

How to Use Environmental Topics to Explain the Gospel in Today's Language

Topics related to "the Environment" have dominated public discussion and policy-making for decades. While the sub-topics have been changing, ranging from the ozone hole, radioactive waste, global cooling (1970s) to global warming, the subtext has remained the same: Does life on this planet have a future? In this workshop, we will see that the Bible has a lot to say about the environment. The anxiety many people feel about the environment needs to be taken seriously and addressed with the agenda God has given for the here and now, and with the hope God has provided for the future.

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I. Introduction

A. We have a situation. The Bible has addressed it in no uncertain terms.

B. Part of the problem:

1. Christians without passion for creation and Creator
2. Christians that exploit humanity's unique position rather than understand we are stewards of creation

C. Part of the solution:

1. Christians have a reason why creation should be preserved: because it was created "good".
2. Christians believe that God wants to heal and preserve life.
3. Christians believe in human salvation.

II. Examples of prominent Christian researchers that actively work for the preservation of the creation

III. Stories from of old we better listen to today

- A. Approx. 1500 BC: Exploitation leads to ecological catastrophes
- B. Exploitation, slavery, infanticide, obstruction of religious freedom
- C. The Ten Plagues of Egypt = ecological catastrophes

IV. The “First” and other Worlds

V. Christianity's contribution to solving the environmental crisis: steps and motivation

A. Steps

Step 1: Confession of personal guilt leads to positive change

Step 2: Live in harmony with humans and God

Step 3: The hope that gets us going

B. Motivation for commitment now

VI. What can we do?

A. Some personal examples

B. Goal: preservation of life individually and in its diversity.

Further Reading and Listening

- Peter Imming *Ist diese Welt noch zu retten? Umweltzerstörung und Lebenserhaltung* (2002), sold out, as pdf only: <http://clv-server.de/pdf/255503.pdf?7>
- Talk by Timothy Keller (New York City): "Can Faith be Green?"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2ThU17l_Rw
- Robert S. White (Editor) *Creation in Crisis: Christian Perspectives on Sustainability* (2009)
- J. Moo, J. A. Moo *Creation Care: A Biblical Theology of the Natural World* (2018)