

## Chuck Colson: Just Do It Good Stewardship and Global Warming

No. 071102

November 2, 2007

A recent headline in the *Wall Street Journal* read, “Split Over Global Warming Widens Among Evangelicals.” While this story was about Baptists in Texas, the disagreements it described are not limited to the Lone Star State—in part, because when it comes to global warming, we evangelicals are so busy disagreeing with each other that we have lost sight of what can agree on.

The article features a discussion between two “devout Baptists.” One, a woman who represents Texas’s largest Southern Baptist group, wants a pastor to get behind an effort to block the building of a “slew of coal-fired power plants.” A committed environmentalist, she cites the Psalmist’s declaration that “the earth is the Lord’s and all its fullness.”

The pastor, in turn, assures her that “God . . . ‘is sovereign over His creation’ and [that] no amount of coal-burning will alter by a ‘millisecond’ His divine plan for the world.” He, too, cites Scripture, in this case, Genesis 8:22: “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.”

The *Journal* summarizes his position this way: Over-concern about global warming “just distracts from core Christian duties to spread the faith and protect the unborn.”

Not surprisingly, neither is persuaded by the other’s argument. They, like most Americans—liberal and conservative—remain divided on the basic questions: “How serious is [climate change], what causes it, and what should [hu]mankind do about it?”

But for Christians, the question of global warming should not stop us from identifying a critical worldview issue here—one on which every Christian can, or should, agree: and that’s the importance of good stewardship toward the rest of creation. There are things we can do now to be good stewards that do not require us to get all of the answers that are going to come on global warming.

A great example of this is a long-time friend of mine named Bill Spears. Bill is a solid Christian, a native oil-belt Texan, a conservative, and an environmentalist wrapped up in one. Bill started a company called Energy Education, Inc., which develops energy conservation plans for school districts, universities, and large churches that “share a common commitment to fiscal and social responsibility and to the wise use of financial and environmental resources.” Why? As Bill Spears says, its clients can invest the financial savings “in the lives of people . . . not the utility companies.”

Take Prestonwood Baptist Church as an example, a huge church in Plano, Texas. It worked with Energy Education to cut its utility costs by \$1.1 million in one year. That’s good stewardship—freeing funds to be used elsewhere in the ministry.

As Prestonwood’s pastor, Jack Graham, told the *Journal*, “Biblical Christianity . . . has a real answer to the ecological

crisis.” Francis Schaeffer, whom Graham quoted, insisted that Christians ought to be the best stewards possible of the environment. Can you think of one instance where Scripture praises excessive consumption or waste? I can’t.

Working with institutions to reduce their energy usage, like Energy Education does, is good stewardship. And it does not depend on what the scientists eventually can prove about global warming. It is all laid out for us already in the Scriptures. All we have got to do is stop arguing long enough to start being good stewards today. ■

---

Francis Schaeffer insisted that Christians  
ought to be the best stewards possible of  
the environment.

---

Andrew Higgins, “Split over Global Warming Widens among Evangelicals,” *Wall Street Journal*, 28 September 2007, A1.

Learn more about Energy Education, Inc.:  
[www.energyeducation.com](http://www.energyeducation.com)

© Prison Fellowship