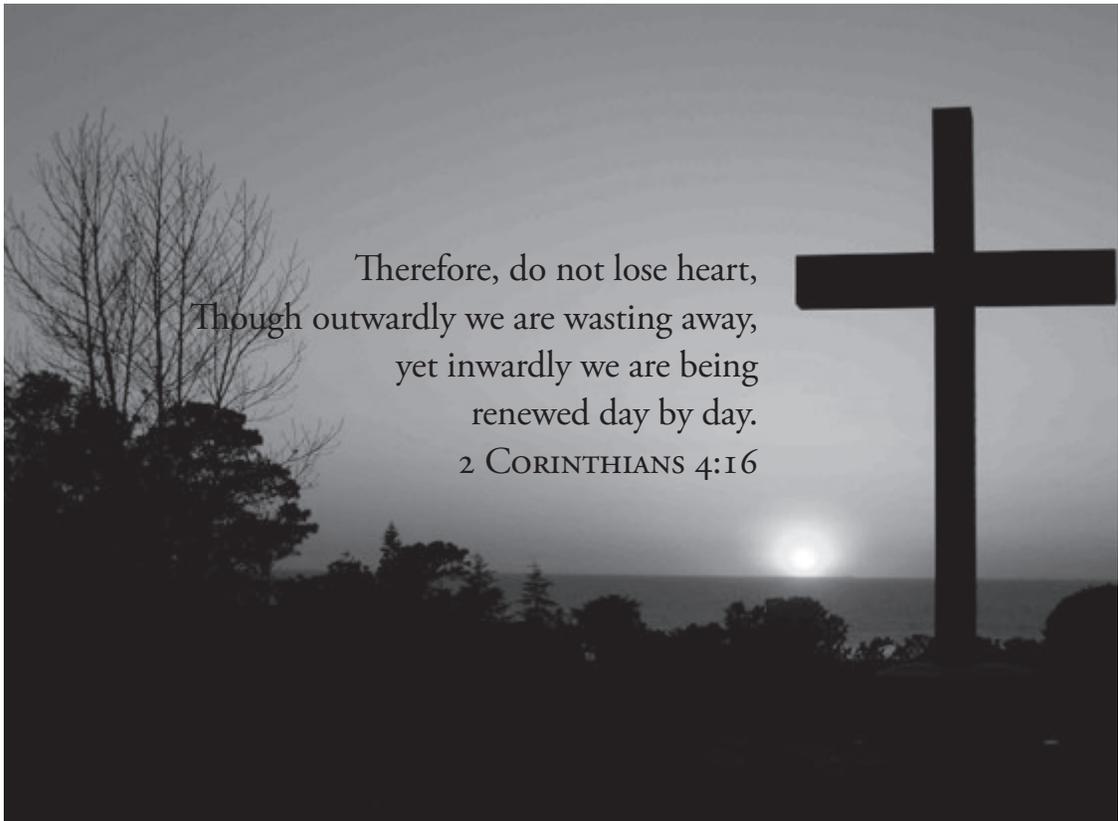
ISAIAH 40:31



When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,

what is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

PSALM 8:3-4



Therefore, do not lose heart,
Though outwardly we are wasting away,
yet inwardly we are being
renewed day by day.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16

For Further Reading

This list, both recent and classic works, has examples of the many informative books now available on the environmental crisis and issues, and help you determine what you can do to help. Some of these are theological studies of the issue; some are practical, down-to-earth handbooks, and others are collections of essays. Check at your library, bookstore or search the Internet for relevant books and websites.

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Brand, Paul and Philip Yancey. *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*. Zondervan, 1989.

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Brown, Lester, et. al. *State of the World*. Washington, D.C.: World watch Institute, 1989.

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Dillard, Annie. *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek: A Mystical Excursion into the Natural World*. New York: Bantam Books, 1975.

EarthWorks Group. 50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth. Berkeley: Earthworks Press, 1989, 1995 (21st Century Edition by John Javna, et al, published by Hyperion, 2008)

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- Fox, Matthew. *Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality*. Santa Fe: Bear & Co., 1983.
- Global 2000 Report to the President*. Report prepared by the council on Environmental Quality and the Department of Energy, 1982.
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- Hesterman, Vicki, ed., *The Earth is the Lord's: Handle with Care*. Napoleon, OH: Accord Publishing House, 1989, 1990. Accord Books, 2010
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If your eye is pure
there will be sunshine
in your soul.
Matthew 6:22



If you would like to order copies of *The Earth is the Lord's: Handle with Care*, you can order them from the publisher:

Accord Books/Accord Publishing House,
PO Box 333, Napoleon, OH 43545
Web: www.Accordbooks.com
Email: info@accordbooks.com

The book is also available at the website, www.christiansforearthcare.org.

Group and student discounts available. All profits are used for education and book giveaways at schools and events such as Earth Day.

