

Consumption or Care: do Christians have a responsibility towards creation

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Date: 27 January 2007

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[0 : 00] Thank you very much, Phil. It's good to be with you again. This evening we're going to be thinking about creation and the question as to whether Christians have any responsibility towards creation and the biblical vision.

! And we're going to start with two examples which Miriam will read for us. Before that, I need to collect your piece of paper, please. So have you all had a chance to complete your task? Do you need a pen?

Thank you. I'm going to collate the answers and feedback to you in a minute.

Thank you. This isn't one of those things where there's a particularly right answer. We're surveying opinion more than anything else. While Miriam's collecting those, if I can just say that the two quotations which she's going to read to you in a moment, I've chosen them because both of them have appeared in the mainline press.

And the first, at least, since its original appearance, has been widely cited in a number of different publications.

[1 : 36] And the second, because it's more contemporary, has appeared in a number of newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic. Okay. Having done my classroom monitor bit, I'll now read the quotation.

So the first one comes from Gavin Maxwell who wrote Ring of Bright Water. Do you all know the book Ring of Bright Water about otters? Very engaging.

So this is a story from his experience. Gavin Maxwell, who wrote Ring of Bright Water, was walking along the foreshore in Scotland when he saw two otter cubs at play by the tide's edge.

He was reminded of the otters in his story and stood watching them for some time when a minister of the Church of Scotland joined him. The minister, who was carrying a shotgun, fired at the otter cubs.

One was killed outright. The other died of her wounds in the water. Maxwell remonstrated with the minister, who expressed regret at having upset Maxwell, but reminded him, the Lord gave man control over the beasts of the field.

[2 : 49] That story was first published in the Observer just over ten years ago, but it's been widely reported since in quite a lot of green literature. And the second quote is about James Watt, who was U.S.

Not James Watt of the steam engines, but James Watt, who was U.S. Secretary of the Interior under President Reagan in the early 1980s. And in this post, he had special responsibility for the environment.

Now, this is something that the Washington Post reported a couple of years ago. The Washington Post reported that in public testimony to the U.S. Congress about the environment, James Watt had said back in the 1980s, God gave us these things to use.

After the last tree is felled, Christ will come back. That was in the Washington Post in 2005, later reported in the Guardian that same year.

Thank you. Now, in both these quotations, the emphasis is upon God having given creation to human beings. And both of them have a notion of dominion.

[4 : 04] In the case of the Scottish minister, it's of control. And in James Watt's case, it's reported to be a kind of exploit the world until we've used it all up, understanding of dominion.

The historian Cartmill summarises the Christian doctrine of dominion in terms of the liberal freedom to do whatever we like with our own property. He says, It's very common among contemporary

evangelical Christians.

Perhaps not surprisingly, it's almost universally assumed to be the Christian view by secular authors, especially in the broadsheet and the environmental press. Jonathan Porrett, who you probably know of, who has been associated with the Green Movement for many years and is currently advisor on green issues to the U.K. government, he remarked that Christians are seen within the Green Movement as part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

So where does this come from? Well, as the Scottish Presbyterian minister argued, God gave humans dominion over fish, birds and land animals in Genesis 1.26 and 28.

The word translated there as dominion, rather, is relatively uncommon in the Older Testament and it usually means to dominate forcefully. This is the sense that's widely adopted by evangelicals that I've discussed this with and I'm going to call this the proprietorial view of dominion.

[6 : 13] But it hasn't always been so. And until the late 19th century, a second understanding of dominion as stewardship was also found in the Church.

Ironically, this second school of thought was most common then among evangelical Christians, especially among those who gave most weight to the Bible. And it had an influence out of all proportion to the numbers who held it.

It's often supposed that pollution or animal cruelty and so on are modern concerns and that Christians from the past would have little to say about them because it wasn't an issue for them. Now it's certainly true that these ills have reached epidemic proportions in their own time. But the human impact upon the environment is not a modern phenomenon. The ancient inhabitants of Australia contributed to the desertification which we see now in the interior through their fire-driving hunting techniques.

Nor is pollution new. In the 13th century, Henry III's asthmatic Queen Eleanor was driven from Nottingham by coal fumes. In his 17th century poem, *Paradise Lost*, John Milton reflects the stewardship view of dominion when he wrote that God gave Adam and Eve care of the habitat of all species.

[7 : 37] Milton was himself writing during a time of deforestation, air pollution in cities, toxic mining, damming of waterways, the draining of wetlands, and over-ploughing.

So these are not new problems and our forebears, particularly evangelical and in the reform traditions, talked about them and wrote about them.

Similarly, animal cruelty was common and visible in the past, especially with the growth of horse-powered transport in towns, the increased breeding of animals solely for food, and the influence of Enlightenment ideas.

Preachers who looked to the Bible as their authority naturally turned to it for guidance on these matters as well as others. And what they found there was not a proprietorial view of dominion, but what I should call a stewardship vision.

This vision has in fact made something of a comeback in recent years on both sides of the Atlantic among evangelicals, and it's generally spoken of now under the heading of creation care.

[8 : 53] Instead of Genesis 1.26, you remember that was the passage that the Scottish minister referred to, the proponents of the stewardship view turn instead to Genesis 2.15, where Adam and Eve are told to dress and keep the Garden of Eden, where dress has a flavour of service, that sort of association, the original word, and keep is used in the sense of Isaiah 27.3, the Lord do keep his vineyard.

Now these are very different associations from the one which the Scottish minister was seeking to draw from 1.26. Now I don't propose to discuss the relative merits of these two texts further, though there is a very active debate about them, but to turn instead to those who soak their theology in scripture generally, rather than relying upon single texts.

And I will also outline the practical consequences of a biblical view for the reforming movements such as the RSPCA, the SPCA originally, RSPCA later in the 19th century, or the anti-vivisection society.

The fact is, there's a return to the Bible as the Christian source of authoritative teaching was deeply influential in the 19th century and even influential on the development of the vegetarian movement later in the century.

So where then might we look for a more authentically Christian vision of dominion? In this talk, I propose to discuss that wing of the Christian church, which most thickened its teaching with scripture.

[10:42] By common consent, this would include the European reformers of the 16th century, 17th century Puritans in England and the UK, but I'll be referring principally to England, sorry, England and the US.

The 18th century evangelical revival and pioneering reforms in the 19th century. And because I want to refer to this group collectively, I'm going to use the rather general heading of reformed or reformation theology to refer to them.

By this, I will mean those who gave greatest weight to the Bible in forming their views of dominion. Rather than citing a long list of names at this stage, I'll introduce the major players as we go along and we'll see in a moment, in a little video, we'll see some of them introduced there.

