

# Deconstructing Our Anthropocentric Ecological Consumption

Humanity has assumed for way too long now that we are the center of the universe.

If not the universe, we are certainly the dominant rulers of this blue orb we call earth. Anthropocentric attitudes and actions have led humanity to the conclusion that the world was created for our unrestricted and unending consumption.

While the notion of ecological provisions might be technically accurate - we have to survive after all - modern-day consumerism has shifted from responsible consumption and ecological stewardship to irresponsible ecological consumption that has placed the world and human existence in peril.

In the creation narratives of Genesis, we find the Creator placing the responsibility of creation care on the shoulders of humanity.

If humans are obedient to their divine calling, God's creation will function within a symbiotic ecological system that will provide for all of creation.

In other words, as long as humans take care of God's creation in a responsible and rejuvenating way, life will work as designed.

That all ended at the fall of humanity. According to Genesis 3, humanity sends creation into chaos when they make the cognitive decision to place their desires over their needs.

Even though the garden provided for their every need, they wanted more. They gave into the temptation of abandoning their responsibility of cultivating and embraced an attitude of selfish consumption.

When divine judgment was rendered for their sin, humanity was told by the Creator, “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:17-19).

From that moment forward, humanity has been at odds with the earth.

The ideal of the Creator was that humanity recognize their symbolic place within his creation and embrace their responsibility as caretakers.

When humanity made the decision to place themselves outside of that ecological existence, they began to dominate, consume and conquer earthly resources.

These anthropocentric ecological consumption ideals and practices are contrary to the Creator’s intention.

Therefore, as Christians, we must acknowledge this as sin, repent and seek redemption from this path.

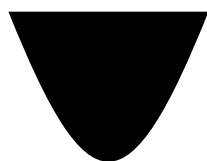
We must place humanity back into the garden where we are creation-caretakers within - and not apart - from the symbiotic ecological system God created.

As Earth Day is celebrated this Sunday, let us remember our place within God’s creation.

Let us repent from our attitudes of human arrogance and irresponsible consumption.

Let us seek ways we can redeem our actions that we might embrace our original responsibility as ecological stewards of God’s creation.

If we can repent from our sin and God redeems our actions, we can find hope for a new earth that will spring forth new life.



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*Editor's note: This article is part of a series focused on creation care for Earth Day 2018. The previous articles in the series are:*

*[How Martin Luther King's Death Birthed Environmental Justice](#) by Aaron D. Weaver*

*[How Churches Can Turn Around Our Environmental Woes](#) by Chuck Summers*

*[Why Our Worship Must Focus More on Creation Care](#) by Helle Liht*

*[Facing Up to the Reality of Climate Change](#) by Gary McManus*

*[Pastors Share How Their Churches Support Creation Care](#) by Zach Dawes*