

Being a REAL Environmentalist

Dr. Jay L. Wile

Christians Should Be Environmentalists...

God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Genesis 1:28)

“A proper understanding of dominion includes stewardship. God invested the only creature made in his image with the power of dominion. There is little room for misunderstanding. Human beings are not blights upon creation...The love and care the Creator invested in the cosmos is to be our model of dominion, rightly fulfilled....we cannot neglect our responsibility to exercise our dominion in a way that treasures the earth, heals its wounds, respects its creatures, and values its divinely given resources.”

(R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

...but They Should Be REAL Environmentalists

- Christians should not believe lies told just to make people care more about the environment (Philippians 4:8)
- Christians should not spread those lies (Leviticus 19:11)
- Christians should do what is best for others, which means that we must care for the earth so that everyone has the opportunity to live a healthy, safe life. (Mark 12:31)

You Become a REAL Environmentalist with Serious Study

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

This means you look at what science really says about the state of the earth instead of just listening to the propaganda you might get from groups that are ignorant or have agendas.

“Environmentalist” Propaganda

In my university chemistry courses, I always took a poll asking students whether the air we breathe today is cleaner or dirtier than the air we were breathing in the 1970s. More than **90%** say it is dirtier.

But the air today is **SIGNIFICANTLY CLEANER!**

Airborne lead: *DECREASED* by 93%

Carbon Monoxide: *DECREASED* by 60%

Ground Level Ozone: *DECREASED* by 53%

Sulfur Oxides: *DECREASED* by 70%

Nitrogen Oxides: *DECREASED* by 20%

Have you seen the picture of polar bears on ice?

“They cling precariously to the top of what is left of the ice floe, their fragile grip the perfect symbol of the tragedy of global warming.”

-*The Daily Mail*

The polar bear population is **INCREASING**. In the Davis Strait area, it has gone from 850 in 1985 to 2,100!

Because of Propaganda, Many Believe:

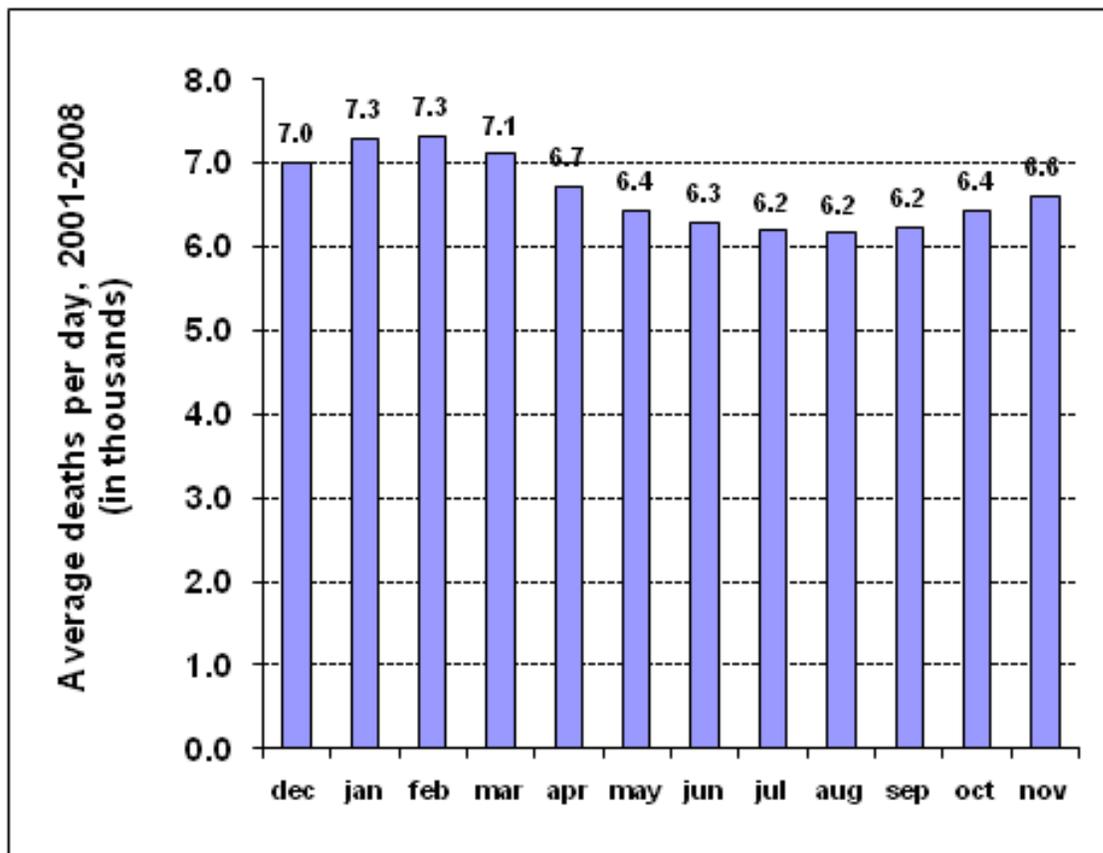
Global warming is real and will cause massive problems in years to come.