So, let me summarise where we've got to so far. I've distinguished two views of dominion. The first is currently widespread, is almost universally attributed to evangelicals by secular opinion, and it considers that creation is our absolute possession to dispose of and consume as we wish.

According to this view, when Jesus returns, the world will be burned up and we'll all go to heaven.

So, what we do to the earth now doesn't really matter. The second view of dominion emphasises that God gave the earth into our care and that we have a duty to look after it.

[12:19] We'll shortly see the balance of these two views in those biblically influenced Christians as I've called reformers or the Reformation theology. But first, I'm going to have a little break while you watch a video.

First, though, Miriam's going to give some feedback on the little questionnaires that you filled out. And, if I can say while I remember it, that the quotations you'll see in the video are all accurate and the people to whom they're attributed said them.

They're genuine quotations. The only possible exception to that is that I've attributed a psalm to the Apostle Paul but I dare say he wouldn't mind that too much. Right.

Just quickly, we're going to feed back the results on the poll we took at the beginning because in a minute we're going to have another slightly different poll after the DVD. So, I asked you to think about people, organisations that are active in taking the lead on environmental issues today and to rank them in order from one to five.

And then I added up the scores. So, the people that got the lowest score effectively came out top. So, Friends of the Earth came out top with 18. Green Party came out second with 21.

[13:33] Then there was a great big gap and the next one down was 35 and we had the Labour Party and the church tied there and the Conservative Party lagged behind with the Duncey's hat on at 41.

So, that was the results of your vote about environmental, giving lead on environmental issues today. Now, this short DVD that we're going to watch together now has an introduction and then it goes into a sort of court case and what you need to understand is that this is structured as an argument between two opposing points of view.

So, you get the case for the prosecution and then you get the case for the defence and then you get the summing up for the prosecution and the summing up for the defence and at the end we're going to ask you to be the jury and take your decision on whether you agree with the prosecution or the defence.

So, that's what you have to bear in mind as you watch it. Right. We haven't done it that way before so, you're the first.

Okay. So, if you start it. It just has to go straight through we don't have to start with start. How did you start it before?

[14:55] So, I think I'll put that. Deep in the heart of Cornwall a dream landscape is being created out of the devastation of industrial destruction.

In an abandoned clay pit where once the area's natural resources and cheap labour were exploited to produce porcelain to grace the tables of the wealthy plants from across the globe are flourishing. Its high-tech biomes are attracting thousands of visitors every day and the employment created is boosting local businesses and regenerating deprived communities.

Its name is Eden. Eden tells a story. It explores human dependence on plants and it treats the pit as a model world created from scratch.

It claims to be a sanctuary for all who think the future too precious to leave to the few because it belongs to us all. and it has caught the imagination of the public who flock there in droves.

[16:11] Is it a coincidence that in presenting its vision of the future the Eden project has taken its name from the book of Genesis? Certainly not.

As the guidebook claims plants set the stage but Eden is really about people. Here a committed group of people are consciously constructing an environment to point to an alternative future which contrasts with the destructive practices of the past.

And the rhetoric uses the image of Eden a perfect garden created by God as a symbol of the regeneration that the project wants to achieve. But although the images of regeneration may be drawn from Genesis the biblical story of creation fall and redemption is more often seen as part of the problem than as the solution.

A new story is being told with different villains and different solutions. We live in a world where the environment has become polluted the ozone layer is collapsing and global warming is accelerating. Over 11,000 species of animals and plants are in danger of extinction. In the West agribusiness and factory farming have degraded the landscape and blighted the lives of animals.

[17:42] Whose fault is all this destruction and misery? We could charge individual industrialists or corporations out to make a quick profit.

food customers who are indifferent to the animal suffering that their meals cost. But the real culprit is Christian civilisation.

It's the Bible and the church that should stand in the dock. Be up standing in court.

Clark to the court. Read out the charge. The Christian church is hereby charged with teaching that human beings are God's own darlings who can do what they like with the world, thus opening the door to environmental destruction and cruelty to other animal species.

Call Lynn White, the first witness for the prosecution. Are you Lynn White, Professor of History at the University of California? Yes, I am. Professor White, who in your opinion is historically responsible for environmental pollution.

[18:52] The population explosion, the carcinoma of planless urbanism, the new geological deposits of sewage and garbage are at least partly to be explained as a realisation of the Christian dogma of man's transcendence of and rightful mastery over nature.

It's a Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man. To a Christian, a tree can be no more than a physical fact.

Christianity bears a huge burden of guilt for the emergence of exploitative technologies. Call Peter Singer, the next witness for the prosecution.

Are you Peter Singer, animal rights activist and author? Yes, sir. Peter Singer, in your expert opinion, do human beings have the special importance among animals that Christian dogma teaches?

It can no longer be maintained by anyone but a religious fanatic that man is the special darling of the whole universe or that other animals were created to provide us with food or that we have divine authority over them and divine permission to kill them.

[20:13] Call the prosecution's next witness, Arnold Toynbee. Are you Arnold Toynbee, green activist and author? Yes, I am.

Arnold Toynbee, is Christianity the religion that the world needs to solve its environmental problems? Well, a right religion is one that teaches respect for the dignity and the sanctity of all nature.

The wrong religion is one that licenses the indulgence of human greed at the expense of non-human nature. The religion we need to embrace now is pantheism and the religion we now need to discard is Christianity, which believes that mankind is morally entitled to exploit the rest of the universe for the indulgence of human greed.

God's Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the case against the Bible and the church is compelling.

The Christian dogma of human superiority only justifies exploitation and cruelty.

We need a compassionate religion, not more bigoted Christianity. Members of the jury, we reject the charge.

[21:32] Far from being the culprit, the Christian church has been the source and inspiration of environmental concern and animal welfare. Call the first witness for the defence.

Are you Paul of Tarsus? By the grace of God. Is it true, as Aristotle taught, that nature has made all things for the sake of men?

By no means. All things in heaven and on earth were created through Jesus and for him to praise his name.

Says the psalmist, Praise the Lord from the earth you see monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command.

Mountains and hills, fruit trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds. Praise the Lord.

[22 : 36] Call the second witness for the defence. Are you John Calvin of Geneva? Yes, I am. Is it true, as Aristotle taught, that we may treat animals as we wish?

God forbid. When God gave us dominion over animals, he did it on condition that we must treat them gently, that as we deal rightfully with men, so we should use the like duty also towards animals, which have no reason, nor understanding, nor cannot complain of the injuries which are done unto them.

God will condemn us as cruel if we do not pity animals, for they cannot speak to move us to compassion, and therefore we must go to them voluntarily.

Uprightness and equity ought to be ministered to animals as well as humans. call the final witness for the defence.

Are you Keith Thomas, Professor of History at Oxford University? Yes, my lord. What historically has been the relationship of the church to environmental protection and animal welfare?

