Coming to Grips with the Religion of Environmentalism

In our lifetime, the shift in aggregate, national religious belief has been radical. In essence, and unfortunately, America has been in the process of changing horses: from the religion of Christianity to one of Radical Environmentalism. The American people are in the process of exchanging the worship of the Creator for the worship of His creation. This huge and dire error with extreme consequences, presages disaster.

The timeless truths of Genesis 1:26–31 have informed, guided, and dominated American thinking in the past. Make no mistake; our historic moorings, cultural understanding and obedience to what God says in this passage is the basis of America’s greatness.

My prayer is that this Bible study will help provide you with a clear, perspicuous understanding—the ability to cogently identify the differences—between these two dueling worldviews. Read on, my friend!

Ralph Drollinger
I. INTRODUCTION

For years, global warming advocates have proffered that the California drought is a precursor of things to come. But they abandon that alarm and leap to the other side as soon as California experiences an extremely wet year. In 2017 heavy rainfall and runoff filled all reservoirs, which caused water to be dumped into the Pacific Ocean at such a voracious rate that the spillway of Oroville Dam was seriously damaged. A San Francisco newspaper’s headline, which attested to that shift in thinking, read, “Is California Overdue for Biblical, Catastrophic Flooding? History Says It Could Be.”

I find such sudden, radical swings in climate theory to be both destructive to credibility and astonishingly amusing!

What seems to go largely unnoticed is that the 180-degree turn around of the radical doomsday climate-change folks contradicts what God’s Word states in this regard. In terms of worldwide drought, God says, He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Matthew 5:45b). Notice that God’s common grace promises rain even to the unrighteous! And in Genesis 9:11 God says to the flood theorists, “I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” In the Sermon on the Mount, God promises to always send us rain, and after the flood of Noah, God promised He would never flood the Earth again.

Other related passages of Scripture serve to contradict the idea that man, by himself, can destroy his earthly habitat. For example, Psalm 104:30 states, You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the ground. God says He will continually renew the face of the Earth until He forms a new heaven and a new Earth in the end times (Revelation 21:1).

In the thousands of years of climate history since these words were recorded, the veracity of God’s promises have proven to be reliable. So, who then should we trust?

To think that man can alter the Earth’s ecosystem—when God remains omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent in the current affairs of mankind—is to more than subtly espouse an ultra-hubristic, secular worldview relative to the supremacy and importance of man.

We can all rest assured and wholly rely on God’s aforementioned promises pertaining to His ability and willingness to sustain our world’s ecosystem!

What glorious truths God has given us! They run smack in the face of the secular fad theorists who try and scare us with global warming, or now, suddenly, flooding!

What has set America apart from other nations of the world has been the strong presupposition of its innovators, i.e., to steward the natural resources of the country in ways that add value to them and thereby benefit others. This premise is based on a mindset that assumes both the utility of natural resources and the value they possess to help others—the very things that God salutes when He created the world in which we live.

Notice these two aspects from Genesis 1:26–31, our passage of study:

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping
**VERSE OF THE WEEK**

Romans 1:25

*For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.*

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Inevitably, these worldviews clash. Certainly inherent in the Christian view of the world’s resources is the understanding of good stewardship, but that perception is not good enough for radical environmentalists who in essence idolize and worship the Earth; theirs is the demand to limit the progress and expansion of mankind. The Earth is the highest good in their way of thinking—not man; and to them, God is a myth, harmless at best, but potentially dangerous. Make no mistake; the difference between secular preservationists and Christian conservationists is big.

One illustration of this clashing worldview is California water. (Please allow me, since I am from California, to take the liberty of using my state to illustrate this study, since I am intimately familiar with this situation. I also have a degree in Ecosystems from UCLA). In an average year of California rainfall, God blesses the state with 200-million-acre feet of fresh water. On average, that water is enough to supply the annual needs of 400 million households—or about 1.2 billion people—enough water to supply all the needs of India or China.

Of that huge supply, only 20-million-acre feet are presently utilized; the remainder is lost—if not absorbed in the soil—allowed to flow back into the Pacific Ocean because environmentalists refuse to allow additional storage lakes to be built. And of the 20-million-acre feet that is captured, 15 million goes for agriculture and only 5 million is allotted to residential use!

1 In other words, only 2.5 percent of California’s fresh water supply is directly used by households—and yet there is an outcry to limit household usage!

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**Whereas Scripture clearly teaches that man is the apex of God’s purposes and creation, the primary purpose and belief of Radical Environmentalism is the preservation of the Earth.**

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The Psalmist in chapter eight reinforces the idea that God has given man dominion over His creation:

> What is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, and You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, whatever passes through the paths of the seas” (vv. 4–8).

