

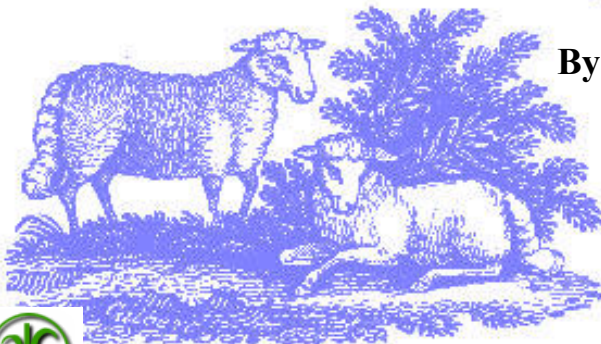
Christian Vegetarian Association UK



CVAUK
PEACE FOR ALL CREATION

Our Response to this Fallen World

By Don Gwillim



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Member Society

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Affiliated
Ministry

Our Response to this Fallen World (Issue 1)

In the following pages you will find that I make good use of quotes from other sources. Each author is far more articulate than myself and has a burning desire to make us aware of our responsibility towards all of God's creation. I therefore consider it my duty to declare that message in the most effective way possible.

I will endeavour to always acknowledge their contribution :

Andrew Linzey

Holder of the world's first fellowship in theology and animal welfare - the International Fund for Animal Welfare Senior Research Fellowship at Mansfield College, Oxford. He is also Special Professor of Theology in the University of Nottingham, and has written or edited numerous books on theology and ethics including some pioneering works on theology and animals.

Tony Campolo

One of the most popular and widely read Christian writers of our time. His best selling books, videos, audio cassettes and speaking engagements have kept him at the forefront of contemporary thought and social action. He is Professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. David's, Pennsylvania and also founder and president of the Evangelical Association for the promotion of education.

Denton Lotz General secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.

Albert Schweitzer

Awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1952, Medical Missionary to Africa, renowned world - wide as a musician, ethical philosopher and humanitarian. He suggested that people should develop a philosophy based on what he termed "reverence for life" embracing with compassion all forms of life.

Right Revd. John Austin Baker Former Bishop of Salisbury.

Humphrey Primatt

Anglican Vicar who in 1776 published a book called - The Duty of Mercy and the Sin of Cruelty to Brute Animals.

May Tripp Co-ordinator Animal Christian Concern (ACC).

There seems to be a conflict between those who emphasise saving souls and those who emphasise saving trees. This is a ridiculous conflict. We need saved souls who can live a meaningful life in God's beautiful world of nature which is yearning to be free from pollution.

Lets not confuse evangelism with ecology, but lets also show that true evangelists are also true ecologists.

Denton Lotz,

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It was Thursday morning, the Gwillim family awoke totally unaware that by 11 a.m. their paradise would be lost, perhaps forever. For 16 years we had

created a safe environment in the garden for chickens, ducks, wild birds & on mild days parrots. It was always alive with twitters, quacks, chicken & parrot noises, we always knew when a hawk was in the vicinity, for all would go very quiet & the ducks would turn one eye towards the sky. Sometimes we would find feathers in the garden and feel very sad.

On that Thursday morning in December we were all busy in the house, confident that all outside were safe. Then about 11 a.m. Audrie heard a strange duck noise and being curious went into the garden to investigate, just in time to see a very large fox attacking Daisy our large white duck. As Tracy & I rushed to her side we could not escape the pain in her voice, Audrie returned to the house in shock while we went down the garden to investigate. Daisy was covered in blood & very close to death and it was necessary to save her from further suffering. Tracy in the mean time had gone into the chicken run & came out in considerable distress “they are all dead” she said “all partly buried in a neat row down the back of the run”.

After burying Daisy & the six dead chickens, we searched the garden for Dilly our other duck & a missing chicken named Chooky, we had made a pet of Chooky, because she had been last in the pecking order. Later that afternoon I found Dilly dead under the big conifer hedge but still no Chooky. We were all distraught & as dusk arrived, Audrie wandered down to the chicken run just in time to see Chooky as large as life, putting herself to bed. We were all so pleased to see her, where had she been? Only God knows the answer to that question but praise the Lord she was alive & well.

