

**Hungering for a Godly Nation
Caring for God's Creation
Genesis 1:1-4, 26-28, 31; Genesis 2:8-9, 15, 18-19; Colossians 1:15-20; Romans 8:18-22
Sermon Outline**

Introduction: According to Jesus we are to love God with all our being and we are to love our neighbor as ourselves (see Matthew 22:37-40). What does this double love look like when it comes to caring for the created world in which God has placed us?

I) Caring for creation as an expression of loving God

A) We will not worship creation

- Nature did not make us; God did. *In the beginning God created*
- *Fill the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:28)*
- *Subject to futility and decay, groaning as in childbirth (Romans 8)*

B) We will respect creation

- God's 'deputies'
- God loves what he made: *...and behold it was very good (Genesis 1:31)*
 - *When he established the heavens...I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight (Proverbs 8).*
 - *By Christ all things were created...He is before all things and in him all things hold together (Colossians 1)*

C) Meaning for us

- Study: *Whatever the man called every creature, that was its name (Genesis 2:19)*
- Enjoyment: *Pleasant to the sight and good for food (Genesis 2:9)*
- Care: *God... put him in the garden to work it and to keep it (Genesis 2:15)*

II) Caring for creation as an expression of loving our neighbor

A) My neighbor across the world

B) My neighbor across time

III) Caring for creation and public policy

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Do you think of creation care as a valid Christian concern? Why? Why not?
- 2) Read Genesis 1-2, Psalm 104, and Proverbs 8:12-31. What impression do these texts give you regarding God's attitude toward the created world? What do they suggest or tell us about our attitude toward the created world?
- 3) In the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) Jesus makes vivid that our neighbor (the person we must 'love as we love ourselves') is anyone in need. Globalization, together with explosive population growth (with attendant reduction of per capita resources), have increased the number of our needy neighbors, along with our awareness of them. Those neighbors are not only present ones, but future ones (our children and their children). How might you love better these present and future 'neighbors' with the resources of this world? Reflect on the following facts and trends as you answer.

Population and Resources, Need and Consumption

Sources: UN Paper on the Critical Role of Global Food Consumption Patterns (2012), the “Forest Resources Assessment 2005” of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization”, the CDC, the US Dept. of Agriculture, Scientific American

Population Trends

1800	1960	2012	2050 (UN estimate)
1 billion	3 billion	7 billion	9 billion

Waste, Inefficiencies, and Ironies

1) Food waste in lbs./capita/year

America	Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	S and SE Asia
661	617	353	276

- “The total grain harvest in 2004, if used directly, would feed 6 billion. If used as animal feed to produce animal protein for human consumption it would feed 2.6 billion.” (UN)

- 2) Obesity in the US between 1985 and 2010 has increased by at least 20% everywhere, in some places by over 30%. Worldwide it grew to 1.5 billion in 2008. Over the next decade deaths due to overfeeding (from diabetes and coronary heart disease) will overtake deaths due to under-nutrition as the leading non-communicable cause of death in developing countries. (UN rpt, 16)

Deforestation trends

If deforestation occurs at a rate faster than we can renew it, agricultural production suffers due to soil erosion and other factors.

In millions of acres either lost or gained between 2000 and 2005 (not all areas included)

N. America	S. America	Africa	Europe	Asia	World
-1.25	-52.5	-49.5	+10.8	+ 13.4	-90.4

- “Today soil is eroded faster than it forms in one-third of the world’s crop-land “ (Van Dyke in *Redeeming Creation*, 1996)

Human Need

- 1 billion are presently undernourished (1/3 of India).
- Many (44% of Sub-Sahara Africa for example) are without food-security (adequate access to sufficient and nutritious food)
- “If current population and consumption trends continue, humanity will need the equivalent of two earths to support it by 2030” (UN report)

Comparative Consumption

Group	% of world pop	% of world consumption: fresh water	% of world consumption: grain	% of world consumption: meat
US	4.5%	11.6%	36.6%	
Developed countries	18%		39%	41%

- “We (in the developed countries) spend 10% of our income on food. People in developing countries spend 50-60%” (Lester Brown, *Full Planet, Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity*, 2012)
- Food expenditure, for example, accounts for 70% of income in Tanzania and 45% in Pakistan (UN report, p 15)