



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GOSPEL: THE POLITICS OF CREATION CARE

John 3: 16
For God so loved
the.....
Cosmos that he
gave His only Son...



Creation Care is Gospel!

CONTROVERSY!!!

We/I seek to offer individual salvation

But I/we neglect the social/political elements of the gospel

I/We become comfortable with a consumerist and materialist culture

“Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking.” (The Message. Also J B Phillips)

What More Does the Bible Say?



**Not dominion or rule
but stewardship in
relational partnership**

**....and God saw
that it was very
good... 5 times!
....let us make
humans in our
own image....**

Genesis 9: v12,16,17..... 'I am making a covenant with every living creature'



Psalm 145: v9....God has compassion on all that he has made

Psalm 19:v1.... The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies..... The work of His hands

Colossians 1:v23....'This is the gospel you heard that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven'.

The Problem

- We need to limit global warming to **1.5 degrees**
- We have already warmed **1.1 degrees**
- To stay at 1.5 degrees we need **8%** cuts in CO2 emissions every year but emissions are rising.

“Climate change directly threatens the lives of millions of people. If your church is serious about loving people, it has to be serious about climate change”. Dr Tim Gordon, marine biologist.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

**Alienation from Creation
and so from God.**

- Rising SOL globally
- More material goods
- Globalism and global trade



- Vast inequality and poverty
- Population growth/decline
- Economic growth at any price
- Consumerism/materialism
- Resources for 3 planets used.
- **I am retired and wealthy!**

The Geopolitics of Economic Growth

**Growth wins
elections**



**It raises SOL,
gives welfare**



**Globalism &
global trade**



**Capitalism is
highly creative**



**Global capital
demands growth and
consumerism**

**Individual
power
& National
competition**



**Resource
depletion
- water**



**The power of
multinationals –
Toyota, Dupont,
Volkswagon**



Possible Christian Responses

1



Some, especially American Christians, some evangelicals.



Ignore or deny climate change.

2

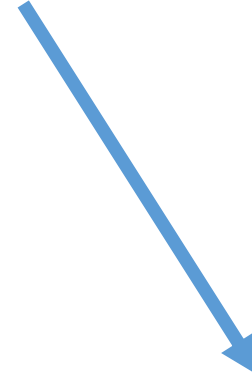


We reflect our culture



Keep religion and politics separate.

3



Christian counter culture: critique our culture, seek alternatives.



1

Of white evangelicals surveyed in the USA, 37 percent said they believe there's no solid evidence the planet is getting warmer — higher than all other religious groups polled. Only 28 percent believe climate change is caused by human activity — a lower number than all other groups surveyed.

“Part of being within the American evangelical community is showing that you keep good theological and political conservative company, and environmentalism is associated with being liberal.”

Some Christians believe that Christ will return before climate change really destroys the planet so why worry.

But.....

Oliver Cromwell thought Jesus would return soon!

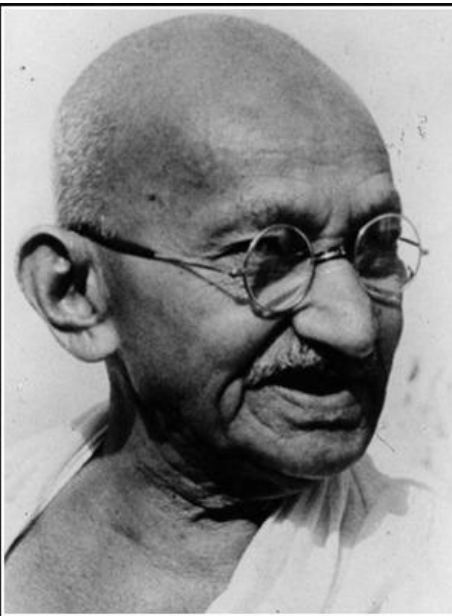
The Bible commands that we “cultivate and care” for creation (Genesis 2:15).



That’s just an excuse to go on living in the same way

What about our children/grandchildren?

What about the poor?



Those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion is.

— Mahatma Gandhi —

AZ QUOTES

The Bible is up to its neck



As long as I don't write about the government, religion, politics, and other institutions, I am free to print anything.

(Pierre Beaumarchais)

izquotes.com

People who say this are really saying that they want to keep a status quo that serves their interests

Amos....'you trample on the poor....deprive the poor of justice in the courts....buy the poor with silver and....a pair of sandals.....let justice roll on like a river....'

3 Critique our culture, economy, society Biblically



The Bible is very clear about social justice & creation care



Enough is enough. Every consumer choice has a cost



How do we use our vote?



The jobs versus environment false dilemma



Radical change is slow, politically unpopular & public persuasion is hard

Possible Alternatives To Consider

1. No Growth Economies

“We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!”



A larger G.D.P. doesn't necessarily mean a rise in human well-being—especially if it isn't distributed equitably

2. Universal Basic Income

Pros

- **Simple and efficient to administer.**
- **Avoids poverty trap of means-tested benefits.**
- **Reduces inequality, poverty and homelessness.**
- **Encourages socially beneficial tasks such as old age care.**
- **Encourages individuals to take risk and set up business.**

Cons

- **Could encourage laziness.**
- **Could discourage part-time work.**
- **Cost higher than current benefit system leading to higher taxes.**
- **Higher income taxes could lead to disincentives to work.**
- **Could lead to welfare support for undesirables like criminals.**

3. A Circular Economy

4. Personal restraint? “Keep yourselves free from the love of money and be content with what you have” Hebrews 13:5