[23 : 58] Well, there was little historical development in the argument against animal cruelty from the strong Protestants or Puritans of the Elizabethan and early Stuart period to the evangelicals, Methodists and humanitarians of the 18th century.

Rather than classical authors, the Old Testament was the authority most frequently cited, and an essential role was played by Puritans, dissenters and evangelicals.

The idea of the balance of nature had a theological basis before it gained a scientific one.

Concluding statement for the prosecution.

The Bible teaches that God made human beings in his own image, and gave us the earth to master, and to use as we please. We owe it no duty.

Christians, therefore, believe that we may exploit the environment and kill animals for food or pleasure. That's what God says animals are here for. So the blame for the environmental crisis and for animal cruelty can be laid squarely at the door of the church.

[25 : 11] We need a different, more sensitive religion. Concluding statement for the defence. The Bible teaches that God gave human beings dominion over the earth, not domination.

Originally, this excluded eating animals, and we were to care for creation as stewards. Even after limited warrant was given for eating meat, the law tied it to sacrifice and condemned cruelty. property. Proverbs 12, verse 10 makes animal welfare a test of righteousness. Historically, animal welfare and environmental movements have grown from faithfulness to the biblical teaching, not from abandoning it.

...!

Okay, so you're the jury.

[26 : 35] We have to press on. Normally there'd be quite a lot of discussion at this stage, but we're limited for time this evening. But just by a show of hands, who found the prosecution case to be persuasive?

Quite persuasive. How about the defence case? Who found the defence case quite persuasive? And the rest of you are undecided, yeah? Sorry? Okay. Okay, so you didn't find the prosecution case convincing then?

Because that wasn't? It was not a result of the prosecution case. Okay. Anybody else want to comment on that? Okay, well, let's press on.

And what I intend to do is to look more closely at precisely the kinds of debates that went on before the late 19th century, really.

[27 : 55] And I'm going to look more closely now at the reformers' understanding of dominion. And you'll remember by reformers, I mean this broad category of Christian folk who looked principally to the Bible to inform their vision of the world.

Okay. First of all, whose world is it? And this is a fundamental question. And I'm going to approach this under three headings.

Creation, and that's what we're going to look at first, whose world is it? Fall into sin and redemption in Christ. So first of all, we're going to look at creation. And we're going to be asking whose world is it?

Well, for the reformers, God created the world and God continually sustains its existence. So Luther says, If God were to withdraw his hand, this building, the creation, is what he means by that, would collapse.

The sun would not long retain its position and shine in the heavens. No child would be born. No kernel, no blade of grass, nothing at all would grow on earth or reproduce itself if God did not work forever and ever.

[29 : 07] Okay. Martin Luther, as you'll recall, was a late 15th century reformer in Germany, in what's now Germany. And many would attribute the first springs of the Reformation to the influence of Luther.

So, according to Luther, the world neither belongs to humans nor was it made for the sake of humans. Nothing in the world is our property to do with as we wish.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, says the psalmist. An immediate consequence of this is that the world is good although it may be suffering and going in the wrong direction.

Thus Calvin comments on the psalm, If the fullness of the earth is the Lord's, there is nothing in the world that is not sacred and pure.

For the reformers, the Christian task is to turn the world back into the right direction. We introduced Calvin on the DVD, you'll remember.

[30 : 18] John Calvin was a Geneva reformer. of the mid-16th century and very influential in the, in subsequently, especially among the English Puritans.

Moreover, as the world is not our property, our dominion over it is limited. You will recall that there was a tree in the Garden of Eden whose fruit, Adam and Eve, were told not to consume, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now there's a popular opinion that this represents something to do with sex. But for the reformers, the tree was a mark of the limit of our dominion.

And when Adam ate from it, our first parents declared that the world was theirs to consume as they wished. They set themselves up at the centre of things as gods. Thus Calvin writes that Adam and Eve were to be subject to God.

and a law, namely not to eat of the tree, was imposed upon them in token of this subjection. For it would have made no difference to God, says Calvin, if they'd eaten discriminately of any fruit they pleased.

[31 : 32] Far from being ours, this world has a glory which mirrors its creator and threatens to undo us. This is another quote from Luther.

If we truly understood the growth of a grain of wheat, we would die of wonder. And of Calvin, another quote from Calvin, You cannot in one glance survey this most vast and beautiful system of the universe in all its wide expanse without being completely overwhelmed by the boundless force of its brightness.

God's most beautiful theatre is like a spacious and splendid house provided and filled with the most exquisite and at the same time the most abundant furnishings. The idea that humans own the world as their own property to consume as we wish would have struck the reformers as absurd.

This had important implications among other things for animal welfare reform. In the 19th century, there were a number of reform movements underway and they were opposed by those who wished to maintain the absolute right of private ownership of animals.

The issue was whether animals were the property of the owner to do with as he wished or as she wished or not. And the issue came to a head in the later 19th century in a test case concerning a man who lost his temper with a horse and he ripped its tongue out.

[33 : 00] Now the issue was whether such a crime could be rightfully punished if the culprit owned the horse as chattel property. The evangelical reformers of the time asserted that no such absolute right existed because the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and that such a crime therefore deserved punishment.

We come now to this idea of use. This was referred to in the DVD as the earth ours to use. Well if the earth is the Lord's and not ours it was clear to the reformers that it was not created primarily for our use but had an intrinsic value.

Why did God make the world? Well God made the world for his glory and his creatures praised him. As the Puritan John Trapp put it in 1657 the world is God's universal kingdom by right of creation and beasts are good creatures in their own nature and kind and made to set forth the glory and the magnificence of the great God.

John Owen the Puritan Chancellor of Oxford University and Chaplain to Cromwell concurred Inanimate and brute creatures ascribe unto God the glory of his properties even by what they are and do.

They give unto God the glory of that wisdom and power whereby they are made and of that sovereignty whereon they depend. In worshipping its creator thus creation fulfills and enjoys its own existence.

[34 : 53] John Ray who was a remarkable 17th century Puritan and many would say the founder of what later became naturalism and hence biology. John Ray writing in 1701 said I do not think that God made all these creatures to no other end but to be serviceable to man but also to partake themselves of his overflowing goodness and to enjoy their own beings.

Godfrey Goodman in 1622 although admittedly no Puritan Goodman but he agreed with the Puritans on this point. Creation he wrote encourages us to praise God so there is not only a communion of saints but a communion of creatures who join together in one natural service of God. the idea that creation has no intrinsic value but is man's to use and consume without constraint gains popularity in the 19th century under the pressure of industrial development which began consuming the world.