Acid rain is destroying lakes, rivers, and streams across the world.

The world is becoming dangerously overpopulated.

This is Very Bad

Some of these “problems” are supposedly solved by measures that **KILL PEOPLE**



Winters are always more deadly than summers in most places of the world. As fuel prices increase, the poor cannot heat their homes in the winter. As a result, more die.

Source: *U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

REAL Environmental Problem #1

Pollution in the Oceans

The Great Pacific Garbage Heap

Circular currents that exist naturally in the oceans (gyres) can collect trash that has been put in the water. The largest collection of this trash is in the North Pacific Gyre

Currently, the exact extent of the garbage heap is unknown, and the exact amount of garbage contained therein is not known. However, it is a real problem.

The plastic releases chemical additives and plasticizers that are harmful to all manner of marine wildlife.

Ocean birds mistake the plastic for food, feeding it to and killing their young. Laysan Albatross seem to be the most at risk.

“To be sure, the Eastern Garbage Patch isn’t a lone phenomenon. Off the coast of Japan there is a Western Garbage Patch. And each of the other oceans has its own, albeit smaller, floating patches of debris. Even so, the Eastern Garbage Patch—rooted square between California and Hawaii—is most intriguing and draws the greatest attention because of its size and the fact that it lies closest to...the United States.”

- *Discover Magazine*

Unfortunately, this is often over-hyped, which harms the cause rather than helping it.

Curtis Ebbesmeyer, estimates the size of the garbage patch to be roughly that of the state of Texas. Charles J. Moore, the man who is credited with discovering the patch, says the mass of plastic found in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch is six times the mass of the plankton found there.

“The amount of plastic out there isn’t trivial...But using the highest concentrations ever reported by scientists produces a patch that is a small fraction of the state of Texas...[when it comes to amount], we have data that allow us to make reasonable estimates; we don’t need the hyperbole. Given the observed concentration of plastic in the North Pacific, it is simply inaccurate to state that plastic outweighs plankton...”

-Dr. Angelicque White

Why Don’t We Just Clean It Up?

- The area is truly enormous. It would take an army of boats just to be able to reasonably cover it in any kind of “search and destroy” mission.
- Any net used to skim for the plastic will indiscriminately pick up wildlife.
- Some method has to be found to be able to distinguish between plastic and wildlife.
- Until some method is found, the best means by which to reduce the impact of such garbage patches is to make sure the plastic doesn’t get in the ocean to begin with.

Some Ocean Pollution Includes Medical Waste

Beaches Close Due to Large Amounts of Waste in the Water

Chelsea Avenue Beach in Long Branch, NJ closes for many reasons, including unsafe levels of fecal coliform bacteria.

Coney Island Beach in New York has been closed because of syringes and blood vials washing ashore.

Ocean Grove Beach in New Jersey is closed more often than it is open for all manner of waste problems.