Why am I telling you this story? Because I believe there are some valuable lessons to be learnt from this experience. We as a family are very concerned about the welfare of animals and what should be our response as Christians to man’s abuse & persecution of God’s creation.

Would we want the hunt to return? The unanimous answer to that question is NO. The Fox was only doing what came naturally in this fallen world; and whose fault was that? He was not made in the image of God and could not make a moral

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judgement of his actions. On the other hand, we have man, who was made in the image of God, has been given a moral choice but is quite happy to hunt the fox down & then watch with apparent glee, as the hounds first corner the fox & then savagely tear him apart.

Should not we as Christians be 100% behind the abolition of all forms of cruelty, whether it be the persecution of man or the rest of God's creation? Jesus did not make any direct statements regarding the welfare of animals but there are some clues;

Luke 12 v 6 *“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.*

Matthew 6 v 26 *“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them”.*

John 10 v 11 *“The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”.*

The following is reprinted by kind permission of May Tripp Animal Christian Concern (ACC).

“There are three crucial junctures in Christ's earthly life; His birth, the beginning of His ministry, and the final week that leads to his death. At each juncture He is in the presence of and identifies with the meekness and humility of His animal creation:

- He is born in a stable (in the presence of animals. Luke 2 v 7)
- After His baptism, before starting His ministry. He is in communion / fellowship with the wild beasts. (Mark 1 v 13).
- He begins His final week on the back of an unbroken colt (Luke 19 v 30). This event is significant for it shows that the untamed colt recognised that the one riding him was his creator; the colt would not have permitted anyone else to ride him.

Additionally, when as a victorious Christ / Lamb He returns to earth, HE and His “army” are on the backs of white horses from heaven (Rev 19 v 11-14).

When Christ assumes His Lordship in heaven, He is called “the Lion”, and, “the Lamb”, and as the whole redeemed creation worships God, Christ is once again in the presence of animals, the angelic cherubim (Rev 5).”

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Christians should do what they believe Jesus would do; stand against all forms of cruelty and take steps to preserve the environment for future generations until He returns and does it for us. There are many ways we can do this; by supporting ministries like CVAUK, Animal Christian Concern, Anglican Society for the welfare of Animals & Catholic Concern for Animals. We could enter our church for the CEL Millennium Certificate and encourage all members to be environmentally responsible. We can organise a Lent group, and use a Lent course specially written to include a study of our response as Christians to Cruelty & the destruction of the Environment.

We constantly pray “Your Kingdom come” but do nothing to actualise it.

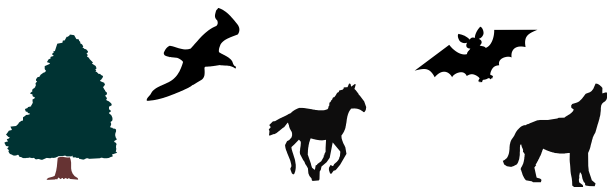
You know what you are doing to this fragile little planet of ours. You read the papers. You know how we’re destroying the land that gives us food, polluting the air that we breathe, and contaminating the rivers that give us drinking water. I don’t have to pound you with facts and figures. You know that the problems related to the destruction of the environment are now severe. And what is making matters worse is that people in general, and Christians in particular, don’t care.

Even when Christians have been commissioned by God to be good stewards of His creation, they appear to be the least concerned with what is going on. And of all the Christians, those who call themselves evangelicals have the worst record. Studies show that the more zealously committed people become to evangelical churches, the less concerned they are about the horrible things that are happening to the environment. We “Bible believing, born again, spirit-filled Christians”, more than any others, seem to have turned deaf ears to the pleas to save God’s creation from what has been called sinful exploitation.

In all this I want to set the task of creation-care in the context of Christian spirituality. I want you to come away from reading this book (How to Rescue the Earth) with a sense that there is no way that you can be faithful to scripture and sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit without becoming involved in the efforts to rescue the environment. I want to make it clear that to evidence the “fruit of the spirit” (Gal.5:22-23), you must be a person who empathises with the suffering of all of God’s creation and who makes praying for the deliverance of creation from its bondage to evil (Romans 8:21) a part of your devotional life. I hope you will be motivated to enter into kinship with nature and through this kinship, to worship God in new ways.