The Psalmist reinforces the idea that man has been created in the image of God and has been given dominion over all of the Earth, and if not specifically stated in these passages, elsewhere in Scripture is the idea of man’s living to help others (cf. Philippians 2).
In fact, in order to secure tunneling under the Delta (as a substitute for the long overdue peripheral canal project) so as to deliver more northern California water to the Bay Area and Southern California (75 percent of the population lives in the south, and 75 percent of the water is in the north), the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California had to agree not to expand its water usage—as if California water was somehow in short supply!

The water situation in California is an apt illustration of Radical Environmentalism's attempt to limit the growth of mankind in the state by curtailing the supply of water—even though there is more than enough to go around. At the core of the decades-old, heated water battle in California are dueling worldviews: one says that people are most important, the other says that the environment is.

In fact, Governor Pat Brown, who was the state governor from 1959 to 1967, pioneered the California Aqueduct many decades ago. Before the religion of Radical Environmentalism prevailed, the state engineers designed the aqueduct to carry three times more water to Southern California than it ever has. That is to say, the state's religious understanding has changed between the time of his leadership and his son's. In all fairness, his son, Governor Jerry Brown (who served from 1975 to 1983 and 2011 to 2019) championed the Delta tunnel project in lieu of the peripheral canal, which his father had envisioned from the get-go. But having given Governor Jerry credit, his tunnel project has much less capacity than his dad’s original peripheral canal plan.

Accordingly, a person's worldview inevitably determines how public servants and the nation as a whole utilize (or fail to utilize) their natural resources for the betterment of others. Therefore, what informs your worldview becomes most important. In light of this, notice what God says from the first chapter of His Book.

II. THE HIERARCHY OF GOD’S CREATIONAL ORDERING OF THE WORLD

Genesis 1:26–31 yields significant insights into the uniqueness of man that God has specified. Here God distinguishes mankind from the remainder of His creation. After creating the heavens, light, land, atmosphere, and the sea, God creates the fish, birds, and animals (Genesis 1:1–25). Subsequent to all that, He creates man. But notice an exclusive difference: God creates man unlike any other previously created creature: in Our image, according to Our likeness... states Genesis 1:26.²

This critically important exclusive difference places man in a distinctly different position from the remainder of the created order. Both of the Hebrew words, image (tselem) and likeness (demuth) carry the idea of man’s being a reflection or a similitude of God’s communicable attributes and characteristics—in the sense of intellect, emotion, will, and morality. No other created life has all of these distinctions. Therefore, man is unique: You have put all things under his feet states the Psalmist in 8:6b.
God has placed man in a superior position over the remainder of creation. This is fundamentally important because it forecasts God’s intention: that the remainder of creation is to serve man. Notice the line of demarcation relative to the biblical order of creation.

Compare this understanding of creational hierarchy to other belief systems. For instance, in India, pantheism lies at the root of national beliefs. Accordingly, there is no line of demarcation in the created order, which means the rat has as much right to the corn in the cupboard as does the child. In California, where the religion of Radical Environmentalism reigns supreme, it means the fish has just as much right to the stream as does the dam builder. The pumping of water for people is curtailed if the delta smelt fish could be sucked into a turbine.

In God’s eyes, man is the highest good; man reigns preeminent over all of creation—and yes, in reigning he does so with respect to the Creator of creation, to whom he must answer. Yes, he ameliorates for the life of the smelt, but at the end of the day, the smelt doesn’t rule his life; rather, he rules the smelt’s life. The late Christian apologist Francis Schaeffer is right when he stated, “So the Bible tells me who I am. It tells me how I am differentiated from all other things. I do not need to be confused, therefore, between myself and animal life.”

The biblically informed public servant must therefore order his thinking in light of God’s revealed hierarchy in creation.

In creating the world, God expects man to reign and steward His creation in ways that are pleasing unto Him. Lest there be any doubt about man’s being the height of God’s created order, the one in charge, the Psalmist adds in 115:16:

**The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth He has given to the sons of men.**

### III. THE HOUSEKEEPERS OF GOD’S CREATIONAL ORDERING OF THE WORLD

In God’s hierarchy of creation man is atop and is to rule over all of creation and subdue it (Genesis 1:26, 28). Notice these words: *rule* and *subdue*. They define how man is to operate in his preeminent role within creation. Not only is he given the unique identity of being created in God’s image, but he is also tasked with the charge to *rule* and *subdue*.

The Creator has appointed man as the warden of His possession.

