

Creation-tide Bible Study • Week 3

Sunday 24 October – (Physical Resources)

Preacher – The Precentor

Reading Gen 2.4-7, 15-24; Ps 104.24-35; 1 John 1.1-4; John 2.1-11

Everyone knows there are environmental problems. Most are concerned. However, even concerned caregivers of the earth do not have the answers. Even those concerned for the earth's care find it difficult to do something constructive without adding to the problem.

In an article on “11 Biggest Environmental Problems Of 2021” by earth.org¹ it named them as:

1. Poor Governance (According to economists like Nicholas Stern, the climate crisis is a result of multiple market failures)
2. Food waste (A third of the food intended for human consumption- around 1.3 billion tons- is wasted or lost.)
3. Biodiversity Loss (The past 50 years have seen a rapid growth of human consumption, population, global trade and urbanisation, resulting in humanity using more of the Earth's resources than it can replenish naturally.)
4. Plastic Pollution (A report by science journal, Nature, determined that currently, roughly 11 million tons of plastic make its way into the oceans every year, harming wildlife habitats and the animals that live in them.)
5. Deforestation (*Every minute*, forests the size of 20 football fields are cut down. By the year 2030, the planet might have only 10% of its forests; if deforestation isn't stopped.)
6. Air Pollution (Research by WHO shows that an estimated 4.2 to 7 million people die from air pollution worldwide every year and that nine out of 10 people breathe air that contains high levels of pollutants.)
7. Global Warming from Fossil Fuels (At time of publication, CO₂ PPM² is at 410 and the global temperature rise is 0.89 degrees Celsius.)
8. Melting Ice Caps and Sea Level Rise (The climate crisis is warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as anywhere else on the planet.)
9. **Ocean Acidification** (Global temperature rise has not only affected the surface, but it is the main cause of ocean acidification.)
10. Agriculture (The global food system is responsible for up to one third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions)
11. Food and Water Insecurity (Rising temperatures and unsustainable farming practices has resulted in the increasing threat of water and food insecurity.)

¹ <https://earth.org/the-biggest-environmental-problems-of-our-lifetime/>

² Parts per million

1. In contrast to the above bad news on our environment, what are some of the “good news stories”?

2. Read Romans 8:16-23.

- Draw up a list of what creation is groaning about.
- As children of God, what does this relationship have to do with caring for the earth?
- How does keeping the earth serve a spiritual purpose?

3. Genesis 2:15 implies protecting the earth for the long-range future. This means being good stewards to avoid behaviour that undermines the capacity of the earth to keep on thriving.

- What such personal behaviour might be included?
- What changes do we need to make in our behaviour to achieve this?
- What does this mean as far as lifestyle is concerned? (At home; at church, in the community, nationally/globally)