Tony Campolo

What is a Green Church



Love is
indivisible;
Cruelty is also
indivisible.

“Holy God all creation praises you, belongs to you and reflects your glory, give us new hearts to feel, new ears to hear, new eyes to see the marvellous work of your hand”.

Prayer from *An order of service for animal welfare and blessing, compiled by Andrew Linzey for the RSPCA.*

A growing number of Christians are appalled at the anthropocentric attitude of the church. They believe there is considerable biblical support for Christians to take the lead in advocating a sustainable future, by protecting the environment and having compassion for all of God’s creation.

Tony Campolo in his book “How to Rescue the Earth without Worshipping Nature” puts it this way; **“Creation is a trust from God. When Christ returns, He will ask what we have done with it. He will want to know if we have watered it, nurtured it and encouraged its fruitfulness, or have we abused it, forsook it and ignored its needs.**

God expects us to take what he has given us and do more than just return it to him the way we received it. He expects us to care for His creation, to bless it and to make it more fruitful. He expects us to be faithful servants who attend to his creation.

One day, God will call us before His judgement seat and we can be certain that he will ask us to give an account of what we have done to the world which He has entrusted into our hands (Matthew 25:14-30).“

We cannot ignore the fact that God has told us that we are to work and care for His Creation (Gen.2:15) which includes compassion for His animals (Prov.12:10). So what can we do about it? The following is an extract from “Time to Change” by Hugh Montefiore former Bishop of Birmingham; **“It is not the prophetic task of the church to provide answers to political environmental questions. It is the task of the church to insist, for the welfare of God’s creation in the world, that these questions are urgently addressed, and that appropriate answers are found to them.**

‘God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life’ (John3:16). If God so loved the world, ought not Christians be active in conserving the world? If so, far more

active witness is required from all Christians, from the bottom upwards and from the top downwards. That witness at both ends , is at present tragically absent. May God grant that we shall get our priorities right !”.

What can we do as Christians? The answer to that question is; plenty. As individuals we can make small and simple changes in our lifestyle at home and within the church, which can help the environment. **Christian Ecology Link** is a resource ministry “To help Christians working for a greener church”. They produce a leaflet “Conducting a Personal Ecological Audit”, in the introduction they make the following statement:

“It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of the environmental crisis - and feel so despondent that governments and corporations seem to be making so little headway in resolving the crisis. “What on earth can one person do?” is a common cry. However, action always begins at the INDIVIDUAL level - the important thing is to realise that it does not end there. By our actions, we can influence others; together, we can do something! We can start from where we are - and this is where the personal ecological audit comes in.”

The proof that this statement is true came only this week, when it was reported on television that, all the big supermarkets were falling over themselves to provide organic produce, why? because the customer (little you & me) were demanding it.

Animal Christian Concern was formed in 1985 by May Tripp, it is an ecumenical movement which now has a membership of Laity, Clergy, Bishops and Archbishops. Their most important work is to evangelise secular animal welfarists. In her letter to Christians she writes:

..Jesus is Lord of the WHOLE of creation. Thousands of leaflets bearing this caption have been requested by them (Secular Animal Welfarists) and have made an impact. From lapsed Christians we have received thanks for, as one put it, the heart to pray again.

Our work among Christians have been less successful. Many just do not want to know about legalised animal abuse. They shy away from a knowledge of what can happen during animal scientific procedures, They shy away from the squalid stench of the battery farm where creatures are denied their God-given environment and all expression of their normal behaviour patterns, and they prefer not to question the source of their fur coats, whether from intensive farms, agonising traps, or the nefarious thefts of pet cats. They may shake a regretful head at the mention of intensive farming but yet fail to seek out a source of free-range meat and eggs, or fail to abandon fur in a climate where no fur is needed. They may shake a head at the mention of animal research, but claim that animals must be expendable if human physical well-being is to be enhanced, as if animal research was the only means of valid

research - which it is not - and as if man's material well-being were the only thing which matters - which it is not.