The earth was there to be exploited for its coal and iron and animals were there as labour or culinary ingredients. that this view gained ascendancy is at least partly due to the abdication of an evangelical voice from the mid-19th century on and the growth at that time of an unbiblical theology indifferent to the fate of creation which it asserted would be burned up at the second coming while Christians are whisked off to heaven.

and I think that bears on the point that was raised just now about the extent to which ideas contribute to this rather than other factors and plainly a whole variety of factors contribute including material factors concerning growth of urban centres and development of technology.

[36 : 52] Okay. We're still thinking about creation you'll remember and the next aspect of creation I want to think about are the animals. Does it matter if we cut up living animals?

Does it matter if we experiment on them? Should we have pity as we listen to them scream? How these questions are answered depends upon what we think animals are.

The idea that creation and in particular animals were created for us to consume has been associated with the belief that we may treat animals as we wish and even the belief that they are merely automata machines incapable of sentience or feeling.

This latter belief grew rapidly in France at the time of the Enlightenment and it fed particularly on an interpretation of the philosophy of the philosophy of René Descartes. One of Descartes' contemporaries wrote as follows.

The followers of Descartes undertook physiological experiments on animals without compassion or compunction. They kicked about their dogs and dissected their cats without mercy, laughing at any compassion for them and calling their screams the noise of breaking machinery.

[38 : 07] It was said that the animals were clocks, that the cries they made when beaten were nothing but the sound of a little spring that had been activated, but that all of this was without sentience or feeling.

The physiological experiments referred to here were what was called vivisection, namely the systematic dissection and probing of conscious living animals. John Ray, writing in 1701, was aware of this point of view of Descartes and particularly his followers rather than Descartes, and he explicitly rejected it as unbiblical and asserted the reality of animal pain.

Proverbs 12.10 says that wicked men are cruel to animals. How, asks Ray, how is cruelty possible? How would it be possible if animals were just machines? John Wesley, the 18th century founder of Methodism, likewise denied that animals are machines without sense or feeling, and that was relevant at the time because of the growth during that period and pressure for increasing use of vivisection.

These biblically based views inspired the foundation of the SPCA, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, later the RSPCA, and evangelicals such as the Baptist preacher C.H.

[39 : 34] Spurgeon, and the social reformer Lord Shaftesbury were active supporters of the Antivivisection Society. So let's return to Dominion.

The status of creation, made by God for his glory and his worship, radically undermines the doctrine that creation revolves around man, and that Dominion means freedom to do as we wish with the world.

Rather, for the reformers, Dominion entails covenant obedience as God's representative. Dominion mirrors God's rule of love and peace, facilitating creation's worship of its Lord.

Thus Luther wrote that before the fall, Adam would not have used the creatures as we do today. He would have used them principally for the admiration of God and holy joy.

It's clear that this understanding of Dominion has nothing in common with environmental neglect or with the clergyman who blasted the otters out of the water with his shotgun. Andrew Lindsay, who's the only professor of animal theology in the world at Oxford, dryly observes that Dominion, so often interpreted as justifying killing, actually precedes the command to be vegetarian.

[40 : 57] Herb-eating Dominion is hardly a license for tyranny, he says. It's surprising how many contemporary Christians don't know that humans were vegetarian until after the flood, and that the grant to eat animals under carefully controlled circumstances was associated with limiting sin and providing food in a world distorted by sin, more particularly following flood agriculture, would have taken some time to recover.

So, creation. We're next going to look at fall into sin, which changed human relationship with creation, the rest of creation.

The fall was the rejection of the lordship of God, and the assertion of human sovereignty and autonomy in a single act of conspicuous consumption.

eating the forbidden fruit. It changed the direction of human culture and the behaviour of the natural world, but not the underlying nature of creation.

Humans declared that the world was indeed theirs to consume as they pleased, without constraint. Symbolic of this was consuming the fruit of the tree which God had set in the garden as a marker of the limit of their dominion, a reminder that the earth is the lords, and that humans are dependent and not autonomous.

[42 : 32] Now, the biblical doctrine of the fall is complex, and a true understanding of the world is impossible without a thorough understanding of the doctrine. Here, I can't possibly deal with that, and all I'm going to do is to look at fall into sin insofar as it changed the nature of the natural world and human interaction with the environment.

So my focus is going to be very limited, very focused. And the first thing that I want to draw attention to is the loss of harmony in creation as man, as Luther puts it, became the cruel master of creation. Quoting from Luther, we now live not by the dominion which Adam had, but through industry and skill. Thus we see the birds and the fish caught by cunning and deceit, and by skill the beasts are tamed.

We now have an extremely small and far inferior dominion. The name and word dominion is as a mere title, but the substance itself has been almost entirely lost.

It will be restored to us in paradise. For Luther, dominion was pretty much destroyed at the fall, in that nature no longer cooperated with human endeavour, and humans were tempted to behave as the absolute masters.

[43 : 59] Although creation continues to praise God and declare his nature, it did so in suffering. The cooperation between humans and the rest of creation was corrupted.

Agriculture was the first to be affected, then animal husbandry. Humans came to treat creation as an enemy and grew indifferent to the effects of their activities on God's world.

There were also consequences for animal behaviour. the reformers, particularly the Puritans and 16th century European reformers, spoke a lot about fierceness in animals, and that was much more of an issue for them than it is for us, because if Calving went for a walk in the mountains around Geneva, he might get eaten.

So fierceness was a real issue for them. However, they considered that the nature of animals remained the same.

Their fulfilment came in praising God, and the wonder of their existence remained the same. But after the fall, their behaviour was changed, they became fierce, they ate one another rather than plants, and now feared humans rather than living at peace with us.

[45 : 16] So Calvin writes, It was the fall which produced the cruelty of the brutes, which prompts the stronger to seize and rend and devour with dreadful violence the weaker animals.

There would certainly have been no discord among the creatures of God if they had remained in their first and original condition. When they exercise cruelty towards each other, and the weak need to be protected against the strong, it's an evidence of the disorder which has sprung from the sinfulness of man.

Christ having come in order to reconcile the world to God by the removal of the curse, it is not without reason that the restoration of a perfect state is ascribed to him. Now it's worth just noting several aspects of this.

Firstly, the animals themselves are innocent. The distortion of creation is the consequence of human sin, for which humans are responsible, not animals, not the rest of creation.

The duty of humans then is to try to put this right, to protect the weaker animal against the stronger, as Calvin puts it. The office of Christ is to restore peace and love within creation.

[46 : 28] Now these are ideas proved important for animal welfare reform, particularly again in the 19th century, as it's suggested that humans owe a duty to animals, as it's human sin which has caused animals to suffer, and the rest of the creation to be distorted.

Secondly, the reformers drew attention to the fact that the fall necessitated the regulation of sinful human behaviour. As dominion was largely destroyed by the fall, and there is now a temptation to abuse creation, God's covenants after the fall provide for the regulation of human behaviour and the restraint of sin.

