

Environmentalism, Part 3 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

Those who abuse their stewardship are not likely to make it to heaven.¹ We are Jesus' slaves and He has put us in charge of the care of his possessions. One of the perks is that we get to eat the Master's food. However, the Lord made it clear that those who abuse these privileges will not fare well when He returns. The Bible seems to imply that those who abuse the environment and their fellow humans reveal that they are not truly saved and will end up in hell.

We are not allowed to say "It's too big a problem." God does not hold us accountable for what we cannot control but for what we can do.² In the parable of the talents, each servant was given resources "– to each according to his own ability." When the Master returned, He did not require five talents from the one to whom He had given only one.

"To whom much is given much is required," the Bible says. The opposite is thus equally true. We are not all presidents. We cannot take personal responsibility for signing the Kyoto treaty or for forcing China to quit killing all its rivers but we can recycle more. We can quit letting the water run while we brush our teeth. We can bicycle rather than drive a car down the block.

It is not enough to simply not grossly damage God's creation – we must do positive good to it.³ God is a tough task master and he will require an accounting of us. The Master in the parable of the talents never denied the wicked slave's assessment of his toughness. The judgment did not come because the wicked slave called God difficult, but because he did not adequately believe and act on that fact.

Note that once again, it is a mark of a true disciple to care for God's resources. Only those who did well were accepted into God's heaven. The one who buried his resource and did not improve it was cast into the outer darkness.

I would like to leave you with this challenge. A great day of reckoning is coming; a day when even the Ransomed will have to face the Master and give an answer as to what we have done with the resources He gave us.

On that day, God will judge two groups of people. One is described as "fearing God" and the other as "those who destroy the earth." John prophesied that the second group would be destroyed by God's wrath. In which group would you rather be included?

¹ Matthew 24:45-51

² Matthew 25:14-25; Luke 12:48

³ Matthew 25:26-20