Many Christians, in other words, have fallen into the trap of secularism, that sophisticated and godless creed which holds that humankind's selfish and material interests must be held paramount. It is understandable that atheists and humanists should be prepared to hold such a view - but Christians? Did not Christ warn: "What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Matt.16).

The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him.

Mark 1 . 12-13.



I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10 . 11.

A righteous man has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

Proverbs 12 . 10.

Man and beast thou savest, o Lord.

Psalms 36 . 6b.



A Matter of Trust

Trust and the new genetics



The new genetics has opened up worrying possibilities for people to apply new knowledge. Scientists can now manipulate genes within & across species boundaries in ways previously unimaginable. Human genes have been inserted into the genetic makeup of sheep & cows so that these animals can produce medicines for humans in their milk. Such developments raise truly perplexing questions. One of the most difficult of them is the issue of trust.

In our society we are witnessing a dramatic decline in trust in public figures & regulatory bodies. Who then are we going to trust to handle these powerful new technologies with equity, justice & transparency?

A Wellcome Trust survey on public perceptions of human cloning was published in December 1998. It suggested that people do not believe that either the altruistic nature of scientists or regulatory frameworks would control such techniques. Some felt that, regardless of any future UK legislation, people in other parts of the world would harness such technology to their own ends.

Other surveys confirm the decline in public confidence that the whole truth will be told by public bodies. Crucial areas of our lives, such as reproduction, health care & food, are now being changed by molecular science. The fact that trust is waning in those responsible for these innovations & their regulation is deeply disturbing.

Prayer is part of the response needed. Some good may come from genetic engineering for human welfare, but the careless introduction of genetically modified plant species into our fields poses very real dangers. Church members need to find out what is happening & make their views known to politicians to help ensure the new genetics do not produce conditions for further destabilisation of our ecosystem.

Amber Carroll, member Christian Ecology Link.

The above article points out a prevailing mistrust that is spreading rapidly throughout our society today. We no longer trust our scientists, who have in the past told us that babies in the womb & animals do not feel pain (subsequently proved totally wrong) this resulted in millions of babies being indiscriminately torn from the womb & thrown to one side to die, also the vivisection of animals without anaesthetic, a holocaust of unimaginable proportions. We do not trust our doctors. This mistrust was demonstrated only last month, in the uproar over the use of unlicensed drugs on premature babies. We definitely do not trust the politicians,

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many of whom proclaim to be Christians but when put to the test, miserably fail to uphold Christian principles in parliament, to the detriment of the Christian faith.

We Christians do not escape; the secular public do not trust us either & for very good reasons. They see a faith that proclaims love & compassion but is silent on the most pressing issues of the day; the careless use of the earth's resources, pollution, the annihilation of other species & untold cruelty towards animals we consider useful for food & experimentation.

Susan Chernak McElroy who was brought up as a Christian & writes for animal welfare, speaks for all those who care for our world when she states "*Any religious doctrine that does not celebrate & hold sacred all of creation feels unacceptable to me. When I consider such belief systems, I feel sick to my stomach & hot with shame at our human arrogance.*"

If we desire to be taken seriously in the new millennium, we need a revised theology & liturgy that embraces the whole of God's creation. The split between the church & the rest of God's creation can be traced back to the Synod of Whitby in 664 AD. At that time there were two missions; the Celtic, who listened to God within the heart of all life & the Roman, through Augustine of Canterbury, who listened to God in the ordained teaching & life of the church. Philip Newall writes "*It is a tragedy that a decision was taken in favour of only one of these missions (Roman), so that the spirituality of the other began to be displaced.*" This was no doubt the catalysis that introduced the anthropocentric attitude now prevalent in our present day church.

Saints like Julian of Norwich, Martin de Porres, St. Bonaventure, St. Francis of Assisi & many others, have kept the Celtic tradition alive. Rev. Prof. Andrew Linzey, professor of theology & animal welfare at Mansfield College, Oxford states "*It is difficult to dispute the authentic Christ-likeness of this tradition & its connection both implicitly in the teaching of Jesus & explicitly in subsequent christological doctrine.*"

John & Charles Wesley, August Toplady & Charles Spurgeon have all spoken out for a recognition of the place of animals in the love of God. Few Christians today remember that the great Christian, Lord Shaftesbury, fought a tremendous fight for total abolition of vivisection, as did many leading Christians, such as the Catholic Cardinals Manning & Newman. The RSPCA was founded by an Anglican priest, Arthur Broome in 1824.