Thus the Mosaic Covenant spelled out how dominion was to be exercised. For example, it forbade the exploitation of natural resources to extinction, it forbade cruelty to animals, and contrary to modern practice, not even warfare justified deforestation.

I've prepared a handout which I'll give out at the end, which outlines a few, if you're interested in following this up, a few themes that you might follow up along these lines, together with a few biblical references to get you underway.

But if you are interested in it, I would recommend to you just reading through the scripture from beginning to end with this in mind and ask yourself, what is the scripture here teaching on this particular issue?

[48 : 04] John Trapp in 1660. Trapp was a delightful puritan author, sometimes called Quaint John Trapp, because of his quaint sayings.

Come back to that if you wish. John Trapp observes that the restraint that was of eating the blood of dead beasts, he's referring to the mosaic law concerning draining the blood of a killed animal if it's going to be consumed.

The restraint that was of the eating, that was of eating the blood of dead beasts, declared that God would not have tyranny exercised on beasts while they were alive.

A rather roundabout way of putting it somewhat characteristically of trap. What he's talking about is that if you kill an animal for food in a hot climate, it goes off before you can eat it all.

So a not uncommon practice historically has been that you don't kill the animal all at once, but you cut bits off it and the animal remains alive and that keeps the meat fresh and then you cut some off and eventually it dies.

[49 : 14] And the draining of blood in the mosaic law specifically prevents that. Now this insight of traps, though obviously not trap but later among others, had the immediate implications for vivisection.

William Durham notes the repeated law that animals also should enjoy the Sabbath, saying that the Sabbath includes ease and refreshment to our wearied beasts.

Some reformers went so far as to suggest the retirement for farm animals. Now we're talking here about age 17th and 18th century, the retirement for farm animals rather than the knacker's yard.

And the reason that they suggest this is a arises from the Sabbath teaching. Thirdly, reformers drew attention to the duty of preservation which resulted from the fall, which emerged from the fall.

After the fall, the command to keep the garden, you recall that Adam and Eve were told to keep the garden of Eden. After the fall, the command to keep the garden takes on the aspect of preservation.

[50 : 28] Noah is told to take the animals into the ark. Genesis 7, 3, I think, to keep their kind alive upon the face of the earth. Now it's noteworthy, I don't know if you've ever thought about it, but God missed a bit of a trick here because he made the mistake of telling Noah to take all the animals onto

the ark.

Well, why not leave the wolves and the snakes and the poisonous spiders behind for them to drown? Even animals dangerous to humans were preserved at the flood, perhaps the earliest recognition of the importance of ecosystems.

The modern author Tony Sargent argues, the Bible is firmly for the preservation of the environment. Sensitivity and responsibility to the land and to its creatures are expected from a mature Hebrew society.

this duty to preserve was widely recognised among the reformers. And again, I've chosen a quotation from Calvin. Calvin considers that to thoughtlessly cut down trees or kill animals is to damage a creation which does not belong to us.

Calvin writes, the fullness of the earth is an expression to denote the abundance of blessings with which the earth is furnished and adorned by the Lord. For if the earth was stripped of trees, herbs, animals and other things, it would be like a house devoid of furniture and every kind of utensil.

[52 : 00] Nay, more, it would be mutilated and disfigured. The custody of the garden of Eden was given in charge to Adam, on the condition that being content with a frugal and moderate use of it, we should take care of what shall remain.

Let him who possesses a field so partake of its yearly fruits that he may not suffer the ground to be injured by his negligence. But let him endeavour to hand it down to posterity as he received it, or even better cultivated.

Let him so feed on its fruits that he neither dissipates it by luxury nor permits it to be marred or ruined by neglect. Moreover, that this economy and this diligence with respect to those good things which God has given us to enjoy may flourish among us.

let everyone regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possesses. Then he will not corrupt by abuse those things which God requires to be preserved.

You'll notice the use of the word steward and stewardship in this context. This is the mid-16th century, remember. If in the 20th century humans had taken Calvin's advice, the current environmental catastrophes could have been avoided.

[53 : 16] Now Calvin wasn't alone in his view that God requires creation to be preserved. John Bulwer again in about a century after Calvin says, it is not lawful to destroy any one species of God's creatures, though it were but the species of toads or spiders, because this was a taking away of the link, one link of God's chain, one note of his harmony.

John Ray, you remember the early naturalist, notes that God takes care to provide for the continuance of species and recommends that we do likewise.

Now we, by contrast, are currently destroying species of plants and animals faster than we can catalogue them. Does it matter? Surely some more will evolve, given time?

Well, for the reformers, it would simply be hypocrisy for Christian people to trample God's creation while praising his name. The 18th century clergyman Humphrey Primatt called this the duty of mercy towards God's creation.

Okay. Creation, fall into sin, redemption. We've seen that the earth is the Lord's, created to his glory, but suffering and distorted by sinful human rebellion.

[54 : 45] But the good news is that God has planned and accomplished within history the redemption and the restoration of his world. Calvin tells us, in the day of renovation and restoration, referred to in Acts chapter 3, all things shall be restored by Christ, by whom alone they can be renewed and made glad, for he alone renews everything and restores it to proper order.

Thus when wolves, bears, lions and other savage animals of that kind are hurtful to man and to other beasts, and when even animals which ought to have been useful to man are hostile to him, this ought to be imputed to sin, because Adam's disobedience overthrew the order of things. But since it is the office of Christ to bring back everything to its condition and order, the confusion or ruin that now exists in human affairs shall be removed by the coming of Christ, because at that time, corruption having been taken away, the world shall return to its first origin.

And going on, another quote from Calvin, Christ having come in order to reconcile the world to God by the removal of the curse, it is not without reason that the restoration of a perfect state is ascribed to him.

As if the prophets had said that the golden age will return in which perfect happiness existed before the fall of man and the shock and ruin of the world which followed it. As if he had said, when God

shall have been reconciled to the world in Christ, he will also give tokens of fatherly kindness, so that all the corruptions which have arisen from the sinfulness of man will cease.

[56 : 26] In a word, the prophets teach the same truth which Paul plainly affirms, that Christ came to gather together out of a state of disorder those things which are in heaven and which are on earth.

Summing up, Christ will come to drive away everything hurtful out of the world and to restore to its former beauty the world which lay under the curse. For this reason, says the prophet, straw will be the food for if the stain of sin hadn't polluted the world, no animal would have been addicted to prey on blood, but the fruits of the earth would have sufficed for all, according to the method which God had appointed.

This new sensitivity towards creation was often noted among reformers and evangelicals and inspired in them a desire for the legal reform of abuses.

The 16th century martyrologist John Fox, he wrote Fox's book of martyrs, it's known as now and has been greatly edited since, but was the history of the martyrs of the 16th century and subsequently others were added.

