

“Stewardship is everything we do ...”

Reflections on a whole-life approach to Christian stewardship provided by the Stewardship Formation Team of the General Board



Care of Creation



Everything we do affects God’s creation in one way or another.

Think for a moment about the other living things with which we share the planet. They are in trouble, becoming extinct at a rate not seen in millions of years. While it’s tempting to put the blame elsewhere - those loggers in the rainforest or ivory poachers on the savannah - much of the responsibility lies closer to home.

For instance, forests are crucial to the planet’s bio-diversity. Yet thanks in good measure to consumption patterns in the “developed” world, they are disappearing at alarming rates. U.S. cities have lost 20% of their trees in the past 10 years to houses, malls and roads; with 5% of the world’s population, we consume 30% of the paper (a whopping 760 pounds per person per year).

God gave us a very specific responsibility: to till and keep the creation.

We’ve done much better at one than the other. What are Christians to do?

1. **Lighten up.** Use less of everything, and recycle everything in sight. American consumers devour 400 pounds of stuff per person per day (five times the pace the earth could sustain if everyone used this much). We can do better.
2. **Think twice.** Carefully consider major purchases like the second car or a larger house, or how far you live from work or school, as these decisions will far outstrip small decisions like turning off the faucet when brushing (not bad—but not good enough).
3. **Ask, “Where’s the beef?”** Experts say that cutting back on our meat-based diets would have a big impact on God’s earth and the creatures with whom we share it.

It is daunting to know that everything we do impacts God’s earth, but faithful living calls us to choose in many ways each day to be “keepers” more than “tillers.” Our God - and millions of other living things - are counting on us.

Contributed by David Radcliff, New Community Project

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