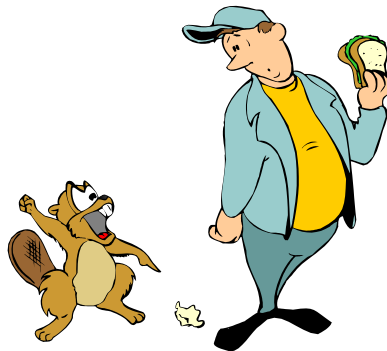
The trust of the world will only be secured by Christians with changed minds & new visions, it will not be changed by old minds & new programs. We as Christians

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have the answer to this fallen world but before we can proclaim it to others, we must first demonstrate it amongst ourselves. We are responsible for the sin of silence, today, cruelty & the destruction of God's creation are condoned by a silent church. We need to once again integrate our care for all of God's creation into our theology & liturgy.

I consider that the suffering of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole of creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Romans 8 . 18-23.



And I will make for you a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the creeping things on the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety.

Hosea 2 . 18.

A Matter of Value



I was looking forward to house group, I would be in charge and had it all planned out. We would finish the last section of the Lent course which dealt with our care of the environment; my favourite subject. All was at first peaceful, we listened to a beautiful Christian song, I prayed for; you guessed it, God's creation, then we read the first page of the study & that was as far as we got. I suppose it was all my fault, I just happened to challenge the established Christian attitude towards the welfare of animals & as expected the room exploded into an exciting debate which lasted well past my bedtime. It was so refreshing to be able to debate the subject, having opposition rather than indifference was great, giving a real insight into how fellow Christians who, may I say, love & care for animals, saw their role in the care of God's creation.

There has also been a debate in the Christian Herald's letter page 'Your Say' since the New Year, fuelled at times by myself, which has given further insight into this subject.

Let me state right from the start that I do not believe in Pantheism or the New Age. John 3.16 states 'God so loved the world' **the word 'world' in the original biblical language, is 'cosmos' which promises salvation to everything in the universe, not just humans.**

I believe in a saviour who came into this world to change us into people who can love & worship His Father; a saviour who came to deliver the rest of creation from it's 'groanings' so that it too can offer up worship to God. When I state that the love of God is not just for humans but all creatures, that it is our duty as Christians to oppose any cruelty for whatever reason. Christians in general are quick to point out; as Geoff Chapman (Your Say) '**human life is much more valuable than that of an animal, and if human lives can be saved only by sacrificing the lives of animals, then I can see no biblical reason to oppose it**'. It is this basic attitude that I want to address in this article.

What are Christians trying to say when they mention our value, are they saying that because we are worth more to God, that in some way, this justifies our cruelty towards other sentient species? I find it incredible that Christians can acknowledge that man is 'made in the image of God', then use this very fact to justify the evil way we treat God's creatures. Can our value to God justify inflicting suffering & pain on farm & laboratory animals? Andrew Linzey states '**It is spiritually infantile**

that we should continue to look upon the world as ‘made for us’ and animals simply as a means to human ends, as resources, as tools, as machines, indeed simply as things’.

Jesus did say; 'You are worth more than many sparrows' that very statement implies that sparrows have some value but I am not talking about value, I am talking about righteousness. Our value is based upon the responsibility God has given us towards all of His creation, our righteousness is determined by the manner in which we execute that responsibility. We have a choice, to either love, nurture & protect His creation or, be cruel, egotistical dictators destroying His creation. This world has obviously chosen the latter but surely as Christians we should not be of this world.

To be made in ‘His image’ carries a responsibility to reflect His love to all of His creation & follow His ways by being good stewards. God will not ask what you did to protect your rights. He will ask what you did to protect the rights of all creatures in His creation. He will not ask how precious you considered you were as a human in His sight. He will ask how precious all His creation was in your sight. When Jesus died on the cross, He not only saved us from our sins (for man is the only part of His creation that had a choice & sinned), He also saved animals from paying for our sins.