REAL Environmental Problem #2

Chemicals Where They Shouldn't Be

The U.S. FDA says that the levels of **mercury** in shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish is so high that pregnant women, children, and women of childbearing age should **NOT EAT THEM**. In addition, they should not have more 6 ounces (one average meal) of albacore tuna per week.

Estrogen has been found in both natural waterways and in bottled drinking water. "USGS scientists found widespread occurrences of fish in the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers with "intersex" characteristics -- male fish carrying immature female egg cells in their testes. Other scientists observed similar problems in fish in Southern California and in labs in Canada and the United States." (*Scientific American*)

Perchlorate is a rocket-fuel component. It is produced naturally in the environment, but it is also produced commercially. Studies show that perchlorate is in both cow's milk and mother's breast milk. Currently, the levels are about half of what is considered safe. Scientists are not completely sure how it gets concentrated in milk.

REAL Environmental Problem #3

Coral Reef Destruction

Unfriendly fishing habits such as explosive fishing and cyanide fishing have devastated coral reefs in certain parts of the world. While these fishing practices are technically illegal, they are not enforced. Cyanide fishing is especially rampant, driven by the high prices for certain exotic fish.

Tourism can promote an appreciation of coral reefs, but it can also damage them significantly.

Large-scale developments, both near the shore and near other waterways, produce large amounts of sediment suspended in the water. This adversely affects the algae that live inside corals, causing a loss of coral.

REAL Environmental Problem #4

Hypoxic zones in the ocean.

These are zones in the ocean where the oxygen content in the water is so low that the water cannot support marine life.

In March 2004, the UN Environment Programme reported 146 hypoxic zones in the world's oceans where marine life could not be supported due to depleted oxygen levels. A 2008 study counted 405 dead zones worldwide.

What Causes Them?

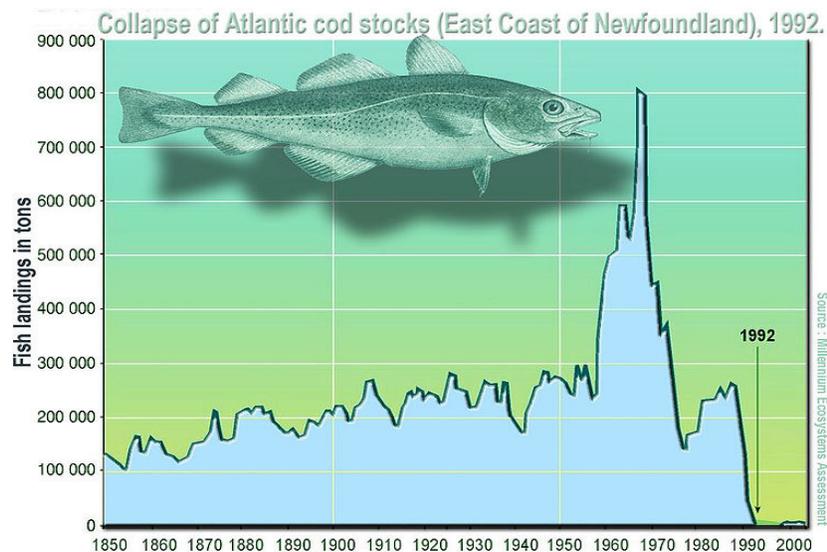
Like many things, there are natural and human-made causes. Fertilizers draining into the sea and sewage being dumped into the sea are the man human-induced causes.

Nature can produce them if wind patterns and water circulation patterns change abruptly.

Currently, the research on these phenomena is so poor that we don't even know what the ratio of human-made areas to naturally-caused areas is.

REAL Environmental Problem #5

Overfishing



We Should Deal With These REAL Environmental Problems

- These are problems that have the potential of impacting the lives of people in the near term
- These are problems that can actually be resolved with the right kinds of procedures
- Some of the money that is being wasted on the “more sexy” environmental problems could have a much greater impact if it were used on these problems.