

## Environmentalism, Part 1 (or Ecotheology)

*The nations were angry, but Your wrath has come. The time has come for the dead to be judged, and to give the reward to Your servants the prophets, to the saints, and to those who fear Your name, both small and great, and the time has come to destroy those who destroy the earth. – Revelation 11:18 HCSB*

According to the Smithsonian Institute, half of Earth's life forms live in rain forests, yet we are losing a net total of one acre of tropical forest every second. In the time it took to say that sentence, 12-15 acres of rain forest disappeared. One hundred years ago there were approximately 4 billion acres of tropical rain forest. There are now less than 2.5 billion acres of tropical forest left.

Many studies indicate that every day 100 plant and animal species are lost simply to deforestation. The National Wildlife Association conservatively estimates that over 27,000 species a year are being lost. Australia is estimating that 95% of the Great Barrier Reef will be dead by 2050.

I have to ask, "What is the role of the Ransomed in this global catastrophe?"

**We are to imitate God's care and concern for the environment.**<sup>1</sup> In Genesis, we read that the LORD God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. He created us in His image and according to His likeness. Tell me something, is God characterized by rampant greed and lack of care for creation?

Yahweh watches with interest as the lioness hunts her prey. He provides the raven's food when its young cry out to Him and wander about for food. He knows when the mountain goats give birth and watches over the deer in labor. He set the wild donkey free and is served by the wild ox.<sup>2</sup> Though they don't sow or reap or gather into barns, our Father feeds the birds of the sky.<sup>3</sup> The wildflowers of the field don't labor or spin thread but God gives them more beauty than Solomon in all his splendor.<sup>4</sup> Even a common sparrow cannot fall out of its nest without God's knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

We are to be like our Father. We must imitate everything about Him including His great passion for creation.

**We are to obey God's command to steward His creation.**<sup>6</sup> His first order of business was to tell us to enjoy creation, to be fruitful and multiply our families. However, responsibility went along with this great privilege. We were put in charge of the planet. It has been entrusted to our care. We are not its masters. We are its stewards.

**We must remember we were meant to live in a garden environment.**<sup>7</sup> I believe that it is important to note that when Yahweh created us, He planted a garden and that is where He placed us. A garden is our natural environment. We have forgotten our origins. We have forgotten our purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 2:15; 1:26-27; Job 38:39-39:9; Matthew 5:26-29; 10:30

<sup>2</sup> Job 38:39-39:9

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 5:26

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 5:28-29

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 10:30

<sup>6</sup> Genesis 1:28-30

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 2:7-8