Hans von Balthasar wrote ‘The whole point of creation is for us to know that we are not creator’ Andrew Linzey adds ‘To affirm that animals are creatures like us is to reject once & for all the deification of our kind that so characterises humanistic perspectives on our prerogatives with regard to other species’.

You might ask, are the above comments theologically correct. I draw your attention to the Lambeth 98 Resolution 1.8 Creation;

This conference:

(a) reaffirms the biblical vision of creation according to which:

Creation is a web of inter dependent relationships bound together in the covenant which God the Holy Trinity has established with the whole earth and every living being.

(i) the divine Spirit is sacramentally present in creation, which is therefore to be treated with reverence, respect and gratitude;

(ii) human beings are both co-partners with the rest of creation and living bridges between heaven and earth, with responsibility to make personal & corporate sacrifices for the common good of all creation;

(iii) the redemptive purpose of God in Jesus Christ extends to the whole of creation.

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I write these articles because I believe that God's love is inclusive, not just for humans **but for all of God's creatures**. It took many years for Christians to realise that we cannot love God & keep humans as slaves or regard woman as second-class citizens. Now it is time for Christians to realise that we cannot love God & be indifferent to the way we are destroying the rest of His creation.

I will give the last word to John Michael (Your Say) **'From a theological perspective, Christ was surely 'worth more' to His Father than the rest of mankind put together. Yet the 'higher' sacrificed himself on the cross for the 'lower'. In the light of this example, our use & abuse of animals is anti-Gospel.**

We need to bring home to people that all cruel behaviour, whoever or whatever the victims, is the expression of a deep evil flaw in human nature, and that all who oppose and fight it, in whatever form, are crusading against a curse that could destroy us all.

Bishop John Austin Baker.



Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.

Albert Schweitzer.

We may pretend to what RELIGION we please; but Cruelty is ATHEISM.

We may make our boast of CHRISTIANITY; but Cruelty is INFIDELITY.

We may trust to our ORTHODOXY; but cruelty is the worst of HERESIES.

Humphry Primatt.

I have a Dream

Martin Luther King's speech "I have a Dream" will be remembered as one of the greatest speeches of the Twentieth Century. It inspired a Christian nation to re-evaluate its attitude towards those whose skin was other than white. Martin Luther King was a dreamer, not one who indulges in fantasy but one who had a vision; a new world. At the end of his speech he coupled his vision to that of another dreamer Isaiah "*I still have a dream today that one day the lamb & the lion will lie down together*" his new world embraced not just man but all of God's creation.



Many years ago I had a dream; I was by the side of a railway track, dirty black steam engines were rushing past belching soot & smoke. On the other side of the track was a tall hoarding covered with advertisements. Next, I was on top of the hoarding looking down into a beautiful world, there was an overwhelming feeling of love & peace, I desired to enter but could not, I turned away exhilarated and on waking, knew that one day I might be allowed to enter & experience it's wonders. Imagine my surprise & delight when many years later my wife Audrie, having no knowledge of my dream, told of a similar dream.

I believe that God has planted in all of us a hope that embraces His dream for creation. A time of peace, without pain, fear, disease or death. Isaiah assures us that one day these dreams will come true. The book of Isaiah goes on to describe a new beginning, a time of final triumph & peace. In that day, there will be no need for tears, wild animals will lie down together, the sun & moon will fade, overwhelmed by the brightness of God's glory. Revelation also ends on a note of great triumph, good news emerges - spectacular Good News. To those who believe, Revelation becomes a book not of fear but of hope. God will prevail. All will be made new. Peace will reign not only between God & man but between God & all of His creation. The kingdom comes out into the open. The city of God flings wide its gates.

So why does the local church refuse to share this dream, is there any biblical basis to support their statement that "*animals do not have eternal lives because they do not have a soul*". I do not believe that there is, in fact quite the contrary. When referring to the new heaven & new earth, God states "I am making *everything* new" (Rev 21 v 5). Commenting on this verse, a Church of England Working Group report on Man & Nature concludes "*To speak thus of the restoration of all things involves the whole of creation & not just mankind alone. On any interpretation of the classical Christian teaching about the resurrection of the body, it is difficult to see how man's bodily life can enter into eternity ---- without in some sense involving that world in which we have rejoiced & of which the human body is part. Nothing which God has made will ultimately be lost. All the splendour of the natural world*

& the creative achievements of man, however transitory & easily destructible they may appear, have eternal significance". So what does the bible say about this subject?

