

Biblical Answers to Difficult Questions: Can We Save the Planet from Climate Change

July 17, 2022

Genesis 1:26-28, Various

Dominion given in Gen. 1:26-28 is a command to use the planet not abuse it.

Facts: 1) It is verifiable that the earth's average annual temperature is increasing. About 1 degree since 1980-2010 and from 1880 to 1910 the average temperature fell by almost 1 degree as well.

2) This trend is very much associated or correlated with carbon dioxide emissions.

4 Truths about God:

1) **God's Creation:** Gen. 1:1-5, Does day mean one long age or a 24-hr. day?

Seven (7) Arguments for God creating in 6 days:

1) **Vocabulary & Precision:** V5, light is Day, dark is Night, one period of light, one period of dark is one day. The word "day" is never used as a long period or age mostly used as a normal 24-hr. day. Ex. 20:9-10, our week is defined by God as seven days.

2) **Faith-Test:** V1, God created the heavens and earth. God was at the beginning of creation.

3) **Ridiculous-Faith:** Evolution and millions of years never observed. Ps. 19, creation displays God's glory. The fool has said in their heart there is no God. Creation is designed based upon evidence vs. saying all things evolved with no evidence.

4) **Motivated-Worship:** Rev. 14:6-7, Fear God and give Him glory who made the heavens and earth.

5) **Glory of Christ:** John 1:3,14, all things were made by Him.

6) **Total Authority:** The Bible is inerrant and its authority is supreme. Science is observed.

7) **Jesus Said So:** John 5:46, Jesus said if you believed Moses, you would believe Him. Moses wrote the account of creation in the Torah or first 5 books of the Bible. Col. 1:16, Jesus created all things. The world is trying to remove God as Creator.

- **A wrong world view leads us to think the world is coming to an end.**

2) **God's Character:** Gen. 9:8-15, God will never destroy the earth with water, V15. God's bow reminds us of God's promise to Noah. 1) God promises a livable earth. 2) Climate Change will not stop seasons. Seasons shall not cease, Gen. 8:22. Other Ref: Jer. 5:22, Jer. 33:20, if we can break day and night, God will break His covenant with David. Jer. 33:25, God has ordained day and night. Jer. 31:35-37, God's order in creation cannot be taken from Him.

3) **God's Curse:** Rom. 8:19-22, creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. Creation has an eager longing for the future. V20, nature desires restoration - sin is the problem caused by man. Is. 65: a new heaven and earth is coming.

4) **God's Conclusion:** 2 Peter 3:8-9, the elect are being saved as a result of God's patience. In V10, is "the heavens will pass away," talking about annihilation? In Luke 21:33, Jesus uses the phrase as well.

Is this annihilation or refinement of creation? In V 10, the words "pass away," are used in the Greek 29X and doesn't mean annihilation or be utterly destroyed. Can be used to speak of a path as in Matt. 8:28. Speaks of the end of trouble. Could be an end of an era, Matt.24:34. What about the words "heavenly bodies" in V10? A traditional translation word that is used is "elements." "Elements" would not have been a word used in the time as the Periodic Table came about 1850s. The best word is "heavenly bodies." What about "melt with fervent heat?" It means to "suffer in the heat." What about "burned up?" The best translation has the meaning "to be found" or "exposed, cleansing, purifying (metal)." Similar to purging of fire found in 1 Cor. 3:12-13.

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The word “**new**” in V13, this doesn’t mean brand new in relation to something old. It means obsolete. Our old body being made new through resurrection, not our old body being decimated. Faulty assumptions about Peter’s eschatology have influenced the rendering and translation of this passage, at times, operating under the assumption of complete annihilation. It doesn’t fit with Biblical eschatology that doesn’t speak of annihilation but redemption and renewal. Acts 3:20-21, a restoration of all things is coming.

V14, the reason to know creation will be purged or cleansed, is that we would be found to be without spot and blemish and at peace at the appearing of the Lord Jesus. V9, encourages us to hurry towards the cross, forgiveness, because of God’s patience.

Further Discussion and Application

To what extent do we trust science and allow it to shape our opinions and knowledge? What do we do with science when it contradicts the Bible? How do we answer those who argue science and a perverted view of creation? What do we answer if we just don’t know?

Read Psalm 19. What attributes of God are clearly seen in this Psalm? What aspects of salvation are evident in this psalm? In V14, how has the heart of the psalmist changed as they have considered all the wonders of God’s hand and His work?

How is our worship motivated by a correct view of creation and seeing God as the Creator and His Son as the one who upholds all things? The truths of Col. 1:16 bring us great confidence in our Savior, list ways that our spiritual life in Christ is impacted by the truths in this passage. Connect those truths to Col. 1:28, and how we mature as we learn and worship God for His wisdom and sovereignty.

Some passages that describe the new heaven and earth are: Gen. 2:10-14, Is. 65:17, Rev. 21:1-2, and Rev. 22:1-5. What picture does God give us about what is coming for those who are the Lord’s? The theme of redemption is found throughout Scripture. What are the objects of redemption? Who is the redeemer and what things will Jesus redeem?