Fox wrote, such is my disposition that I can scarcely pass the shambles where beasts are slaughtered but that my mind recoils with a feeling of pain.

[57 : 55] Augustus Toplady, now best known for his hymns, but at the time very active in theological dispute in the 18th century, Toplady was an outspoken defender of animal welfare.

How dare we then be destroyers of the animal's ease which we ought to promote or wantonly deprive them of that life which we cannot restore. This, remember, is the 18th century.

Preachers didn't keep their views secret but considered it their duty to inform their flocks of the whole counsel of God. John Wesley records in his journal for 1743 meeting a man who expressed doubts about going to hear him preach for fear that Wesley would say something against the fighting of cocks.

Indeed, Methodism became so closely identified with opposition to animal cruelty that John Lawrence in the very late 18th century, Lawrence was a follower of the French Enlightenment, not at all sympathetic to Methodism, but Lawrence was worried that he would be thought a Methodist for writing against animal cruelty.

as he puts it, the indolent, the prejudiced, and the naturally hard-hearted have already provided me with a snug corner in the holy temple of Methodism.

[59 : 14] He felt that to be thought a Methodist would not be good for his image. Among the reformers, though, there's a more salutary aspect to the restoration of creation, and this is our giving an account for our abuses of it.

And they were nothing if not serious people, and they took this very seriously. Many evangelicals and reformers spoke out against the destruction of creation and made it clear that those doing the destroying would have to give an account at the day of restoration.

Calvin, as usual, puts it plainly. He says, as we deal rightfully with men, so we should use a like duty, even towards the brute beasts. God will condemn us for cruel and unkind folk if we pity not the brute beasts.

Now, the idea that we've got a like duty towards animals is towards human beings sounds more like some modern animal rights extremists than a 16th century theologian.

The difference, of course, is that the animal rights advocate believes that the like duty is owed because humans are part of the animal world. For Calvin, there is a like duty because of God's covenant of love and peace in Christ.

[60 : 32] If we break the covenant, God will, says Calvin, condemn us. John Trapp, a century or so later, makes the same point. He wrote of man as a steward who must give an account of all to his Lord.

William Durham, writing in 1713, The creatures are gifts of God. They are so many talents entrusted to us by the infinite law of the world, a stewardship, a trust reposed in us, for which we must give an account at the day when the Lord shall call.

As I said, the reformers took this seriously. At the end times, God will not say, well done, you fully exploited the earth and left a wreck behind, now off we go to heaven.

Rather, as Revelation 11:18 tells us, God will say, now is the time to destroy the destroyers of the earth. Practical Implications The earliest animal welfare legislation, and this legislation arises

directly from this teaching.

The earliest animal welfare legislation in England dates from 1640, and was the fruit of the Puritan influence on Cromwell's government. In the US, the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay colony were also the first legislators against animal cruelty.

[62 : 02] In 1733, Wesley wrote a tract against the cruelty of horse racing at Cursell Moor, near Salford, and that resulted in a ban on horse racing for 30 years.

But the majority of the legislation dates to the 19th century. William Wilberforce, best known for his anti-slavery stand, was present at the inaugural meeting of the SPCA, later the RSPCA, and active in promoting its work.

He pioneered parliamentary attempts to legislate from 1802. He was also, of course, deeply involved in the anti-slavery attempts in Parliament. Lord Shaftesbury, again better known for his pioneering work to protect children and women in factories and mines, was very active in promoting animal welfare.

In 1879, he addressed the House of Lords and gave a harrowing description of the vivisection of a dog. He continued, and that was the use they made of the creatures committed to their charge, that the account they would render of their stewardship.

On what authority of Scripture did they rest their right to subject God's creatures to such unspeakable sufferings? The animals were God's creatures as much as we are God's creatures, and his tender mercies, so the Bible tells us, were over all his works.

[63 : 35] Shaftesbury became president of the Anti-Vivisection Society, which was supported by both C.H. Spurgeon and Mrs. Booth of the Salvation Army. Indeed, Spurgeon at one point, I read through the minutes of the Anti-Vivisection Society, and Spurgeon at one time wrote an open letter to them deploring cruelty to animals and said that they could use it if they wished in promoting their calls.

And this was debated by the committee, but they decided not to make it public because Spurgeon's language in his letter was so outspoken that they felt that it would alienate some of their supporters. He felt very strongly about this.

In our own time, environmental degradation has reached epidemic proportions and the cruelty to animals is rife. For example, some 15% of all species were lost in the 10 years leading up to the millennium.

Climate change is now irreversible and will at best result in accelerated species loss, mass human migrations, and starvation among the world's poorest people.

It's something that I can't go into, but the links between environment and effects on the world's poor is something that we should take note of.

[64 : 56] Animal cruelty has been taken off the streets. Horses are no longer beaten to death on the highway. It's become invisible. The public used to go to watch animal vivisections. The cruelties of animal experimentation now are hidden away behind closed doors, only coming to light when animal rights activists infiltrate laboratories and take photographs.

John Flavel, the Puritan, was horrified at the cruelties to livestock as they were driven through the streets and slaughtered in public view. Nowadays, animals are bred in industrial farming facilities, transported in closed vehicles, and slaughtered behind locked doors at locations far from centres of population.

Matthew Scully describes the condition of livestock in a modern industrial facility in the US. The animals lie covered in their own urine and excrement with broken legs from trying to escape or just to turn, covered with festering sores, tumours, ulcers, lesions, or what my guide shrugged off as the routine pus pockets.

Now, Scully, by the way, is a contemporary conservative American evangelical who was at one time a senior speech writer for George W. Bush and has written a book called Dominion.

There's a copy over there if you want to have a look at it, after which he resigned as Bush's speech writer, I think to do with the publication of the book. It's a remarkable book.

[66 : 24] He's not a way out animal rights protester. He's somebody who, a Christian person who was horrified at what he found. Susan Eiszitz describes the failures of stunning in US slaughterhouses.

Stunning is the process which is supposed to make slaughtering humane. But it results in animals, as Eiszitz describes, coming back to life while they're having their legs cut off.

After this, they go through the skinning machine and one slaughterhouse worker told Eisnitz that some were still alive at this stage. Obviously horrified by this account, she protested that maybe they weren't alive, could it just be a muscle reaction?

The worker replied, when they're sucking in air and bellowing, their eyes bugging out, if people were to see this, they'd probably feel really bad about it, but in a packing house, everybody gets so used to it that it doesn't mean anything.

Now, these descriptions are what happens in well-regulated modern industrial farming in a developed country. The likelihood is that most of the meat that you eat is imported from countries where there are no animal welfare rules at all.