1. Do animals have a soul? On looking up The Bible, Bible Commentaries and Systematic Theology, I have come to the conclusion that nobody really knows. The use of the word soul in the Old Testament is quite different from its use in the New Testament. In the OT it is simply an animated being. In the NT the word is the Greek *psyche*, the non material source of a body's life, personality, what makes you, you. In the NT it is quite often interchanged with the Greek *pneuma* (*spirit*) & both words sometimes appear to mean exactly the same, while at other times there appears to be a clear distinction. *Psyche* is the quality of life while *pneuma* is the principle of life in all created things. So what is the difference between man & beast, it is not that man alone has a soul or spirit but that man is created in the image of God, whereas the beast is not.

2. Will there be animals in heaven? Your answer will depend on how you interpret the bible. Let us consider Rev. 4 v 6-11; Awesome creatures encircle a lofty throne, praising God. Four of the creatures in Heaven (v7) symbolise the most impressive examples of all creation, the lion, ox, man & the eagle. To the anthropocentric Christian however, they represent men, the four apostles who wrote the gospels!!!! Again if we look at Ecclesiastes 3 v 21 "Who Knows if the spirit of man rises upward & if the spirit of an animal goes down into the earth?" **This verse is often quoted by anthropocentric Christians as a fact, when it is obviously a question.**

So why does the traditional teaching of the church imply that God loves man alone. Surely this arrogant attitude diminishes God's love by implying that God created animals; to experience the holocaust of human greed, cruelty & intolerance; to spend lives full of anguish, fear & pain, only to end up on the eternal scrap heap, while the perpetrators of such heinous crimes are not only forgiven but exulted. Is it little wonder that those who care for animals & the environment consider that the church is its worst enemy.

I believe that God's creation is not complete but waiting for us the body of Christ, to demonstrate that through Jesus we can first set ourselves free from this fallen world and then to be instrumental in freeing the rest of creation, in preparation for God's new heaven and earth "*because creation itself will be set free from it's bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God*" (Romans 8 v 21).

The problems related to the destruction of the environment are severe, yet we as Christians do not seem to care, even though we were commissioned by God to be good stewards. We have refused to separate ourselves from a world that is driven by selfishness & greed, a world that is raping God's creation to the detriment of future generations.

To fulfil the dream we need to proclaim to the world that Jesus has the answer; sacrificial love. Surely as Christians we should be prepared to demonstrate that love

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by reducing the destructive elements within our own lifestyles; rejecting all forms of cruelty and violence; raising our voices in support of all who wish to divert this generation from a destructive economic system; support & encourage those who want to use the creative powers of God to sustain and enhance His creation. God's dream is a perfect world where "*they will neither harm or destroy on all my holy mountain*" (Isaiah 11 v 9), should we not as Christians endeavour to reflect that dream in our own lives.



The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,
and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.
They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
Isaiah 11 . 6-9.

A Call to Arms.

I pray that God will use “Christian Vegetarian Association UK” to proclaim to all Christians their responsibility towards the whole of His Creation. To be instrumental in proclaiming to a disillusioned world that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not just for the human race but all of God’s creation (Mark 16 v 15).

Jesus has already won the war but Christians have failed to understand the sacrificial love of Christ, that we need to actualise **His love** in order to claim **His victory**. So the battle continues, our selfish indifference, greed and love for the material benefits of today’s world, have closed our eyes to the truth; that it is unacceptable to God for Christians to:

1. Condone cruelty towards any living sentient creature, for whatever reason.
2. Ignore our selfish use of the world’s resources and the resultant pollution which, if allowed to continue unabated, will destroy not only ourselves but all of God’s beautiful creation.