Man is to *fill the earth* (v. 28) and oversee its operation as a stewardship responsibility. Note that the word *subdue* does not carry with it a bulldozer mentality. When commenting on Genesis, Ian McHarg, one of the world’s foremost landscape architects, said in summary of his thinking, “If ever there was justification for a bulldozer mentality, this verse is it.” But what McHarg failed to see is the biblical context of the passage: Mankind has inherent stewardship responsibilities before his Creator, as is borne by the very fact that this right of dominion is given before the Fall, which does not occur until Genesis chapter 3. Post-Fall, yes, man can and does sinfully alter his steward responsibilities if left unchecked (which is why evangelizing the lost is the most important discipline for achieving the ultimate stewardship of the planet). Unfortunately, McHarg elected to abandon the ideas of biblical *rule* and *subdue*, substituting and believing another religion, pantheism, was the best religion for planet stewardship.

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“[Governments] could not give the rights essential to happiness... We claim them from a higher source: from the King of kings, and Lord of all the earth.”

— John Dickinson, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Governor of Pennsylvania, Governor of Delaware, general in the American Revolution.


John Dickinson

Coming to Grips with the Religion of Environmentalism

in Genesis 1:21 and 31 that all He created is good, God expected and continues to expect that mankind will not reconfigure or destroy that which He put him in charge of. Rather, states one leading Evangelical commentator regarding these passages, these words “speak of a productive ordering of the Earth and its inhabitants to yield its riches and accomplish God’s purposes.”

This foundational, biblically based way of thinking has accelerated America’s quick and relatively sudden vault into world leadership. Rockefeller’s innovation of the use of gasoline, a byproduct from the production of lamp oil, Carnegie’s innovation of steel alloy from iron, Morgan’s investment in the creation of electricity, the harnessing of water by Hoover Dam and its transportation by the Metropolitan Water District and Mulholland’s importation of the same from the Sierra Nevada: all gave birth to American innovation and the industrial revolution!

Here’s the point: Such ruling and subordination of natural resources were largely done by Christian men whose minds and actions were informed by Genesis 1! Such fundamental subjugation of natural resources then gave rise to efficient modern agriculture, energy production, transportation, architecture, and their likes. The current trend now, to move away from this biblical understanding, drastically challenges the American way of life, our world leadership in innovation, and our very quality of life. 6

This is perhaps best illustrated by a classic interview with William Gould, the retired CEO of Southern California Edison and the father of the western power grid. Gould remarked about a 1984 summit meeting with environmental leaders in Salt Lake City and how the meeting went sideways. The bottom line, the environmentalist exclaimed that they had enough laws on the books to hinder the development of any new power plants. Gould went on to say how the development of the San Onofre Nuclear Power Plant was a nightmare due to continual public lawsuits. He remarked that SCE would never attempt another due to huge cost overruns coupled with the insecurity of ever being able to come on line. Subsequently, other power developers left the state for greener pastures. Therein was the seedbed for the California electrical crisis—a shortage threat that still persists on hot summer days. Now years later, the radical environmentalists have succeeded in shutting down the world’s most efficient way to produce electricity—and with technological advances, now one of the safest.

It’s very plain to see that countries such as India which possess similar natural resources but hold to dissimilar beliefs experience incessant intractability. But such is the exact same road on which America finds herself due to her disregard and rejection of what God so clearly exclaims in Genesis!

To allow fish to govern the construction of dams, endangered species to govern power plants, flies to govern hospitals, or kangaroo rats, homes is to miss the clear proclamation of God in Genesis.

God calls all public servants and citizens to walk in the confidence of His hierarchy of creation with an understanding of our housekeeping responsibilities. For Americans to discount Genesis is for America to walk backward.

When the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California had the foresight to increase water storage to assure delivery during drought years, they spent over $3 billion constructing the Diamond Valley Reservoir, which holds an additional 800-million-acre feet of water. As wise a
stewardship responsibility this was to in-
sure water for 17 million people who live
in Southern California, $1 billion ended
up having to be paid to fight and assuage
the lawsuits of the radical environmental-
ists who managed to delay the project for
ten years. In contrast, during these Cali-
fornia drought years of late, the non-sub-
du ing radical environmentalists of Marin
County have had to jerry-rig water pipes
across the Richmond Bridge in order to
keep their citizens from dying of thirst.
That’s what happens when endangered
species rule over people.

The false religion of
Radical Environmentalism
leads to human poverty
and cultural insolvency.

Beloved, this religion of environmental-
ism is not a very good religion on which
to base a country! America’s problems are
not so much rooted in a lack of creativity,
markets, or conveyance as much as they
are with religious beliefs—unlike the reli-
gion of environmentalism—the Christian
religion’s organizational chart relative to
creation is not aberrant.

