

EARTH: A RESOURCE TO BE USED OR A TREASURE TO BE PRESERVED?

1. We are _____ to _____ creation as a gift from God.
(Gen 1:28, 2:15, 3:17-19)
2. Creation is intended to be a _____ of God's _____. (Ps 19:1-3, Rom 1:19-20)
3. We are to _____ our _____. (Matt 22:36-40)
4. Our behavior _____ to what we _____ about creation. (Col 1:9-2)
5. Creation is a _____ not a _____. (Ex 20:3, Rom 1:22-25)

Genesis 1:28

^[28] And God blessed them (Adam and Eve). And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (ESV)

Genesis 2:15

^[15] The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. (ESV)

Genesis 3:17–19

^[17] And to Adam he said, ... cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ^[18] thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ^[19] By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (ESV)

Psalms 19:1–3

- ^[1] The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
- ^[2] Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.
- ^[3] There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard. (ESV)

Romans 1:19–20

^[19] For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ^[20] For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (ESV)

Matthew 22:36–40

^[36] "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ^[37] And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ^[38] This is the great and first commandment. ^[39] And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ^[40] On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." (ESV)

Colossians 1:9–12

^[9] And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ^[10] so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ^[11] being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ^[12] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. (ESV)

Exodus 20:3

^[3] "You shall have no other gods before me. (ESV)

Romans 1:22–25

^[22] Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ^[23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

^[24] Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ^[25] because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (ESV)

The Earth: A Resource To Be Used Or A Treasure To Be Preserved?

November 21, 2021

Open: Do you tend to recycle? Why or why not?

Read & Discuss: Genesis 1:28; 2:15; 3:17-19

1. In Genesis 1:28, God tells Adam and Eve to “subdue” and have “dominion” over the earth. The word “dominion” means “the power to rule.” Based on what you know of God’s rule and considering God’s comment in Genesis 2:15, what do you think God intended with these commands in verse 28? In such an ideal world, how would you describe man’s relationship with the rest of God’s creation?
2. After God cursed the world, how did mankind’s relationship with the world change? What stayed the same?
3. How has the presence of sin changed man’s ability to be successful at fulfilling God’s commands in Genesis 1:28 and 2:15? Are there ways in which Christians should view our relationship with the world differently than non-Christians? Explain.

Read & Discuss: Psalm 19:1-2

4. How would you paraphrase the point being made in Psalm 19:1-2? When you look at creation, what does it tell you about God?
5. If the earth is God’s creation, intended for our good and His glory, what is an appropriate perspective on caring for the earth? Appreciation of God’s creation should move us to worship God. How do we know when we’re actually worshipping the creation rather than the Creator?

Read & Discuss: Matthew 22:36-40

6. How does the command to “love your neighbor as yourself” intersect with caring for the earth? What are some examples of ways we can love our neighbor by caring for the earth? Are there ways in which caring for the earth could ever violate this command? Explain.

Apply: How would you summarize the proper biblical perspective on mankind’s relationship with God’s creation? What will you do to better put that perspective into practice?

Pray: Pray that God’s people would take proper care of God’s creation. Pray for wisdom as we use the earth’s resources. Pray more people would look at creation and marvel at the Creator.

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