Should not we as Christians proclaim to the world that our Lord Jesus has the answers and demonstrate His sacrificial love; by rejecting all forms of cruelty and violence, by raising our voices in support of all who wish to divert this generation from a destructive economic system and encourage those who want to use the creative power God has given us, to sustain and enhance His creation.

Let us link together and raise the banner of our Lord Jesus Christ high above the battlefield of this fallen world, let us start now to act like the sons of God we are destined to be (Romans 8 v 18-23), let us cry out to the lost to join in our crusade; to come and rest in His forgiving arms.

A Prayer of Hope.

We bow before you, divine and holy Father, eternal source of our existence.

We thank you for the hope you have placed in our hearts. That this fallen world, marred and distorted by sin, will be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth.

That Lord, you will perfect all of creation and bring it into harmony with the purposes for which you originally created it. That those mentioned in the Lamb’s book of life, will reign in your image, over all of creation, a creation free from cruelty and pain, under the kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank you Father that we can hope for a new creation full of beauty, abundance and joy, where Jesus has prepared a place for those who truly love Him, in a city whose light is the glory of God and whose lamp is the lamb.

We pray that Christians will not wait for the return of Jesus to actualise your will but as the body of Christ will begin to practice now that hope we all pray for every Sunday “your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”.

Amen.

Recommended Books

Animal Gospel by Andrew Linzey 0 3406 2150 8

Animal Theology by Andrew Linzey 0 334 00005 X

Animal Rites by Andrew Linzey 0 334 02760 8

Is God a Vegetarian? By Richard Alan Young 0 8126 9393 0

How to Rescue the Earth without Worshiping Nature by Tony Campolo
0 85009 571 9

God's Covenant With Animals by J.R.Hyland 00-04126

Good News For All Creation by S,R.Kaufman & N.Braun 0 9716676 0 8

Judaism and Vegetarianism by Richard H. Schwartz 1 930051 24 7

Recommended Web Sites

Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals: www.aswa.org.uk

Catholic Concern for Animals: www.catholic-animals.org

Christian Ecology Link (CEL): www.christian-ecology.org.uk

A Rocha: www.arocha.org Christians in Conservation.

PAPA (Parrots and Pets Advice): www.parrotspets.co.uk

My Family Web Site. Visit section on God's Creation

All Creatures: www.all-creatures.org

Dedicated to cruelty free living through a Vegetarian / Vegan lifestyle according to Christian ethics. Great resource site.

Humane Reigion: www.humanereligion.org

Our Patron the Rev. J.R.Hyland's Website.

Christian vegetarian Association UK: www.christianvegetarian.co.uk

Christian Vegetarian Association (USA): www.christianveg.com



Glorify your Name.

Lord, your love embraces, all that you have made.
Your hand created the firmament, the moon, the sun , the stars.
Your breath gave life to your good world and man you set to rule,
To enhance your realm, bring joy to all and be their servant King.
To reflect by deed, the love they need, and glorify your name.

Man's fall and arrogance to this day, rejects your plan, for the violent way.
Has substituted instead, the image of the evil one, hatred, fear & dread.
Through greed he does his very worst, to those who cannot converse.
For future generations man does not care, provided he now gets his share.
By economic strategies the rich convert food you destined for the poor.
Is this the way Lord, for all time or just a test for humankind.

Your grace ensures a future, Lord, for those who accept your Son,
For those who tread His lonely path of sacrifice and love.
Blessed are they who know the truth, who mourn and are meek,
Blessed are those who are pure in heart, merciful to the weak,
Blessed are those who end all wars and suffer for your sake.
Blessed are they who follow your ways and glorify your name.

O Lord you are magnificent, compassion rules the day.
Lord, your great love has conquered all, joy, justice, peace, remain.
The ghastly lessons of this past world will surely guarantee,
Pain, suffering and death now gone, for all eternity.
Eden revisited, evil destroyed, your circle is complete.
All creation now bow before your Son, the only one, who glorifies your name.

Don Gwillim March 2001

(Written at the time of the Foot & Mouth epidemic)

Dedicated to every creature tortured and slaughtered to satisfy man's greed.

**Help us all to work towards a violence-free world.
If you are not a member, please consider linking your
vision to ours by becoming a member of the
Christian Vegetarian Association UK**