IV. THE HARVEST OF GOD’S
CREATIONAL ORDERING
OF THE WORLD

Continuing in the first chapter of Gen-
esis, verses 29 and 30 specifically reveal
that God’s purpose in creating the world
was for man’s betterment and enjoyment.
More specifically, the plants, animals,
birds, and every moving thing were cre-
ated by God to be man’s food. Without
the aid of Scripture, a person might sup-
pose that this is a greedy self-centered way
for man to view other living inhabitants
sharing the planet. Certainly that would
be the conclusion of those who reject the
inspiration and authority of God’s Word;
it is easy to see how people could arrive at
such conclusions apart from God’s Word!

But God reassures man in verse 31 that
not only were His creation and hierarchy
very good—but that what He also created
was and is to serve as mankind’s multivari-
ate forms of food.

Man need not feel guilty
because his basis for
bountiful living is not
arrogance; it is revelation!

Opposite the effacing anthropology of the radical environmentalist, Scripture
unabashedly proclaims man’s superiority
in the world over all else. Again, Psalm
115:16b states, But the earth He has given
to the sons of men. Further to the point, 1
Timothy 4:1–4 castigates those (and their
religion) who fail to understand God’s
will on this matter and powerfully states:

But the Spirit explicitly says that in lat-
er times some will...advocate abstaining
from foods which God has created to be
gratefully shared in by those who believe
and know the truth. For everything cre-
at ed by God is good, and nothing is to be
rejected....

V. SUMMARY

God is pleased when organic and inor-
ganic substances, the lesser of creation, are
utilized to benefit those uniquely created
in His image. Conversely, He is greatly
displeased when humans inappropriately
exalt His creation and worship it at His
expense. Romans 1:21–25 underscores
this displeasure:

For even though they knew God, they did
not honor Him as God...Professing to be
wise, they became fools, and exchanged
the glory of the incorruptible God for an
image in the form of corruptible man
and of birds and four-footed animals
and creeping creatures...For they ex-
changed the truth of God for a lie, and
worshiped and served the creature rather
than the Creator...

In a culminating crescendo of recurring
biblical teaching, herein the worship of
God’s creation instead of God Himself
is deemed as foolishness. God has harsh
words for those who profess to be wise
with biblically unenlightened ideology.
My friend, don’t be counted among these
people. If you are, my friend, you need to
come to Christ!

I see three conclusions very applicable to
the life of a public servant as a result of
this study:

A. GOD IS PRO-MANKIND

The God of the Bible is pro-mankind. Be-
cause He loves us and wants to bless us, He
gave us a planet full of abundant natural
resources! It is true that the fall has made
those natural resources more difficult to
realize for our good, but nonetheless, He
didn’t remove them from us. The religion
of Radical Environmentalism, on the oth-
er hand, is anti-mankind. All that the pro-
ponents have left in their twisted way of
thinking, which is devoid of acknowledg-
ing, serving, and worshipping God, is the
physical world around them in which they
find themselves. As if to think they are
on the moral high ground, their religion
is bent on keeping man from that which
God has intended for his betterment.

B. THERE IS GREAT
POLITICAL VALUE
IN HOLDING ONTO
THE GENESIS
UNDERSTANDING

There is much political value in holding to
the Genesis order of creation. It is impor-
tant to communicate through your actions
and voting record that people are of great-
er importance and worth than anything
else in your district—both animate and
inanimate objects—because at the end of
the day, only human beings are eligible to
vote. (At least at this point in American
history, fish can’t vote). Stand for the bet-
terment of common people versus a member of the “enlightened class” who deprives people of making a living and forging a better life.

C. DIRE DEMOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES ARE IN STORE FOR RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Well worth noting is the demographic consequences of Radical Environmentalism. Those advocating this position tend to have had only one child, if that, in the last two decades. Accordingly:

What radical environmentalists have committed is akin to ethnic suicide; let’s call it ideological suicide.

Those believing in the biblical truth of multiplying and filling the Earth have continued to have large families. Since the advent of Radical Environmentalism in America in the last two decades, it is estimated that the latter ideological affinity group has outperformed the former by six million children. Those six million children are just now reaching voting status. Said another way, young Americans raised with a Christian worldview will soon outnumber the children of radical environmentalists by at least six million voters in coming elections. Indeed, the scriptural truth that your sins will find you out will soon be realized across the country. Hopefully, the religion of Radical Environmentalism will soon be relegated to fringe minority status in American society. Amen.

1. Per statistics from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.
2. The words “Us” and “Our” in this passage are indicative of the Trinitarian nature of God (cf. Deuteronomy 6:4).
3. Meaning God is in everything.
7. When given the opportunity to store California Bay Area drinking water in a new proposed reservoir near Lake Shasta in the northern part of the state, so as to facilitate the deconstruction of the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir Dam in the Sierra Nevada, I find it interesting that radical environmentalists refuse the proposition because HHR water and power presently cost the Bay Area nothing! That observation is to say that when restoring the environment comes at a personal cost, they seem quick to jettison their ideology.