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A Biblical Position on the Environment

Purpose: To put together the information discussed so far and construct a Biblical Position on the environment

1 Introduction

This week, assemble all we have seen into a Biblical view.

We first re-affirmed the completeness and authority of the Word
Here are principles we obtained in the previous lessons:

2 God

- ☐ God is Almighty
- ☐ He works all things according to His will and for His glory
- ☐ He is independent of all His creatures
- ☐ He is the fount of all being
- ☐ He has sovereign dominion over all creatures, disposes of them as He pleases
- ☐ Nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain
- ☐ Some Scriptures: Gen. 17:1, Rev. 4:8, Eph. 1:11, Acts 17:24-25, Rom 11:36, Rev. 4:11, 1 Tim. 6:15, Dan 4:25, 35, Acts 15:18, Ezek. 11:5.

3 God's Decree

- ☐ God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass:
- ☐ It is a holy, wise and good plan that God has freely made
- ☐ It is unchangeable and covers all things
- ☐ Its end is the glory of God
- ☐ We know some from what has been revealed
- ☐ We know some from what comes to pass
- ☐ He does not "ordain" what He foresees
- ☐ God's decree includes sin
- ☐ But He is and cannot be the author of evil
- ☐ It includes the eternal destiny of men, women and angels
- ☐ Some Scriptures: Eph 1:11, Heb 6:17, Deut 29:29, 1:13, 1 John 1:5, Romans 9:11-23

4 God's Providence

- ☐ God the great creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things...
- ☐ God is in control, working out His decree as first cause or through 2nd causes
- ☐ God's providence includes man's sinful acts, yet He is not the author of sin
- ☐ God's providence is directed towards the sanctification of His people
- ☐ Towards the growth and spiritual prosperity of the church
- ☐ It is directed towards the judgment of the ungodly

- ☐ Some Scriptures: Heb 1:3; Rom 9:17; Ps 135:6; 2 Chron 32:25-26, 31; 2Cor 12:7-9; Ps 77; Rom 1:24-28, 11:7-8; Matt 13:12; Mat 16:18; Acts 2:47; Gen 9:11-13; Ecc 12:13&14

5 Creation

- ☐ When God Completed the creation, it was "very good"
- ☐ It revealed some characteristics of its Creator
- ☐ All environmental issues come from sin
- ☐ Even those not performed directly by man
- ☐ Man was perfect
- ☐ Made in the image of His Creator
- ☐ He was the pinnacle of created things on earth
- ☐ Commanded to rule over the earth as steward
- ☐ To tend the garden, defend it, to fill the earth and subdue it
- ☐ He delighted in obeying the commands of His Creator
- ☐ Some Scriptures: Genesis 1:27-31; 2:15 & 2:19

6 The Fall

- ☐ Both man and the creation are affected by the fall
- ☐ Creation itself is in bondage to corruption; problems would not end even if we could take man away
- ☐ God is still revealed in creation but the picture is defaced
- ☐ Man is still made in God's image but again the image is horribly disfigured.
- ☐ Man is still steward of creation but his dominion is altered to be harder and less complete than before – there will be rebellion
- ☐ Fallen man does not and cannot exercise this stewardship for the glory of God but for selfish purposes which give rise to outcomes that can affect the environment
- ☐ Some Scriptures: Genesis 3:7-8; 3:12-23; 4:1; 9:1-3; Romans 1:20; 8:18-22.

7 Redemption Begun

- ☐ Christ purified all things by His blood – in heaven and on earth – universal consequences
- ☐ The full realization of this will be on the Last Day
- ☐ We have redeemed spirits, groan for redeemed bodies
- ☐ Earth still a slave to corruption
- ☐ Creation groans for Last Day, when it will be liberated
- ☐ Man's mandate, unchanged
- ☐ Redeemed man has the capacity to be a better steward of all God has given
- ☐ Some Scriptures: Revelation 22:3, Galatians 3:10-14, Acts 3:18-21, Colossians 1:15-20, Ephesians 1:10, Hebrews 9:23, 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 1 Corinthians 15:50-54, Philippians 3:21, 1 John 3:2, Romans 8:18-25

8 Eternal State (Redemption Completed)

- ☐ At the appropriate time, God will purge this creation with fire
- ☐ He will make all things new
- ☐ There will be a link between the old earth and the new and between the old heavens and the new
- ☐ All will be restored – "very good" again
- ☐ Man will receive his glorified body
- ☐ It will be the body he had on earth but transformed and glorified, like Christ's
- ☐ The image of God in man will also be restored

- ☐ He will sit on the throne with Christ, judging even angels
- ☐ He will delight to obey God and glorify Him
- ☐ He will not be able to sin
- ☐ Man will regain the tree of life
- ☐ Will worship and glorify God forever
- ☐ Some Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 1 Corinthians 15:50-54, Philippians 3:21, 1 John 3:2, 2 Peter 3:5-7, 2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 20:11, Romans 8:18-22, Revelation 22:1-5, 2 Peter 3:11-13, Revelation 21:1-5, Rev 21:10-27.

9 **Developing a Biblical Position**

These are the areas we need to cover in a Biblical position:

9.1 **The Sovereignty of God**

9.1.1 **The purpose of the creation.**

What is this creation here for? The glory of God

How will this be accomplished? Salvation and damnation

How long will this present creation last? Until last saint saved

How do you know?

9.1.2 **The potential for environmental catastrophe**

Sinful man has the potential to destroy the world

Is this going to happen? Why/why not?

9.2 **The Fallen Creation**

9.2.1 **The state of the world after the fall.**

What is the current state of the creation according to Scripture?

– what is its condition?

– what does it reveal?

What do these things mean as far as the environment is concerned?

9.2.2 **The potential success of environmental initiatives.**

Does man have the potential to restore world to pre-fall state if he wanted to?

Why/why not?

9.3 **The Responsibility of Man**

9.3.1 **The role of man in general.**

What is man's place in the present created order?

What does God require of him?

How well is he able to perform that role?

9.4 **The Christian Perspective**

9.4.1 **The role of a church.**

What is the best thing a local church can do for the environment?

Why?

9.4.2 **The role of the believer.**

What should a believer do in respect of the environment?

Should he/she become directly involved in environmental projects?

What Gospel impact might a more “natural” environment have?

How should he/she approach this?

Care over claims concerning what is good for the environment!

Do the numbers add up? Make sure they do!