[67 : 41] Many Christians I've discussed this with protest that they're not personally cruel, they only eat the meat. But that always seems to me like the bank robber protesting innocence because he only drove the getaway car.

Evangelicals of the past would have asked, what does God think of this? The loss of a biblical vision of God's creation also has an impact on evangelism.

many people sensitive to green issues consider that Christianity is part of the problem, not the solution. You asked earlier whether the results of the poll were typical or not.

I think that many people consider evangelical Christians, at least as presented to us in the popular press, as certainly not being leaders in environmental or animal welfare reform.

as we saw in the video, the environmentalist Arnold Toynbee argued that Christianity is just what we don't need because it teaches that mankind is morally entitled to exploit the rest of the universe for the indulgence of human greed, and he concludes that we need to embrace pantheism.

[68 : 55] Now, as I hope I've shown, this is a tragic error, but one perpetuated by the attitudes of many contemporary Christians. Christians, the misrepresentation of biblical teaching on creation, fall, and redemption diverts many people into other belief systems and is a powerful force against evangelism among an increasingly environmentally aware population.

Simply put, Christians are immoral and are the worst possible people to tell others how to live in the modern world. this is a tragedy.

We should not, however, be too despondent. I mentioned at the outset that the stewardship sense of dominion is growing among contemporary evangelicals, although the theology is a bit thin in comparison with the reformist theology that I've outlined to you.

The Church of England has recently launched an environmental campaign and the Bishop of London has described the profligate use of resources as sinful. In the US, the 30 million strong National Association of Evangelicals has circulated a statement on the Christian duty to conserve the environment.

A 2005 survey in the US showed that 52% of conservative evangelicals supported strict environmental regulation even if it costs jobs or higher prices.

[70 : 19] So the scene is changing. On the table over there, there's a book by John Halton, who is a well-known climate scientist and also an evangelical.

The scene is changing, although we rarely hear about it, partly as a result of stereotyping of Christians in the secular and green press. At the beginning of this talk, I cited the Washington Post and the Guardian, which both reported the evangelical James Watt as telling US Congress, after the last trees felled, Christ will come back.

And it's a quotation which is much cited elsewhere. Watt never said it. He was misreported by the liberal columnist Bill Moyers as part of a campaign to ridicule American evangelicals.

Don't believe everything you hear about evangelical attitudes in the newspapers. Now, I've spoken a lot about the reformers' attitudes, but let's remind ourselves that these insights long predated the Reformation.

And Miriam's going to read you the prayer of St. Basil the Great, who was a fourth-century church father. Perhaps we can make this prayer our own. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.

[71 : 45] O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, our brothers the animals to whom thou gavest the earth as their home in common with us. We remember with shame that in the past we have exercised the high dominion of man with ruthless cruelty, so that the voice of the earth, which should have gone up to thee in song, has been a groan of travail.

May we realise that they live not for us alone, but for themselves and for thee, and that they love the sweetness of life. That's all from us.

Okay. I think we have a time for discussion now. Over to you. I'm sorry?

I was quite surprised that you thought that currently a lot of evangelicals take the view that dominion means domination. Is that based on research?

Well, it's based on my conversations with lots of evangelicals and reading of the literature.

[73 : 08] It is a very common view, and it's an almost universal view among secular commentators of the evangelical church, both in the UK and the US.

It isn't much helped by some statements that come out of the conservative church in the United States, but as I indicated with the James Watt quotation, you have to be a bit cautious about that, because the reporting is very selective.

So I think there are a wide range of views within the evangelical communion, but the view of dominion as making use the evangelicals and the animals is very common.

I was talking to a friend a couple of weeks ago at church who has a medical condition which means he had to change his diet, and he said, well, it was a pity that he was much meat as previously, because God gave us animals to eat, didn't he?

Animals are ingredients. I think it's quite a common view still. Though it's changing. I don't want to be too pessimistic about this training.

[74 : 20] When we think about other issues than animals, I think there's a much growing awareness of stewardship of environmental resources. I mean, I noticed, for instance, on your table over there, you've got a leaflet from Tier Fund encouraging people to go and protest back in, make representations back last November outside Parliament about some environmental issues and a card to sign up to trying to prevent climate change.

And I think there is a very different feel beginning to develop on those sorts of issues among Christians and among evangelicals than even five years ago, say. If we could conceivably call ourselves biblical Christians, do you believe that one of the generations should become vegetarians?

Well, it's a very interesting question. The term vegetarian developed in this relatively modern term. It developed, again, popularity in the mid-19th century.

To a large extent, because of the preaching of a chap called Cowherd, which is an interesting cowherd, yes, in Salford. He was a minister in Salford, which is an interesting name for a pioneering vegetarian.

He came out of a Swedenborgian church, Swedenborg being a mystic who's not much known nowadays, perhaps happily so if you've read any of his writings, which are extraordinary.

[76 : 04] And Cowherd took his congregation away from the Swedenborgian church and founded a church called the Bible Christian Church, which by his name might suggest, looked more towards the Bible than Mr. Swedenborg as his authority.

And to be frank, he didn't get very far. He wasn't particularly good theologian.

And his church is certainly not what we might call a biblically oriented church. But one of the things that he did discover in the Bible was this teaching about the nature of animals and in particular the teaching against cruelty.

And he felt that cruelty was so endemic at the time, this would have been mid-19th century, in the provision of meat in that period, that no conscientious Christian person at the time could eat meat. And so his church became largely vegetarian. And most of the early members of the English Vegetarian Society came out of that church. And they sent a missionary to the United States and the same links can be found between that missionary and the churches he founded there and the early vegetarian movement in the United States.

[77 : 23] But vegetarianism very quickly became something quite different from Cowherd's kind of Christian vision and all sorts of other beliefs congregated around it. And it developed in other directions.

So I'm wary about saying that, though I don't in fact eat meat, but I would be wary about describing myself as a vegetarian. I'd rather say that I think Christian people should look to the scripture and then look at their eating habits.

And there are lots of things then emerge. Is it really right to, fair trade have drawn attention to many aspects of food that we eat?

Is it really right to ship stuff or fly stuff halfway around the world to eat out of season? What cruelties are involved in the meat that we eat? Do we know where it comes from, how it's slaughtered?

authorities.

And people commenting on it. And he was interviewed by the BBC about it. And the interviewer asked in astonishment, well, does the Bible really say anything about animal welfare?

[84 : 07] And he then had an opportunity to say what biblical teaching about the world is. Yeah, the protest was about exporting calves from Britain for the veal trade in Europe.

And the reason they're crated is because it makes the flesh white. It was actually the export of live calves from Shoreham, just down the road from here.

Do you have a still-nosed field, right? I'm sorry? Do you have a still-nosed field, right? Oh, yeah. Yeah. Which ones? Which ones?

Oh, sorry, which ones? I'm pretty sure France does. France also legally protects the false feeding of geese for foie gras, which is, again, illegal in this country.

No, it's not illegal to sell it. Sorry. Yeah, I was going to say, I think the... I mean, you can dismiss, in a sense, this sort of very naive here as a sort of postmodern rhetoric that there was a kind of safe Christianity and safe capitalism and so on.

[85 : 23] But at the same time, it's... I mean, it's never clear to me exactly what the view of the Green Party or Friends of the Earth actually is.

I mean, whether they're actually claiming that our footprint on the Earth should be effectively negligible is... I don't know if you see how the panthers do support that.

But it seems to me that there is a view... What Christianity does teach is an active management of the world, not a passive one. And that is certainly different, perhaps, to some greener, I think.

But on the other hand, it's difficult to see how any such passive view actually could be maintained.

And what are you actually going to do? Are you going to cull the people? I mean, we have six billion humans on the planet.

It's too many for the thing to be self-sustaining. So it has to be active. I think this was quite a problem with quoting some of the reformers' views, that they didn't really understand how complex the problem was.

[86 : 35] And that nearly actually industrial... You know, things that actually... Even just using drugs to cure people, which surely everybody would think is a good thing.

But in fact, that itself creates its own problems. And I think that it seems to me that the real Christian understanding of this has got to be more...

More constructive and more creative about how we can actually actively manage the world in order to...

To... To... You know, actually manage the world in order to... You know, to maintain it. I mean, he's to say it's a good thing.

I'm sure he's... You know, he's a good thing. But you can't just say, okay, we're all... You know, as if the problem's all going to go away, I think everybody says, yes, we ought to maintain the world. It's not going to happen.

[87 : 36] I mean, one of my... One reason I'm not a vegetarian is because I don't particularly want to see all these populations of pigs and cows have become extinct, for instance. Which I suspect what would happen if we all gave up eating meat.

Because we say there isn't room for them. So it's not a... I mean, I suppose I'm saying, how can we take a much more active and positive approach to this rather than just saying, well, you know, we really should be concerned about it.

Can I just chip in? I think that's an exceedingly good question. One of the reasons why so many quotes are from the Reformers and Calvinists because actually, from the end of the 19th century onwards, there hasn't been a lot of really hard, thorough Christian thinking about this kind of thing. So perhaps that's a bit of an indictment of us. And that is a challenge that we have to rise to, or people within the Christian community today, because that thinking does need to be done in the light of the new situations.

That's one of the really encouraging things about Sir John Horton, who I think Phil referred to, whose book we've got over there, who is a leading authority on climate change and a very committed Christian believer.

[88 : 51] And he's someone who, using his expertise, has really got stuck into this debate and has encouraged a lot of Christians in the USA who have perhaps been fed things from other perspectives to really think that through and to take things like climate change much more seriously.

And that's clearly only one aspect of the environmental issues facing us. And there's a lot of hard work that does need to be done. We've got to kind of take up where the Reformers left off and look at the situations biblically that have arisen in our time.

Many of the Victorian engineers were questions, and even in any case the Evangelicals, of course, and they were guided as what they were doing. It was a lot better than the lost of mankind.

I'm sure that's why they were doing it. Yeah, I agree. I think there's an enormous gap between green rhetoric and a Christian vision. And a Christian vision plainly involves active participation in the world, as you suggested.

And it is a task, as Miriam says, if one looks at the literature, that serious biblical thinking stops in the middle of the 19th century on this, and the 20th century is a desert.

[90 : 04] Recently, creation care and sort of rather vague stewardship ideas have become much more popular on both sides of the Atlantic. But when you read the literature, it's very thin in comparison with the literature of the Reformers.

And I genuinely believe that the reason that so many reforming movements in the 19th century were so successful was because God blessed faithfulness and the faithful return to his word.

And the people concerned were tiny groups of people. And the effect they had was out of all proportion to the size and the influence they had objectively. And yet they found all these societies and set off reforming movements of all kinds.

On the farm animals, I think that the idea that everybody's going to stop eating meat overnight is not realistic. What's more likely to happen is over a period of years the farm animal population will drop. It won't disappear. Particular breeds won't disappear any more than rare breeds have disappeared. In fact, arguably rare breeds have survived quite successfully and are specifically farmed.

[91 : 25] Incidentally, there's a connection between I've indicated a connection between farm animals and the developing world. There's a connection between farming and global climate change in that 10% of greenhouse gases come from the industrial animal industry.

That's in fertilizer production to grow feed, exporting the feed over long distances to feed the animals in the industrial world, killing the animals, transporting them, refrigeration.

If you toss it all up, it comes to 10%. It's much more effective for a family to stop eating meat than to swap to a Prius from a gas gazler or to stop flying in the aeroplanes.

That's a tiny contribution in comparison with animals. So it might not be such a bad thing on the part of any other reason if the animal population decreased.

If all the world had as much meat as the developed west, we'd need three planets to grow a thing. I'm not suggesting that we offer the hydrogen. I agree, we've got too much meat.

[92 : 40] Certainly, I'm not advocating battery farm. I agree, but I'm not convinced myself that we write for a reason to get it.

I think we need an understanding. I mean, we do need both an understanding of the science and of the moral issues. Unfortunately, what's happened, of course, a lot in Western is that they're, to a large extent, being divorced.

And that's what, I think, a lot of, I mean, that's probably what Toynbee's getting at. He's not actually advocating a sort of naturalism like the science that we're not an expert in Toynbee.

He's saying, when he angles, he's saying, you've got to have some moral basis as well as a scientific basis. Yeah, absolutely. It's the separation of two, which was largely, so there wasn't much thinking on this in the 20th century for that reason.

Well, not by Christians, there wasn't. And it's striking that people like Ray, for example, from Ray's, was heavily involved in both the science and even someone like Wesley, but Ray particularly, heavily involved in both the theology and the ethical side of it and the science.

[94 : 05] I think we'll, in a short of conclusion there, it's worth thinking that regarding the whole of creation, Christ says he's making all things new.

And that's what the resurrection does, isn't it? It says that a new creation, actually we don't end up in heaven, and we end up in a new, a whole new environment, which is one way of giving a plug for a fortnight's time.

We're going to be looking, we're not meeting next Saturday, fortnight's time it'll be looking at the resurrection, and then the following week, Ryan Douglas is going to take us through a selection of different isms and ologies and comparing them with Christian faith and worldview.

So just to remind you of those meetings coming up, can I say a very big thank you. It's been a little uncomfortable listening this evening, but very stimulating and very challenging, so we're grateful to you for coming.

So perhaps you could pray. We thank you, Lord, for what we've heard. We pray that you would show us in wisdom the way that we may live in this world that you have made for your glory.

[95 : 19] And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Thank you very much.